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THE BUDDHIST SANCTUARY-VIHĀRA OF LABNASAGUT AND THE IL-QAN HŰLEGŰ: AN OVERVIEW OF IL-QANID BUDDHISM AND RELATED MATTERS

SAMUEL M. GRUPPER

Labnasagut, the site which lent its name to the sacred enclosure that the Il-Qan Hűlegű had built for Buddhist clergy at his summer pastures in the Ala-tay Mountains of Armenia, forms the core subject of this study. His patronage signaled – if it did not initiate – the moment when Il-Qanid Buddhism took its institutional form of state support. As such, the complex of sanctuary and residence (S. *vihāra*), the forward-most outpost of Buddhism in late medieval Western Asia is important for what it reveals about a pattern of sponsorship, ecclesiastical organization, and sacred architecture that arguably represents a model of religious devotion and practices drawn from lands in the Mongol-dominated Buddhist bloc of states.[1] My general purpose in this paper is to draw attention to the site Hűlegű endowed as an ascetic retreat for the purposes of the Buddhist community, the special regard he had for its spiritual leader and clergy, their religious devotions and his commitment to and involvement in its communal worship and way of life. As the focal point of Hűlegű's solemn devotions, and consequently the cradle of Il-Qanid Buddhism, Labnasagut came to be associated with the power of the ruling house. It is Hűlegű's faith, underscored by shared convictions and sensibilities with other Činggisids that I intend to explore in this article. It will prove instructive to present the personal soteriological goal of enlightenment and dynastic ambitions that inspired Hűlegű and other Činggisid rulers to make sure that many of their descendants acquired Buddhist teachings and engaged in elaborate confirmations of their faith. With respect to the Il-Qans and their kinsmen in the other Mongol Qanates of the Činggisid dispensation, I would suggest that their Buddhist piety and devotion is better understood if approached as a commitment to a way of life, rather than a set of beliefs and practices narrowly identified with a particular cult, though that has its place

1 For the transcription of foreign words and texts, I use the following abbreviations: S. Sanskrit, T. Tibetan, M. Mongolian, Tkc. Turkic, Ch. Chinese, and P. Persian.

Concerning the building of Labnasagut, Thomas T. Allsen links its construction and that of other Buddhist sites to the work of Chinese artisans who were compelled to reside in the Il-Qanid domain and who joined with local skilled craftsmen to produce sacred monuments and palaces. See his "Technician Transfers in the Mongol Empire," *The Central Eurasian Studies Lectures* 2, 2002, 1-28, pp. 13-14. I am grateful to Dr. Allsen for providing me with an offpring of his article.

here too. More broadly, then Labnasagut's sanctuary-*vihāra* is significant not only for identifying aspects of the Il-Qan's spiritual convictions, but also for provideng a benchmark in comparing the eastern and western branches of Mongol Buddhism, determining their affinities and disparities, and revealing an overall uity of belief and practice.

The full historical circumstances surrounding the founding of Labnasagut, beginning with the the granting of land in 1259, the construction of the religious complex that occurred mainly between 1261 and 1265, and its presumed afterlife of some thirty-odd years as a fixture of Il-Qanid religious life, have yet to receive systematic treatment. The enterprise is not without difficulties, however. To my knowlege, no one has identified the presence of the site in the archaeological record, so that no excavation reports, and consequently no evidence of its distinctive material culture. The published results of archaeologists either gloss over or else wholly overlook core activities of the monastic community and its connections with the material remains of the faith. The end result has been to minimize the significance of Buddhism to Il-Qanid belief and religious culture.

I. Background

At the beginning of the Mongol/Il-Qanid period, as indicated by Rashīd al-Dīn, Hűlegű (b.1218, r.1256-1265), founder of the dynasty and grandson of Činggis-Qan, sponsored the building of Buddhist temples at Khoy and Marāgheh.[2] Apart from these two acts of generosity evincing imperial prestige and legitimacy in Buddhists lands,[3] it is generally assumed that Hűlegű had little if any interest in Bud-

2 See Ét. Quartremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, Paris 1836, pp. 401; Allsen, "Technician Transfers," p. 14, n. 61. For the temple at Marāgheh, see Warwick Ball, "The Imamzadeh Ma'sum at Vardjovi: A Rock-cut Il-Khanid Complex near Marageh," *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 12, 1979, 329-340, p. 338.

3 Perhaps the single most renowned sacred structure proclaiming Mongol support for the spread of Buddhism and its religious goals is the Chü-yung-kuan monument. Located at a strategic site sixty kilometers north of Beijing, the Chü-yung-kuan is a fortified gate constructed ca. 1343 during the reign of Toγon Temür Qaγan (1333-1368). At one time, three reliquaries stood atop the three-sided archway of the gate, while the interior was decorated with carvings of mandalas, ten seated Buddhas, and 1,000 smaller Buddha images. Inscriptions, carved on both the east and west walls of the archway, are in five languages of the empire: Mongolian (written in 'Phags pa script), Tibetan, Uyγur, Tangut, and Chinese and two apotropaic formulas (*dhāraṇī*) inscribed in Lantsha (ornamental Sanskrit lettering). For further remarks, see Gadjin M. Nagao, "The Tibetan Eulogy at Chü-yung-kuan/Text and Translation," *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R.A. Stein*, Bruxelles 1985, 832-861, pp. 835-837.

dhism as he expanded and consolidated his conquests. Rashīd al-Dīn repeatedly refers to the presence of Buddhist monks at Hűlegű's residence (*ordo*) and those of his descendants, however, he tells us nothing about how the clergy organized themselves, their religious observances, or their sectarian identity. Although there isn't material evidence of the physical religious environment pertaining to the first Il-Qan's Buddhist convictions *per se*, there are epigraphical and narrative sources of information that no one has yet examined in a methodical way. With only two exceptions, neither historians nor Buddhologists have made an effort to identify fresh information and cull from it evidence of where Il-Qanid Buddhism stood in the wider context of the Mongol empire or within the framework of Buddhist civilization.[4]

Pending the identification of Labnasagut's exact location and its archaeological excavation, a fair amount of progress in furthering the investigation of the site and what we actually know about Hűlegű's Buddhist convictions still can be achieved on the basis of systematically collating textually verifiable data. To be sure, Buddhism had long since faded from the scene of Persian culture and its lack of roots in any specific locale makes it difficult to comprehend the Il-Qan's choice of religion and why it occupied a central place in his spiritual interests. As shall be determined from the discussion of the literary sources, he plainly acknowledged the religious teachings and spiritual guidance of the organized Buddhist monastic community, demonstrated his beliefs by building its temple and providing the objects of veneration for its cult, and gave it pride of place and a robust role in his regime. What ultimately remains to be seen is how closely the general pattern of Il-Qanid Buddhism corresponds to the evolution of Mongol Buddhist beliefs and observances and its relationship to Buddhism as a world religion.

The Il-Qans, though hospitable to the faith, did not rule as an unbroken series of Buddhist-style sovereigns, the apparent exception being Hűlegű's seventh son Tegűder (r. 1282-1284, who as a convert to Islam took the name Ahmad). Successive descendants of Hűlegű, – the Il-Qans Abaqa (r. 1265-1282), Aryun (r. 1284-1291), Gaikhatu (r. 1291-1295), and prior to their conversion to Islam, Ghazan (r. 1295-1304) and Őljeitű (1304-1316) – adhered to the Buddhist faith and embraced its cultural system.[5] In consideration of this development and its causal connections

4 Regarding the investigation of these sources, see Karl Jahn, *Rashīd al-Dīn's History of India, Collected Essays with Facsimiles and Indices*, The Hague 1965, and Gregory Schopen, "Hīnayāna Texts in a 14th Century Persian Chronicle, Notes on Some of Rashīd al-Dīn's Sources," *Central Asiatic Journal* (hereafter *CAJ*) 26, 1982, pp. 225-235.

5 There is reason to believe that Őljeitű (r. 1304-1316), at least for a while, behaved as an observant Buddhist. For his reign and that of his predecessors as Il-Qans, see J.A. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, *The Saljuq and Mongol Periods*, edited by J.A. Boyle, Cambridge 1968, 303-421. Refer

with the religious essentials then observed in the other Činggisid appanage-states,[6] Labnasagut is significant not simply because it enables us to propose a hypothetical reconstruction of a Buddhist complex in Il-Qanid Transcaucasia, but because the ecclesiastical elite and its temple sponsored by Hűlegű provide a focal point for analyzing the involvement of the Il-Qans in Buddhism and their identification with it as a world religion.

Little of this accords very well with the received interpretation of historians of the Il-Qanid period. In fact, the matter stands pretty much as it was in 1836 when Ét. Quartremère described it,[7] even though several reformulations of his findings have been advanced. The most accessible and influential explanation of what Hűlegű believed remains that of Bertold Spuler. As Spuler points out in his discussion of Nestorianism and Buddhism, although Hűlegű enabled monks to settle at court, he only made an accommodation of sorts with their faith:[8]

> ...Hūlāgū did not, indeed, himself embrace the Nestorian faith; he inclined rather to a quite different creed, which had failed to take root in Western Asia but had become familiar to the Mongols from China, namely Buddhism. Although there is no definite evidence that the Īlkhān was a formal Buddhist, he was at any rate well disposed towards that religion. Not a few Buddhist priests (*Bhikshus*), whom the Mongols called *Bakhshys*, resided at his court.

Though forty years and more have elapsed since he articulated this judgment, and based it on less than comprehensive evidence, the influence of Spuler's conclusion has not faded. A more recent assessment by David Morgan puts the matter of Hűlegű's faith and its legacy somewhat differently, alluding to his lack of conviction, while making the point that it took several decades until the "vaguely Buddhist" Il-Qans accepted Islam,[9]

to pp. 401-402 for the comments regarding Őljeitű's beliefs and his second thoughts and those of his amirs regarding their acceptance of Islam.

6 In addition to the well-known examples of Buddhism in the Mongol/Yuan empire (cf. n. 3 above and the appęndix to this paper), it is important to take note of Buddhism in the Čaγataid Qanate as recorded in the Sino-Uyγur Inscription of 1326 commemorating the restoration of the Temple of Manjuśri by Nom-taš. Cf. Geng Shimin and Zhang Baoxi, "Yuan huihuwen 'zhong xiu wen shu si bei,' chu shi," *Kaogu xuebao* 2, 1986, pp. 253-264. Concerning elements of Buddhism in the Qipčaq Qanate, see n. 127 below.

7 See Ét. Quartremère, *Mongols de la Perse*, Paris 1836, p. 401.

8 Spuler, The Muslim World, A Historical Survey, Part II/The Mongol Period, Leiden 1960, p. 26.

9 David Morgan, *Medieval Persia 1040-1797*, London 1988, p. 65; also see Morgan, *The Mongols*, New York 1987, pp. 158 and 163.

> and in the meantime Buddhism enjoyed a brief period of official favor. Hűlegű is said to have inclined towards it, though the circumstances of his funeral[10] perhaps suggest that this did not go very deep. Under his successors, however, Buddhism was taken more seriously, especially by Arghun. The preferred form of that faith, as in Mongol China, was a variety of the Lamaistic Buddhism of Tibet, in which magical practices dear to the hearts of the Mongols took a prominent part. This was a kind of Buddhism that was quite easily reconciled with the Mongols' ancestral Shamanism, which there is little reason to suppose was necessarily displaced by the Buddhism of the court. ... Despite residual Shamanism, the favor shown Nestorianism and other varieties (e.g. the Jacobite) of Christianity, and the Īlkhāns' dabbling with Buddhism, it was the indigenous religion, Islam, that the Mongols of the Ilkhanate ultimately adopted.

Buddhism, for the reasons advanced by Morgan, did not extend to such an unwilling part of the Mongol empire as the population of Islamic Persia. And though differences in emphasis may be due to Morgan's access to more recent interpretations of Il-Qanid Buddhism, his and Spuler's explanations do not supply specific information on the religious complexities and personalities that inspired Hűlegű and his successors to devote themselves to the faith and its rituals. The motivation of the Il-Qans in supporting the monastic community and the reasons for establishing temples and involving themselves in cult practices, as I intend to demonstrate, represent the convictions of reverent believers rather than those of dilettantish adherents of the faith who at heart remained preoccupied with shamanism.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that from a Buddhist perspective the Mongols' devotion to their own traditions – especially shamanism – would not be an impediment to being regarded as a religiously observant member of the faith. In this regard, it is worth noting Buddhism's effectiveness not only for confronting other world religions, but also for condoning local spiritual traditions, diverse apotropaic practices, and devotion to the gods of particular geographical and culturally plural areas. An acknowledged authority on Indian Buddhism, the Belgian Roman Catholic priest, Father Étienne Lamotte has admirably expressed how Buddhism dealt with these matters:[11]

> Adherence to the Buddhist faith in no way compels the adept to reject his ancestral beliefs or repudiate the religious practices customarily performed

10 Hűlegű's burial was an occasion on which human victims are reported to have been interred with him. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 354.

11 Étienne LaMotte, *History of Indian Buddhism, From the Origins to the Śaka Era*, Louvain-la-neuve 1988, p. 68.

> in his circle. By means of those compromises of which India supplies so many examples, each person is allowed to venerate, in addition to the Three Jewels [i.e., the Buddha, the Dharma, and the community of monks], the deities of his own region, caste or choice and to worship them in the appropriate way.

If we apply Father Lamotte's observation about Indian religions to the traditional beliefs and cults of the Mongols, there is no reason to think that because the Činggisids and their followers participated in ancestor worship and veneration of shamanist spirits that they would be barred from the community of Buddhist devotees. The formulaic expression of the Three Jewels (also known as the Three Objects of Veneration or Three Refuges), as Lamotte indicates, represents the reliance of the faithful on the Buddha, the Dharma comprising the Buddha's teachings, and the order of monks, and, in effect, serves as a confession of laypeople's faith.[12] Granting that, if it can be shown that the Il-Qan Hűlegű and his descendants actively revered the Three Jewels, it then can be contended that by means of such acts of veneration, he and his successors formally professed their Buddhist convictions. To that end, if we are to judge the depth of faith and devout obeisance, it is best to base our conclusions in so far as is possible on intrinsic Buddhist tenets and not the standards of unbelievers, however unbiased and judicious they may be.

In other words, when Hűlegű's religious conduct and that of his kinsmen unmistakably began to respond to Buddhist teachings, such a transformation can best be determined on the basis of the Buddhist sources, namely, religious chronicles and various donative epigraphs composed by aristocratic, learned members of the monastically educated elite. The two most important literary sources for present purposes are, first of all, the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* (completed ca. 1341-1344) by Nien-ch'ang concerning Hűlegű's affinity with Buddhism and, secondly, the *Pien-wei-lu* (completed 1291) of Hsiang-mai regarding contemporary affirmations of faith by other Činggisids.[13]

My basic premise in exploring Il-Qanid Buddhism is that its adherents, namely Hűlegű and three generations of his descendants who followed him on the throne, together with the monks at the sacred sites and *vihāras* they patronized, formed an organized confession, united by common institutions, beliefs and practices, that they shared with other far-flung Buddhist communities of the Mongol Empire. For purposes of discussion, I have organized my exposition around Hűlegű's sponsor-

12 Luis O. Gómez, "Buddhism in India," *Buddhism and Asian History*, edited by Joseph M. Kitagawa and Mark D. Cummings, London 1989, 51-104, p. 55.

13 For some brief remarks regarding these two works, see Herbert Franke, "Some Aspects of Chinese Private Historiography in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *Historians of China and Japan*, edited by W.G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank, London 1961, 115-134, pp. 130-132.

ship of Buddhist activities prior to his departure for the west, following related activities throughout his reign as Il-Qan, and pursuing similar devotions – at least so far as the sources permit – as they relate to successive Il-Qans, extending to the dissolution of Buddhism as the result of Ghazan's renunciation of the faith in 1295. By establishing the basic facts of Il-Qanid Buddhism, documenting its development, and setting it within its devotional and communal framework, we will be able to verify that the religious convictions of the Il-Qans were consistent with the fabric of Buddhist culture and civilization. The end result I hope will contribute to a clearer understanding of Il-Qanid Buddhism and provide data for an eventual comparison of the eastern and western branches of medieval Mongolian Buddhism.

II. Genesis: Hűlegű's Early Contacts with Buddhism and Its Teachings

As best as can be told from the literary sources, it appears that Hűlegű moved slowly in the first steps he took toward observing the rules and morality of the Buddhist faith. That he entered into direct contact with the order of monks and its exegesis of the Dharma is confirmed by the epigraphical record that by Buddhist standards unambiguously ascribe to him an interest in hearing the teachings originally expounded by the Buddha. A somewhat defaced dedicative inscription of 1255 provides evidence of Hűlegű's presence at a religious service conducted by the Ch'an monk, Hai-yün (1202-1257). The Chinese stele inscription describes Hai-yün as the Great Meditation Master (*...Hai-yün Ta shan-shih...*) of Yen-ching's Ta-Ch'ing shou Temple of the Great Mongol Nation (*Ta Meng-ku Kuo Yen-ching Ta-Ch'ing shou ssu...*)." The stele commemorates the career of Hai-yün, whom Činggis Qan had granted tax-exempt status (*darqan*) in 1219 and whom Ögödei Qaγan appointed to lead the order of Ch'an monks in North China with the title "Grand Meditation Preceptor of the States of Yen and Chao (*Yen-Chao kuo Ta Ch'an shih*).[14] A damaged portion of the inscription identifies Hűlegű and his half-brother

14 *Ch'en Yüan hsien-sheng chin nien-nien shih-hsüeh lun-chi*, Hong Kong 1971, p. 24. Y[ün] H[ua] Jan has written the most accessible account of Hai-yün's life and times. See his essay, "Hai-yün (1203-1257)," *In the Service of the Khan, Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol Period*, edited by Igor de Rachewiltz, Hok-lam Chan, Hsiao Ch'i-ching and Peter W. Geier, Wiesbaden 1993, pp. 224-242. An overview of Ch'an Buddhism and its significance has been discussed by Kenneth Ch'en. In his opinion, Ch'an "appealed more to the practical tendency in Chinese thought. It did not antagonize Confucian thought, and it bore a close affinity with Taoism in its philosophical ramifications. See *Buddhism in China*, Princeton 1963, pp. 350-361.

It should also be noted that a review of the western Asian sources reveals some striking details concerning early Mongol Buddhism. For example, a Syriac source of 1286, reports instances regarding Činggis-Qan's patronage of Buddhism that resonate with Ti-

Mŏge in attendance at the Ta-Ch'ing shou Temple and the result of having heard Hai-yün deliver a sermon:[15]

> ...Mŏge (Mou-k'o)[16] and Hŭlegŭ (Hsŭ-lieh-wei), the two princes having heard the [exegesis of the] preceptor, started the reconstruction of the [Ta] Ch'ing-shou [Temple], and by their efficacy, vast wealth was provided [for its renovation]...

beto-Mongol historiography and literary materials of the seventeenth century and later. According to Bar Hebraeus, an acquaintance of Il-Qanid princes and princesses, Činggis-Qan, having learned of the wisdom of the Buddhist monks, sent to China to request monks whom he wished to have debate with the shamans at court. The Buddhist party having triumphed because of their doctrine (*nom*), "the rank of priests increased among the Mongols and they were commanded to fashion images, and to cast copies of them as [the priests] did in their own country, and to offer to the full sacrifices and libations according to their custom." With respect to the details of this account, probably supplied by Bar Hebraeus' elite Mongol informants, it is possible to interpret Činggis-Qan's policies as favoring conditions that first enabled the monks to organize themselves as a community in a Mongol setting and proceed to venerate the Buddha. See Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj...commonly known as Bar Hebraeus*, translated by E.A. Wallis Budge, London, 1952, v. 1, p.355-56. Regarding the critical value of *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj* as a historical source, see J.B. Segal, "Syriac Chronicles as Source Material for the History of Islamic People, *Historians of the Middle East*, edited by Bernard Lewis and P.M. Holt, London 1962, 246-258, especially pp. 256-257. With respect to Tibeto-Mongol historiography concerning Činggis-Qan as a Buddhist-style sovereign, see Herbert Franke, *From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God: The Legitimation of the Yüan Dynasty*, Munich 1978, pp., pp. 54-71.

15 *Ch'en Yüan hsien-sheng chin nien-nien shih-hsüeh lun-chi*, p.27. This is not the earliest evidence pertaining to Hŭlegŭ. An epigraphical reference to his activities is found in the epitaph (*shen-tao-pei*) commemorating the life and career of Po-te-na, the steward of Il-Qanid extraterritorial holdings in China. An inscription by Ch'eng Chü-fu records that in 1238, Hŭlegŭ "led reinforcements to garrison the northern regions (*shuo-fang*)." The reasons for this assignment, however, are left unexplained. For the text of the stele inscription, see Ch'eng Chü-fu, *Ch'eng hsüeh-lou wen-chi*, Taipei 1970, ch. 18, 1a-3a, p. 1b. For additional data regarding Hŭlegŭ's extraterritorial domains, see n. 106 below.

16 According to Rashīd al Dīn, Mŏge, was Hŭlegŭ's half brother and the eighth son of Tolui. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan, Translated from the Persian of Rashīd al Dīn*, New York 1971, pp. 159 and 162.

Hai-yün was a conscientious and dutiful administrator and a preacher whose sermons evidently drew an influential audience.[17] Review of the inscription reveals that the excerpt referring to Mŏge and Hŭlegŭ occupies a space between two illegible sections of the text that are relevant to its chronological framework; the first section testifies to Hai-yün's Bodhisattva ordination of Prince Qubilai in 1242, while the second refers to Möngke's accession as Qayan in 1251.[18] What is of significance about the dates is that they allow us to place Hŭlegŭ at the Ta-Ch'ing shou Temple between the years 1242 and 1251, a time prior to the departure of his military expedition to the west in 1253. Judging by the inscription's internal evidence, in subsidizing the temple's restoration, Mŏge and Hŭlegŭ openly supported the cultic center of Ch'an Buddhism, and thereby made it possible for Hai-yün and the order of monks to advance their spiritual goals.

This incident apparently had no immediate other consequences for Hai-yün who continued in office with his powers unaffected. However, the inscription is a helpful indication that Hŭlegŭ manifested Buddhist propensities as a result of listening to Hai-yün preach. A further point to note is that the subsidy of the two princes recorded by the inscription, when compared with another nearly contemporaneous Buddhist epigraph of the Mongol period, points to the fact that their generosity sowed roots of spiritual merit for them, the result of which could be transferred for other religious purposes.[19] Without any question, gifts given to the monastic community, or any transfer of wealth or property to which Buddhist literary and epigraphical sources often refer, represent an act of lay devotion common to all schools of Buddhism.[20] For all that, insofar as the inscription at the Ta-Ch'ing shou

17 Jan Yün-hua, "Chinese Buddhism in Ta-tu: The New Situation and New Problems," *Yuan thought: Chinese thought and religion under the Mongols*, edited by Hok-lam Chan and William Theodore de Bary, New York 1982, 375-417, p. 389.

18 Concerning Qubilai's ordination, see *Ch'en Yüan hsien-sheng chin nien-nien shih-hsüeh lun-chi*, p.27, and Paul Demiéville, "La Situation religieuse en Chine au temps de Marco Polo," Demiéville, *Choix d'études sinolgiques (1921-1970)*, edited by Yves Hervouet, Leiden 1973, 193-236, p, 203.

19 Bars Tŏge, an imperial son-in-law, who patronized the temple commemorated by the Sino-Mongol inscription of 1257, prayed for the merit (*puṇya*) of his act to "reach unto the many, many generations through the descendants of descendants!" Nicholas Poppe, "Notes on the Monument in Honor of Mönke Khan, I. The Mongolian Inscription," *CAJ* 6, 1961, 14-23. p. 18. Regarding the concept of merit (*puṇya*), see Jean Filliozat, "Sur las domaine sémantique de *Puṇya*," *Indianisme et Bouddhisme, Mélanges offerts à Mgr Étienne Lamotte*, Louvain 1980, pp. 101-116.

20 Schopen, "Sukhāvatī as a Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature, *Indo-Iranian Journal* (hereafter *IIJ*) 19, 1977, 177-210, pp. 181-182. Not only was the sponsoring of a temple or holy shrine a generous deed, but such a gift actually constituted a devotional act as well. For example, according to the *Byang chub kyi snying po'i*

Temple is concerned, whatever the religious intentions of Mŏge and Hŭlegŭ's might have been, and no matter what their comprehension of the outcome of their act, the clergy gratefully acknowledged their generosity and commemorated it epigraphically as an indication of vital Činggisid support.

If this donation was all we had to go by in trying to learn with certainty Hŭlegŭ's religious behavior, it would be a slender thread from which to weave together the whole cloth of his Buddhist disposition. However, it happens that his early association with Hai-yün did not end his involvement with the Ch'an community and that Hŭlegŭ's Buddhist sensibility continued to evolve. Under the impetus for renewed conquest that began with Mŏngke's accession as qaγan in 1251, Hŭlegŭ was ordered to project Mongol power further into Western Asia.[21] It was during the course of events that led to the establishment of his domain that he appealed to Hai-yün for spiritual guidance. Nien-ch'ang's Buddhist chronicle, the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, preserves pertinent information concerning Hŭlegŭ, then in the midst of the bitterly fought campaign against the Ismā'īlīs, as seeking to contact Hai-yün:[22]

rgyan 'bum gyi gzungs, the Tibetan version of the *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa*, worship of a sacred monument (S. *caitya*) involved the following: "If some monk or nun or lay man or woman, or some other son or daughter of good family, after writing this Dhāraṇī [a mnemonical apotropaic formula to facilitate the study of the Dharma] and making a *caitya*, were to put this Dhāraṇī into that *caitya*, although that person has made (only) one *caitya*, he would (in effect) have made a hundred thousand. He might also do worship [of the *caitya*] with heavenly flowers and perfumes and garlands, unguents, aromatic powders, cloths, umbrellas, flags and banners, but this is not the worshipping of only the *caitya*: the Jewel of the Buddha, the Jewel of the Dharma, and the Jewel of the Community would also (in effect) be worshipped with those articles of worship." In other words, the making of a sacred shrine and the honor paid to it was tantamount to worship of the Three Jewels. See Schopen, The *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa* and *Vimaloṣṇīṣa Dhāraṇīs* in Indian Inscriptions, *Weiner zeitschrift für die indische Philosophie* 29, 1985, 119-149, pp. 133-134.

21 The Mongol/Yuan dynastic history, the *Yuan-shih* (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chu, 1976, hereafter *YS*), ch. 3/47 records that in the summer, the sixth lunar month of 1253, there was a command that "Imperial Prince Hŭlegŭ, Uriyangqatai and others lead the army to attack the Caliph of the western region, Baghdad, and other nations." Regarding, Hŭlegŭ's line of march in 1253 and the flanking movement of one of his commanders, see below, n. 54.

22 Nien-ch'ang, *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, Taishō shinshū daizōkyo, Tokyo 1924-1932, v. 49, no. 2036, 704c. Hŭlegŭ's campaign against the Ismā'īlīs is amply documented by Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines*, Cambridge 1990, pp. 423-428

> [In the first month of summer of the *ping-ch'en* year (1256),] Grand Prince *Hűlegű (Hsü-wei-lieh Ta-wang)[23] sent the Mongols (*Meng-ku*) an immense number of government dispatches (*hsüan-ch'a*[24]), and a golden staff and a gold threaded [monks] cassock (*chia-sha*), together with a princely edict (*ling-chih*[25]). [In it] with complements to the preceptor [Hai-yün], [Hűlegű] requested discourses on the Dharma (*Fa-yü*).[26]

It is unknown whether Hai-yün (who died 19 May 1257) had the discourses on the Dharma conveyed to Hűlegű, or if Fu-yü,[27] the preceptor's successor as head of the Ch'an sect, saw to it that the religious discourses reached the prince. Much of the year was taken up with preparations for the Mongol onslaught against the Ismā'īlīs mountain top citadels; Hűlegű's forces had crossed the Oxus in January 1256 to spend the rest of the winter at the pastures of Shafūrqān, west of Balkh. That spring, Mongol columns converged on the Ismā'īlīs strongholds in Rūdbār and in December of 1256 demolished the fortress of Alamūt.[28] In this context, it seems fair to say that Hűlegű's interest in the Dharma was not motivated by opportunism. Whereas his overture to Hai-yün in an East Asian Buddhist context might be interpreted as a bid to appear more credible to Ch'an monks and laymen of the realm,[29]

23 Y[ün] H[ua] Jan, "Hai-yün (1203-1257)."p, 239, identifes Hsü-wei-lieh as Prince Širegi, a son of Möngke. But the evidence that the excerpt refers to Širegi seems unsustainable on both historical and linguistic grounds. In 1256 or later, Širegi was not known to have any interest in Buddhism. Furthermore, as regards the reading of the compound Hsü-wei-lieh, it is not lsited in any of the indices of the *Yuan-shih* under the heading of the character Hsü. See inter alia, *Genshi goi shūsei*, Kyoto 1961-1963, 3 vols., v. 1, p. 730; *Combined Indices to Thirty Collections of Liao, Chin, and Yuan Biographies*, Peiping 1940, p. 33; de Rachewiltz and May Wang, *Index to Biographical Material in Chin and Yüan Literary Works*, Canberra 1972. Accordingly, I have interpreted the last two characters wei-lieh of the compound as having been transposed, restored them to be read as lieh-wei for Hsü-lich-wei, and reconstructed the name as Hűlegű.

24 Tetsuji Morohashi, *Daikanwajiten*, 13 vols., Tokyo 1955-1960, vol. 4/996c lists the compound *hsüan-ch'a* as meaning "to give notice by government orders."

25 For the meaning of the compound *ling-chih* as "princely edict,"see Francis W. Cleaves, "The *Lingjî* of Aruy," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* (hereafter *HJAS*) 25, 1964-1965, 31-79, p. 67, n. 66.

26 With respect to the compound Ch. *Fa-yü*, lit. "Dharma-words, religious discourses," see William Edward Soothill and Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms with Sanskrit and English Equivalents and a Sanskrit-Pali Index*, Delhi 1977, p. 273.

27 On Fu-yü, see Jan "Chinese Buddhism in Ta-tu," p. 391.

28 Daftary, *Ismā'īlīs*, pp. 423-428.

29 Official favor for Buddhism, especially during the reign of Qubilai (1260-1294), resulted in special privileges and tax exemptions for the clergy, the construction of temples and

the future Il-Qan had no need to demonstrate his Buddhist leanings to the Ismā'īlīs, a major Shī'ī population the Mongols sought to extirpate. Consequently, it should be underscored that other than for purposes of furthering his own spirituality and religious understanding and that of his immediate circle, there is no conceivable reason why in 1256 Hűlegű would have sought religious instruction from Hai-yün.

Admittedly, the Chinese donative inscription and the Buddhist narrative cited so far offer only glimpses of Hűlegű's interest in the Dharma and the order of monks. However, his involvement with the Grand Meditation Preceptor Hai-yün clearly was a milestone on the path to the full embrace of Buddhism. His patronage in the restoration of the Ta-Ch'ing shou Temple and the request for discourses on the faith suffice to indicate that Buddhism had inspired Hűlegű's charitable impulses and the desire for religious instruction. That his spiritual concerns did not occur in a vacuum cannot be doubted, since other Činggisid princes had begun to regard Buddhism in universalist terms.

For at least a generation, beginning in the reign of Ögődei Qaγan (r. 1229-1241), the Mongol elites involved themselves with more and more enthusiasm in Buddhist practices; in return for considerable merit-making activity by the Činggisid ruling house the order of monks held religious observances in support of the realm.[30] This point can be developed further with additional insights provided by the Ch'an abbot, Hsiang-mai, from his *Pien-wei-lu* that demonstrate Hűlegű's growing enthusiasm for Buddhism was consistent with the prevailing standards of religious and cultural transformation then underway in Mongol imperial circles. In the opinion of Hsiang-mai, the leading figures of the dynasty were united in their efforts to protect and promote Buddhist beliefs and practices:[31]

monasteries, and "helped ensure Buddhist support for Khubilai's policies." Morris Rossabi, "The reign of Khubilai khan," *The Cambridge History of China, vol. 6, Alien Regimes and Border States 907-1368*, edited by Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, Cambridge 1994, 414-489, p. 462.

30 Concerning the subsidies provided by members of the Mongol ruling house for Buddhist observances during the 1240s, see the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, *ibid.* 704c. See n. 50 below for additional comments. With respect to the evidence of works of merit-making by members of the Mongol elite specifically in regard to temple patronage, as preserved in the Mongolian and Chinese versions of the stele inscription of 1257, see Poppe, "Notes on the Monument in Honor of Mönke Khan," p. 18. For the Chinese inscription, see the translation by Kun Chang and Leon Hurvitz, pp. 19-23.

31 Hsiang-mai, *Pien-wei-lu*, Taishō shinshū daizōkyo, Tokyo 1924-1932, v. 52, no. 2116, 774c.

> From the advent of the Great Yuan, the throne has cherished the doctrines of [Buddhist] wisdom (*fa-men*[32]). Činggis-Qan (*T'ai-tsu*) therefore intelligently decreed that the prime minister (*shou-pan*) [Muqali] extensively protect [Buddhists] in this circuit (*tao*). Ögödei Qayan (*T'ai-tsung*) then examined the *sūtras* and built a temple[33] for carving [the wood blocks] and repairing the canonical *sūtras* (*tsang-ching*). Güyüg Qayan (*Ku-yü Han*) consequently commanded that his retinue of Buddhist priests regularly recite the *sūtras* of the Buddha. Möngke Qayan (*Meng-ko Huang-ti*) accordingly contributed to [the translation of] the Buddhist priests' *śāstras* and *sūtras* (*shu-ching*) and magnanimously built reliquaries (*stūpas*).[34]

If we believe Hsiang-mai, and I see no reason why we should not, the efforts of the founding sovereigns of the Mongol empire provided sponsorship of one kind or another that made worship possible for the Buddhist community, and by the standards of the Buddhist faith had constituted merit-making acts. In sum and substance, Hsiang-mai's comments indicate the construction of a temple and reliquaries, the translation and preservation of *śāstras* and *sūtras* (*shu-ching*), and their recitation brought Buddhist monks into the religious activities of the court. This record of pious largesse as described in the *Pien-wei-lu*, a work preserved in Chinese Buddhist canon, leaves no doubt that the ordained clergy regarded the partiality of the founding sovereigns of the Mongol empire (whatever the personal religious beliefs of the individual Činggisids may have been) with sufficient gratitude so as to commemorate their deeds in holy writ. Given the growing contacts between the elites of state and faith, shortly after the middle of the thirteenth century Buddhism clearly began to have a bearing on the views of the leading figure of the Činggisid dispensation. Hsiang-mai, a possible eye-witness to the ongoing Buddhist-Taoist wrangle that took place at the debate of 1256, furnishes critical support for the assertion that as Hülegü went about projecting Mongol power against the Ismā'īlīs, the Činggisid elite regarded Buddhism as relevant to its needs.[35] Möngke on the occasion of the

32 The compound Ch. *fa-men* stands for S. *Dharmaparyāya*. It is defined as meaning the "doctrines, or wisdom of Buddha regarded as the door to enlightenment." Soothill and Hodous, *Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 273.

33 Epigraphical evidence confirms the temple subsidized by Ögödei and further supported by Möngke was part of the construction program of sacred architecture at the Mongol capital of Qara Qorum. For additional remarks, also see below nn. 50 and 94-95.

34 Hsiang-mai's account of Möngke's building program fits the more ample description of the building of the religious complex at Qara Qorum that the emperor sponsored on behalf of Buddhism recorded in the Sino-Mongol inscription of 1346. Cf. n. 95 below.

35 Regarding the substance of the various Buddhist-Taoist controversies, see Joseph Thiel, "Der Streit der Buddhisten und Taoisten zur Mongolenzeit," *Monumenta Serica* 20, 1961, pp. 1-81.

debate of 29 September 1256 publicly declared that he placed his confidence in Buddhism as a potent force for promoting the interests of the state and praised the superiority of the Dharma over other beliefs, when he made the following declaration:[36]

> Our nation relies on applying the powerful radiance of Buddhism to enlarge the great undertaking of the sovereign (*hung-chi*[37]). The holy commandments (*sheng-chih*) of the Buddha spread instinctive (lit. involuntary) obedience and the Taoist monks see that I, the emperor, and the people (*Huang-ti jen-chiq*), follow the Buddhist Dharma...Now, the Taoist monks say Taoism is the most eminent; the scholars say Confucianism is preeminent; the Christian (*Tieh-hsieh*)[38] people revere the Messiah (*Mi-shih-ho*) and speak of attaining life in Heaven; and the [Muslim] mullah (*Dašman*)[39] crys out to the void to thank God for bestowing favors. Giving careful consideration to all the bases [of their beliefs], none compare with Buddhism." The Emperor, at that moment, raised his hand to illustrate it to them (i.e., those gathered at the assembly), and said: "Speaking figuratively, as the five fingers extend from the palm, Buddhism resembles the palm and the others resemble the fingers."

Even the most stringent interpreter of the opening lines of Möngke's statement would fail to claim that it is devoid of Buddhist content and thus may be taken to state his preference and commitment to Buddhism for reasons of state. Especially prescient in this regard was his willingness to identify his sovereignty with Buddhist beliefs, a principle embraced in all respects by Qubilai and, as shall be demonstrated, by Hülegü as well. Together with the information of the Buddhist narrative sources and donative inscriptions, Möngke's declaration of principle directs attention to the emergence of a distinctive pattern of thought that – in addition to merit-making behavior, an embrace of Buddhist architecture and iconography, a growing interest in oral and textual teachings, and devotion to the wide array of ritual acts – reveals an intensification of the court's pro-Buddhist sentiments.

36 Hsiang-mai, *Pien-wei-lu*, 770 c.

37 The compound *hung-chi* is defined in the *Daikanwajiten*, vol. 6/1107c as "the work of emperors and kings: the great undertaking – the duties of a king."

38 On the compound *tieh-hsieh* (<*te[r]za), i.e., *terza* and its equivalence with *tarsā*, supposedly a contemptuous Persian word applied to Christians, see A.C. Moule, *Christians in China before the year 1550*, New York 1977, p. 178, n. 29.

39 For the term *dašman* < Persian *dānišmand* "Muslim clergy," see Poppe, *The Mongolian Monuments in HP'ags-pa Script*, Wiebasen 1957, second edition translated and edited by John R. Krueger, p. 83.

That said, there are in the official Sino-Mongol sources references to individual monastics of requisite religious stature, with the means and opportunity, who because of his favorable circumstances, was able to influence the policy of the ruling house with respect to Buddhism. A biographical source, an account of the life of the Kashmiri notable, *Tege, preserved in the Mongol/Yuan dynastic history (*Yuan-shih*), provides corroborative evidence regarding the official recognition his kinsmen, leading Kashmiri Buddhists, had received from the Činggisids. The initial portion of Tege's biography, a significant albeit indirect source on internal events in contemporary Kashmir, relates how his father and uncle, along with a considerable number of followers, sought refuge with the Mongols:[40]

> *Tege (T'ien-ko),[41] having the surname of the *Ganai (*Chia-nai*) clan was a Kashmiri (*Chia-she-mi-erh*). Kashmir is the nation of *Deccan (*Chu-kan*)[42] of the Western Regions (*Hsi-yü*).[43] His father *Otoči (Wo-t'o-

40 *YS* 125/3074-3075.

41 The name Tege is derived from the Turkic root *täg-*. Paul Pelliot and Louis Hambis, *Histoire des campagnes des Gengis Khan, Cheng-wou ts'in-tcheng lou*, Leiden 1951, p. 91; Suzanne Kakuk, "Quelques catégories de noms de personne turcs," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* (hereafter *AOASH*) 28, 1974, 1-35, p. 10.

42 The compound *chu-kan* phonetically may be reconstructed as t'ịuk-,kân > Deccan on the basis of the ancient Chinese forms of Bernhard Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*, Taipei 1973; Ancient Chinese t'ịuk > *chu*, p. 354, no. 1249, and Ancient Chinese ,g'ịän > *kan*, p. 110, no 299. For Deccan (< S. *dakṣīṇa*) "situated to the south, turned or directed southward," see Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, New Delhi 1986, p. 465. For *dakṣīṇa* as a reference to Deccan, See Soothill and Hodous, Chinee Buddhist Terms, p. 414. As a reference to Kashmir, the form *dakṣīṇa* entered the Kashmiri language as *dachin*. According to Alexander Cunningham, it denotes the "north" and refers to the northern half of the valley of Kashmir "below the junction of the Sindh River with the Behat." There is also on the Lidar River "the subdivision of Dachinapâra on the north of the stream." See Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India, I. The Buddhist Period, including the Campaigns of Alexander, and the Travels of Hwen-Thsang*, Delhi n.d., p. 80. Also note *dachinpōr* m(asculine) N(ame) of a *pargana* of Kashmīr situated on the right bank of the River Lĕdärä (Ledar), the Sanskrit *Dakṣiṇpāra* "the right bank;"it is famous for horses," see, George Grierson, *A Dictionary of the Kāshmīrī Language*, Calcutta 1932, p186.

43 During the Yuan period, according to Ch'i-ch'ing Hsiao, the term Hsi-yü was applied to the "vast areas from the Tangyud and Uiyur through the three Mongolian *ulus* to eastern Europe." Hsiao, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty*, Cambridge 1978, p. 223, n. 116.

ch'ih)[44] and his uncle Na-mo[45] had both studied with the Buddhists. Otoči's elder and younger brothers had said to one another: "The course of events is troubled [due to which] our nation is about to perish. In the northeast there is the vigor of a son of heaven; would it not be better to go to submit to him." Consequently, together they went to have an audience. Ögödei Qaγan (T'ai-tsung) courteously welcomed them. Güyüg Qaγan (the *Ting-tsung* [Emperor]) treated Na-mo as his preceptor and gave Otoči a golden tablet (*chin-fu*)[46] to wear, commissioning him to look into the illnesses of the people.[47] Möngke Qaγan (the *Hsien-tsung* [Emperor]) honored Na-mo as National Preceptor (*Kuo-shih*) and granted him a jade seal to direct the

44 The form *Otoči (Wǫ-t'o-ch'ih) represents the Turkic title *otači* "physician" *Drevnetjurskij slovar'* (hereafter *DTS*), Leningrad 1966, p. 373. The word had passed into Mongol as both *otači* and *otoči* id. Ferdinand D. Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary*, Berkeley 1960, p. 625.

45 Soothill and Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p.298, regard the compound *na-mo* as a loan word from Sanskrit *nama* defining it as "to submit oneself to, make obeisance, to pay homage to, an expression of submission to command, complete commitment, reverence, devotion, trust for salvation;" cf. Sanskrit *nama* "homage, veneration," Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 528. The vocable *na-mo* also has passed into Turkic with the meaning "worship, kneel in worship, respect," see *DTS* 355.

46 The Military Monograph of the *Yuan-shih*, ch. 98 records that commanders of one-thousand were entitled to wear golden tablets as symbols of their authority. Hsiao, *Military Establishment*, p. 73. Presumably, government officials who fulfilled non-military functions wore such tablets too. See also n. 48 below.

47 Regarding Buddhist medicine, at least that which was practiced in Tibet (and I presume by Buddhist-trained physicians in the Tibetan-influenced cultural areas of Kashmir), see Christopher I. Beckwith, "The Introduction of Greek Medicine into Tibet in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (hereafter *JAOS*), 99, 1979, 297-313. Concerning a principal connection of Kashmiri Buddhism with its Tibetan counterpart, note the long-lived career of Rin-chen bzang-po (958-1055). As a youth he was sent to Kashmir, where Buddhist masters "preserved both the speculative and logical tradition, and the practice of Tantra and ritual." Rin-chen bzang-po is esteemed in Tibetan tradition for building numerous temples and his translations of Buddhist scripture. Along with the learned Indian master Atiśa, who formerly had been a director of the University of Nalanda, *the* major center of contemporary Buddhist learning, Rin-chen bzang-po expanded the faith through western Tibet. Cf. Giuseppe Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, Berkeley 1980, p. 21. For the link between Kashmiri and Tibetan Buddhism during the early thirteenth century and its aftermath, see Leonard W.J. van der Kuip, "On the Lives of Śākyaśrībhadra (?-1225)," *JAOS* 114, 1994, 599-616. For additional sources concerning Kashmiri Buddhism, see n. 49 below.

[affairs of the] Buddhists of the empire. Otoči also had high authority and commanded the Ḳashmiri [unit of] Ten-thousand.[48] He memorialized the emperor, saying: "Kashmir is a small nation on the western frontier. It has not yet submitted. May I depart to issue it orders [to capitulate]." It was decreed that together with the palace attendants (*chin-shih*) he depart. The ruler of his nation did not obey [the order to submit], and in anger slew them. The emperor dispatched troops to put to death the ruler of the [Kashmiri] nation. In the first year of the *yuan-chen* period (1295), [Otoči] was enfeoffed as Duke of Tai-kuo and posthumously titled "faithful and perfect (*chung-sui*).

In the excerpt from Hsiang-mai's *Pien-wei-lu* and the biographical details of the Kashmiri Buddhists Otoči and Na-mo are contained further clues concerning the flowering of Buddhism in Mongol imperial circles.[49] Tege's biography suggests the two leading members of the émigré Kashmiri Buddhist community influenced imperial decision-makers in both secular and spiritual matters. For his part, Na-mo came to the attention of the Činggisids at the time the imperial house resolved to administer the Buddhist monastic community, but also requested that the clergy conduct public worship and devotional acts on behalf of the nation.[50] As a result of

48 There appears to be no further mention of the Kashmiri unit in the *Yuan-shih*. However, Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlát, in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* reports an attack in 1361 on the Barlas tribe by a Kashmiri regiment then in the service of the Moghul Qan. See E. Denison Ross, *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia*, London 1972, p. 19, n. 1. It is tempting to identify members of the Kashmiri contingent who served in Moghulistan during the fourteenth century as descendants of the Kashmiri unit of ten-thousand men who had served under the command of Otoči. However, the relationship of the two Kashmiri contingents cannot be established. Command of the Kashmiri *tümen* noted in the excerpt from Tege's biography would have entitled Otoči to possession of a golden tablet. But if the tablet in question was identical to the one granted him by Güyüg or a separate one conferred by Möngke is unclear. Regarding the different tablets issued various troop commanders, see Hsiao, *Military Establishment*, pp. 170-171, n. 27. Also cf. n. 46 above.

49 For the history of Buddhism in Kashmir and the spiritual and intellectual influence of Kashmiri Buddhist masters, see Jean Nadou, *Les bouddhistes Kaśmiriens au moyen age*, Paris 1968. A Kashmiri Buddhist epigraph at Vejebror, donated by the Ācārya Kamalaśriya in honor of Avalōkitēśvara, attests to contemporary support for Buddhism during the reign of King Rājadēva (r. 1213-1236). Provisionally, it appears as if his reign coincides with the approximate time Otoči and Na-mo arrived at Ögödei's court. For the text of the inscription, refer to B.K. Kaul Deambi, "Four Unedited Inscriptions from Kashmir, *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India* 8, 1981, 39-43, pp. 41-42.

50 Nien-ch'ang, in his *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, 704c summarizes the gradual development of relations of state and faith and of crown and clergy. In 1245, Ögödei's widow and regent

these new modes of administration and repeated exposures to Buddhist precepts, Güyüg viewed Na-mo as his preceptor and Möngke's promoted him to the office of National Preceptor (*Kuo-shih*), then the highest ecclesiastic rank of the empire, the incumbent of which had charge of Buddhist affairs throughout the empire. To be sure, Na-mo's ecclesiastic career largely reflects the primary concern of the Činggisids to control Buddhist institutions and regulate the activities of the monastic community. His advance to the position of National Preceptor principally was due to the indispensable qualification of his bureaucratic abilities, and because his gifts lay in ecclesiastic politics, not spirituality. Just as significant, or even more so, was

"Lu Huang-hou (=Töregene (r. 1241-1245)) decreed that [Hai-yün] conduct a national prayer for blessings at Mt. Wu-t'tai....In the *ting-wei* year (1246), when Güyüg Qayan (*Kuei-yu Huang-ti*) ascended the throne, an imperial proclamation commanded the preceptor to direct [the affairs of] the Buddhist monks and granted him 10,000 ounces of white gold. The preceptor organized a great assembly at Hao-t'ien Temple at Mt. Wu-t'ai to conduct national prayers for blessings. Prince Qarača[r] (*T'ai-tzu* Ho-lai-ch'a) [son of Ögödei and brother of Güyüg Qayan] invited the preceptor to enter Qara Qorum for a prolonged stay at T'ai-p'ing hsing-kuo chan Temple. In the *hsin-hai* year (1251) when Möngke Qayan (*Huang-ti*) ascended the throne, he issued orders graciously proclaiming his regard for him (i.e., Hai-yün) and received him with great kindness. He commanded that the preceptor again direct the affairs of the [Chinese] Buddhist monks of the empire, excusing them from taxes and exempting them from corvée, all according to the old system. In the first month of the *ping-ch'en* year (1256) there was an edict that [Hai-yün] organize an assembly at Hao-t'ien Temple..." This scenario has the partial support of the *Tabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* (completed 1260). Therein, Minhāj al-dīn Abū-'Umar 'Uthmān b. Sirāj al-dīn al-Jūzjānī relates that a "fraternity of recluses and devotees of the infidels of Chin, and idol-worshippers of Tingit (Tangut) and Ṭamghāj (North China), whom they style by the name of Tūniān [Tūnīs (=*Toyins*)], acquired ascendancy over Kyuk (Güyüg). That faction constantly used to study persecuting the Musalmāns, and were wont to promote means of afflicting the people of Islām continually, in order that, mayhap, they might entirely uproot them, extirpate them completely..." See H.G. Raverty's translation, *Tabaḳāt-i Nāṣirī: a general history of the Muhammadan Dynasties of Asia*, New Delhi 1970, 2 vols., v. 2, p. 1157.Additional (albeit indirect) corroboration that Tangut monks engaged themselves in religious activities devoted to members of the Mongol imperial house comes from the 1247 Tangut edition of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamarāja-sūtra.* Its preface preserves a prayer by Hui-chüeh, a monk of the Tangut Tz'u-en Temple, that the "present emperor (i.e., Güyüg) [enjoy] abundant virtue and augmented fortune, that the heir and imperial princes [enjoy] long life and absence of illness." See Ruth Dunnell, "The Hsia Origins of the Yüan Institution of Imperial Preceptor," *Asia Major* (hereafter *AM*) 5, 1992, pp. 85-111, p. 106.

the prevalence of Kashmiris preceptors at contemporary courts.[51] Additionally and more importantly, Na-mo's ascent as National Master, the dominant figure in Buddhist affairs at the Mongol capital and nominally throughout the empire, coincided with the surge in interest in Tantric Buddhsim and the growing acceptance of it among the members of the extended Činggisid ruling house.[52]

Gifted with persuasive personalities, the two Kashmiris plainly had an impact on Mongol policymakers. Otoči, for his part, by conveying the orders of capitulation to Kashmir and perhaps providing military intelligence as well, played a role in Činggisid strategy that brought Mongol armies to the mountainous regions west of Tibet, southwest of Sinkiang, and north of India to center on his homeland. Presumably, at the prodding of Otoči and (possibly Na-mo) Mongol policy towards Kashmir during the 1250s underwent a shift, comprising the use of power politics to affect a regime change in their homeland. For one thing, that meant, in so far as the grand strategy of Mongol territorial expansionism was concerned, the Buddhist Kashmiris benefited from access to the Činggisid elite and obtained Mongol support to make intervention in Kashmir a priority of Mongol foreign policy. When, as the *Yuan-shih* relates, the Kashmiri ruler refused to surrender to Mongol demands and had Otoči and the courtiers executed, Mőngke dispatched expeditionary forces to bring Kashmir to terms.[53] Given Otoči's posthumous enfeoffment as Duke of Tai-kuo, there is reason to believe that this official acknowledgement was in recognition of his ef-

51 Other leading polyglot monastics of the Kashmiri diaspora of the latter half of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries had achieved equally prominent positions. Tibetan tradition accords the eminent Kashmiri scholastic Śākyaśrībhadra as having transmitted monastic rules (*vinaya*) to four Tibetan communities and that he had acted as preceptor of the *dharmaraja* Stag tsha in 1213-1214. Jayānanda, another well respected Kashmiri monk and contemporary of Śākyaśrībhadra, served the Tangut/Hsi-hsia court as National Preceptor during the last decades of the twelfth century. See the two articles by Leonard W.J. van der Kuip. "On the Lives of the Śākyaśrībhadra," pp. 603 and 607. and "Jayānanda. A Twelfth Century *Guoshi* from Kashmir among the Tangut," *CAJ* 37, 1993, pp. 188-197. On contemporary Buddhist developments at the Tangut court, see Dunnell, "Hsia Origins of the Yuan Imperial Preceptor," 85-111.

52 Tibeto-Mongol traditional historiography generally credits Kőden Qan, the second son of Ögődei, as the first Mongol patron of Tibetan Buddhism. Kőden favored the Sa-skya-pa sect through its two principal hierarchs, the renowned scholar, Kun-dga'-rgyal-mts'an (1182-1251) and subsequently, his nephew, Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan (1235-1280). See L. Petech, "P'ags-pa (1235-1280)," *In the Service of the Khan*, pp. 646-654, But a more panoramic view of Mongol patronage turns up evidence of support for Tibetan Buddhism in the Čaγataid Qanate as recorded in the Sino-Uyγur Inscription of 1326 at the Temple of Manjuśri. See n. 6 above.

53 According to Chinese sources, that expeditionary force did not materialize until 1258. See n. 54.

forts to bring about political change in Kashmir and align it with the Mongol bloc of states. For another, it is not incidental that Mongol support for that aim received expression in a shift in the communal religious identity of the Činggisids. The significant contact that occurred between Kashmiri Buddhists and the Mongol establishment took place at a critical time that coincides with the dissolution of Buddhism in Kashmir, the emergence of diverse streams of the Dharma among the Činggisid elite, and the further expansion of its domination of Central and Southwestern Asia.[54]

54 Kashmir, experienced at least three Mongol invasions: the first led by Ukutu Noyan during the reign of Ögödei defeated the Hindu ruler, Rāmadēva (r. 1236-1251), the second onslaught led by Sali ooccurred under Möngke's orders and the third led by Kuo Kan at the behest of Hülegü. Rāmadēva's authority extended to Ledari (i.e., the Lidar River, the region of Dachinapâra where Na-mo and Otoči and their followers had originated, see n. 42 above). For the events of his reign, cf. Kahlana Pandita, *Kings of Káshmíra, being a translation of the Sanskrita Work Rájatarańgní*, translated by Jogesh Chunder Dutt, Delhi 1990, 3 vols., v. 3, p. 12.

Events appear more complicated when the Sino-Mongol sources are taken into account. According to the *YS* 122/3010-3011, in 1253, *Ambayai, a Mongol of the Baryud clan, "accompanied Imperial Prince Hülegü (*Tsung-wang* Hsü-lieh-wu) to attack the western barbarians of Mnga-ris (La-li Hsi-fan) [of Tibet], and the various tribes of Mt. Hsieh-chü, the Temple of T'ao-li, and Ho-hsi [the territory of the former Tangut/Hsi-hsia Empire], and completely subjugated them." Hülegü's advance across Western Tibet was part of a coordinated attack in which Prince Qubilai's invaded eastern Tibet and Yün-nan in 1253. It also should be mentioned that the *YS* 3/47 records an imperial command of 1253 directing the Mongol commanders, Tatartai, Sali and Turyai and others, to lead campaigns against the nations of the Sindh and Kashmir. This account of the invasion is partially supported by the evidence of Islamic sources, according to which Sali campaigned in India in 1253-1254. P. Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," *CAJ* 22, 1978, 186-243, pp. 240-241. As regards the contingents led by Hülegü, Ambayai and Sali, their proximity to one another in northwest India, western Tibet, and Kashmir roughly coincide chronologically with Otoči's mission to demand Kashmir's submission, and apparently were intended to support him militarily. Rashīd al-Dīn relates that the forces under the command of Salī in 1253 invaded India and Kashmir, after which he presented Hülegü with an undetermined number of captives acquired during the campaign. See Kazuhiko Shiraiwa, "Ïnjū in the *Jami' al Tavārīkh* of Rashīd al-Dīn," *AOASH* 42, 1988, 371-376, p. 372.

All in all, the outcome of this Mongol pincer movement indisputably had a significant impact on the transformation of the Kashmiri political landscape that culminated in the investiture of Lakshamadēva (r. 1273-1285) as *raja* of Kashmir and Mongol vassal. See Aziz Ahmad, "Conversions to Islam in the Valley of Kashmir," *CAJ* 23, 1979, 3-18, pp. 3-4; and cf. the entry by A. Guimbretière on Kashmir, in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*,

It was perhaps a consequence of the broadening of religious horizons brought about by the Kashmiri Buddhists and other important schools of the faith at Qara Qorum,[55] in addition to the practical worth of Na-mo in arbitrating difficulties between Buddhists and Taoists, that induced Hűlegű and others of his generation to include monastics among their retinues.[56] More to the point, bearing in mind,

v. 4, new edition, edited by E. van Donzel, B. Lewis, and Ch.Pellat, Leiden 1978, 706-711, see p. 708. Also cf. Jahn, "A Note on Kashmīr and the Mongols," *CAJ*, 2, 1956, 176-180. Several sources report the presence of Hűlegű's forces or that of his deputies not only in western Tibet, but also in the region close to Kashmir. See n. 106 below for additional remarks. A thirteenth century Tibetan source credits Hűlegű as the patron responsible for the construction of a *vihāra* (*gtsung-lag-khang*) west of Kashmir, where the traveler O-rgyan-pa Seng-ge dpal came upon a mixed population of Mongols and Indians. See Elliot Sperling, "Hűlegű and Tibet," *AOASH* 4, 1990, 145-157, p. 152. O-rgyan-pa Seng-ge dpal's encounter with these people suggests the presence of Qaraunas elements and the location of the *vihāra* as being in either Swat or Gilgit. The travels of O-rgyan-pa Seng-ge dpal, which took place in the late 1250s, are not incompatible with the presence of Hűlegű's forces in the region a few years earlier. For the date of O-rgyan-pa Seng-ge dpal's travels, see Luciano Petech, "The 'Bri-guń-pa Sect in Western Tibet and Ladakh," *Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Memorial Symposium held at Mátrafüred, Hungary 24-30 September 1976*, edited by Louis Ligeti, Budapest 1978, 313-325, p. 315, n. 9. The third invasion of Kashmir occurred in 1257/1258, when Hűlegű diverted the forces led by his field commander Kuo K'an, then engaged in operations against the Ismā'īlīs, and had him lead troops to Kashmir (*Ch'i-shih-mi*), where he defeated an otherwise unidentified Quli Sultan (Hu-li Suan-t'an). See *YS* 149/3524; for the equivalence of the orthography of *Ch'i-shih-mi* with Kashmir, see *YS* 149/3539, n. 14. It was this last engagement that seemingly avenged the death of Otoči and his retinue that also coincided with a further campaign of Sali Noyan in northwest India, perhaps in support of Kuo K'an. See Jackson, "Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," p. 240.

The relative chronology of the progress of Mongol arms in the campaigns of 1253 and 1257/1258 along the periphery and inside Kashmir, while they do not specify the military objectives, are striking in that they transpired with the mission of Otoči and its aftermath, culminating in a change of regimes and vassalage of Kashmir's ruling line to the Činggisids.

55 Qara Qorum, according to William of Rubruck, already was the site of "twelve idol temples belonging to different peoples" when he visited the Mongol capital in May 1254. Peter Jackson and David Morgan, *The Mission of William of Rubruck, His journey to the court of the Great Khan Mőngke 1253-1255*, London 1990, p. 221.

56 It is noteworthy that at this point, when events in Kashmir appear to have taken a turn that favored the return of the Kashmiri émigrés to their homeland, Na-mo despite his importance to the Mongol establishment and the Buddhist community, faded into obscurity after 1258. Following the Buddhist-Taoist debate of that year, no further references to

him occur in the historical and canonical sources. All entries referring to Na-mo in the Japanese index to the *Yuan*-shih, *Genshi goi shūsei*, v. 1, p. 1008, refer only to his biography in *YS*/125. His closest associate in that contentious encounter was the young Tibetan monk, i.e., Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan 'Phags-pa Lama. Interestingly enough, the debate marks a curious symmetry of eminent lines of Kashmiri and Tibetan Buddhists. It can be argued that the spiritual relationship of 'Phags-pa to the Kashmiri National Preceptor Na-mo is paralleld by an identical link of Sa-skya Pandita, Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan, to the most renowned Buddhist scholastic luminary of the age, the Kashmiri Śākyaśrībhadra. It was Śākyaśrībhadra who ordained Sa-skya Pandita as a monk in 1208 and whose spiritual lineage his Tibetan disciple then entered. See van der Kuip, "Śākyaśrībhadra," pp. 612-623. For his part, 'Phags-pa also was a member of the same lineage as a result of having taken his vows as a novice from Sa-skya Pandita. See L. Petech, "'P'ags-pa," *In the Service of the Khan,* 646-654, p. 647.

By way of background it is important to note that Śākyaśrībhadra, born in 1127 and ordained in 1149, was already 77 years old when he went to Tibet in 1204. He taught for ten years and in 1214 returned to Kashmir where he died in 1225. Additional information pertaining to the final phase of his activities in Kashmir is related by Gos lo-tsa-ba-gZon-nu dpal (1392-1481), *The Blue Annals*, translated by George N. Roerich, Delhi 1988 reprint, p. 1071: "Though the Doctrine had spread in Kāśmīra, the priests were few in number. [Śākyaśrībhadra] increased the number of priests, and established the right path of the method of the *Tantras* and *Sūtras*. The king [Rājadēva (r. 1213-1236)] who had become a heretic, was again established in the Doctine. [Śākyaśrībhadra] repaired ruined vihāras and images." For a list of religious teachings attributed to Śākyaśrībhadra, see *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, translated from Tibetan by Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya, and edited by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Delhi 1990 reprint, pp. 434-435. Given the fact that Śākyaśrībhadra was a highly active teacher in both Kashmir and Tibet, and, according to the *Yuan-shih*, Na-mo had received his Buddhist education in Kashmir in the early decades of the thirteenth century, there could be a significant spiritual continuity between the two monks of Kashmiri stock. This congruence of time and place suggests Na-mo may well have received his religious education and spiritual vows from Śākyaśrībhadra or another monk of the same lineage. If such a development did in fact occur by which both Na-mo and Sa-skya Pandita belonged to the same lineage, it implies that 'Phags-pa belonged to the same spiritual lineage. This, in turn, serves to explain why Na-mo chose 'Phags-pa as his associate in the Buddhist-Taoist debate of 1258. In any event, the absence of Na-mo from Buddhist activities under the auspices of the imperial establishment after 1258 raises several other intriguing possibilities. As Mongol forces entered Kashmir that same year (cf. n. 54 above), it may be assumed that elements of the Kashmiri *tümen*, along with Na-mo, accompanied them. Whatever the case may be concerning his whereabouts, it so happens that from this point in time one can track Buddhist clerics as members of Hülegü's retinue. And, as shall be determined, the Buddhist religious orders that established themselves in the Il-Qanid do-

Mŏngke Qayan's explicit statement that he valued the power of Buddhism for reasons of state, we see that Hŭlegŭ's quest for religious instruction had a great deal in common with the spiritual movement then underway in imperial circles. Hŭlegŭ's increasing interest in Buddhist thought went hand and glove with his own expansionist objectives as his troops brought the territorially dispersed Ismā'īlī state to the verge of collapse. It is clear that he had opened himself to new ideas and forms of religious life as he and his field commanders began to regroup in preparation for the advance towards the principal purpose of Mongol grand strategy in Southwest Asia: the subjugation of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate.[57] This objective they achieved with the surrender and sack of Baghdad and the execution of the Caliph, al-Musta'şim billāh, in February 1258.[58]

By 1260, Hŭlegŭ's empire, of which Persia formed the nucleus, essentially reached its greatest territorial extent. Upper Mesopotamia and the farthermost flank of the Euphrates valley marked its western frontier, while in the north his domain included the dependencies of Saljuq Asia Minor and Lesser Armenia. He and his descendants, having made inroads into the Caucasus, fought for decades for its control. However, it remained a flashpoint and a source of contention between the Il-Qans and the Qipčaq Qanate (later known as the Golden Horde). To the east, the territorial limits of his authority extended to the Amu Darya where the frontier with the Čayataid Empire in Central Asia remained unsettled.[59]

main were offshoots of Indian, Kashmiri, Tibetan, Uyyur and Chinese monastic communities that at one time or another were in proximity to where Mongol forces had once campaigned.

57 Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 346; Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, p. 43. Events in Kashmir during the early 1250s and Hŭlegŭ's apparent involvement in the campaign through Western Tibet and the territory of the former Tangut/Hsi-Hsia Empire (see n. 54 above) indicates a necessary revision is in order regarding the chronology of events surrounding the establishment of the Il-Qanid Empire. According to the standard accounts, Hŭlegŭ left his *ordu* in October 1253 and tarried at *Uluy Ev*, the residence of Cayatai's widow and regent, Orqina (r. 1252-1261). It was not until early summer of the following year that he advanced to the west. It is generally believed that his "leisurely pace [was] necessitated perhaps by the size and unwieldiness of his forces." Boyle, *ibid.*, p. 341. Hŭlegŭ's role in turning events in Kashmir to the advantage of the Mongols, I would argue, strategically caused him to delay his forward progress.

58 On the fall of Baghdad, see Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks, The Mamluk-Ilkhānid War, 1260-1281*, Cambridge 1996, p. 16; Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 348.

59 Regarding these geographical determinations and other remarks, cf. B. Spuler's article, "Il-Khans," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, v. 3, new edition, pp. 1120-1123; Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," pp. 350, 352, 373-374, and Jackson, "Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," pp. 219-220. Concerning conflicts between the Il-Qanids and the

III. The Founding of Labnasagut and the Advent of Il-Qanid Buddhism

Following the fateful events at Baghdad, Hűlegű withdrew to the north near Hamadān and then continued on to Azerbaijan to prepare his troops for the attack on the Ayyūbid states in Syria. The next year, Mongol forces made ready to depart from Azerbaijan for their advance toward the Syrian city of Aleppo as their objective. At this moment, prior to the onset of actual hostilities, as Hűlegű led his forces on campaign, he turned his attention to other matters seemingly unconnected to the logistical or tactical exigencies of the invasion. The event, as described by Rashīd al-Dīn, refers only to Hűlegű's halting at a particular site, without any mention of why and for what purposes he selected it:[60]

> On Friday, the twenty-second day of Ramazan, of the year 657 [=12 September 1259], under the constellation of Scorpio, he (=Hűlegű) headed for the Syrian land. When he arrived at Ala-tay, he praised that pasture and called it Labnasagut.

Rashīd al-Dīn's laconic statement concerning Labnasagut, while somewhat enigmatic, poses neither geographical nor chronological problems. Following the assault on Upper Mesopotamia, Hűlegű, and subsequently his descendants continued to travel to the summer pastures at Ala-tay as late as 1301, a fact noted by Rashīd al-Dīn and others.[61] For geopolitical and strategic reasons, Hűlegű chose to make Ala-tay the site of his summer headquarters in proximity to the defensible heights on which stood the ancient citadel of Garni. The Armenian historian Grigor of Akanc' knew that Hűlegű built his palace "on the plain of Daṙn, which place in their own language they called Ala-tay, which had previously been the place of the sum-

Čayataid Empire, during the early 1270s in the reign of Abaqa see Boyle, *op. cit.*, pp. 356-361.

60 *Ibid.* p. 349; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Sbornik letopisei* (*Collected Chronicles*), vol. 3, translated by A.K. Arends, Moscow-Leningrad 1946, p. 49.

61 Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," pp. 350-351 and 356; Honda Minobu, "Iru han no fuyu ei-chi, ka ei-chi" ("The Winter- and Summer-Quarters of the Il-Khans"), *Tōyōshi Kenkyū* 34, 1976, 81-108, English summary, pp. 3-4, see in particular pp. 84-88 and 89-90; and Charles Melville, "The Itineraries of Sultan Öljeitü, 1304-16," *Iran* 28, 1990, 55-70, pp. 57 and 68, n. 89; Ala-tay, north of Lake Van where Labnasagut was situated, remained the location for Mongol administrative purposes and nomadic pastoralism. Also cf. John Masson Smith, Jr., "Mongol Nomadism and Middle Eastern Geography: Qīshlāqs and Tümens," *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, edited by Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan, Boston 1999, 39-56, p. 42.

mer residence of the great Armenian kings, i.e., the Arshakids."[62] The stronghold of Garni, according to Atā-Malik Juvaynī, stood on the river which bears that name and empties into the Araxes, east of the Zanga.[63] With specific reference to Labnasagut, H.G. Raverty localized the site as being a "few miles west of Bayazid," near the northern shore of Lake Van, close to the eastern branch of the Euphrates.[64] Consequently, although differing in a number of respects, the general opinion formed by reexamining the sources and scholarly references relative to the question of the whereabouts of the site is that these overlapping determinations narrow the geographical location of Labnasagut to the Ala-tay massif, northeast of Lake Van. This would place it in the immediate vicinity of the ancient Arshakid fortified palace of Garni, located on the Daṙn steppe.

While the relative location of Labnasagut is assured, the meaning of the name itself remains unexplained. There can be no doubt, as John A. Boyle sensibly observed, that Hülegü gave the place a Mongol name,[65] and that being the case, we should be able to determine the etymology of the previously unattested Perso-Mongol form *Labnasagut*. The vocable in question can be analyzed as a compound of two separate Mongol words that various manuscripts of Rashīd al-Dīn's work have transmitted in two forms.[66] The first element is identifiable as the nominal *labna-*, that transparently represents the Tibeto-Mongol compound plural form *labnar* "lamas." It consists of *lab* "lama (T. *blama*) and the Mongol plural suffix *–nar.* and the second element *–sagut* is recognizable as being derived from the heretofore unattested deverbal noun **sayuyud.* With respect to the form *labna-*, it transparently represents the Tibeto-Mongol compound plural form *labnar* "lamas," consisting of *lab* "lama" (< Tibetan *blama*) and the Mongol plural suffix *-nar.*[67] The dropping of

62 Grigor of Akanc', "History of the Nation of Archers (The Mongols)," translated by Robert P. Blake and Richard N. Frye, *HJAS* 12, 1949, 269-399, p. 343; Francis W. Cleaves, "The Mongolian Names and Terms in the *History of the Nation of Archers* by Grigor of Akanc'," *HJAS* 12, 1949, 400-443, p. 404.

63 Atā-Malik Juvaynī, *The History of the World Conqueror*, 2 vols., translated by John Andrew Boyle, Cambridge, 1958, v. 2, p. 427, n. 2.

64 Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i nāṣirī*, 2 vols, translated by H. G. Raverty, New Delhi, 1970, p. 1264, n. 8. See also Allsen, "Technician Transfers," p. 14, n. 9.

65 Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 350. Honda, based on his reading of A.A. Alizade's edition of Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārīkh*, Moscow 1980, vocalizes the form as LBNASΓVT, see "Iru han no fuyu ei-chi, ka ei-chi," p. 89.

66 Allsen, "Technician Transfers," p. 14, based his reading of Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārīkh*, Moscow 1980, 2 vols., edited by B. Karīmī, Tehran 1959, transcribes the name as consisting of two separate vocables, i.e., Lanbā Sāghūt.

67 The vocable *labnar* "lamas" has survived in the Written Oirat language. See John R. Krueger, *Materials for an Oirat-Mongolian to English Dictionary, Part Three*, Bloomington 1984, p. 582.

the final consonant *-r* of *labnar* is a normal development of Mongolian phonology where *r* at the end of a syllable is dropped before the consonant *s* as would be the case of consonant cluster *-rs-* in the form **labnarsayud*. In addition, note that the consonant cluster *-rs-* does not occur in purely Mongol words nor in borrowings from Turkic.[68]

The second element *-sagut* consists of the Written Mongol verbal root *sayu-* "to live, dwell, reside," the deverbal nominal suffix *–γ-* that forms nouns designating the result of actions, and the plural suffix *-ud* that is added to stems ending in consonants other than *–n*, resulting in the deverbal plural noun **sayuγud*.[69] Its transcription into *–sagut* is explained as the development of the syllabic group *–uγu-* of **sayuγud* being contracted into the long vowel *–ū-*.[70] Although reduction of the length of a vowel is rare in Mongolian and is a more common occurrence in Turkic, the form *–sagut* demonstrates an evolution from **sayuγud* by the regular disappearance of of the intervocalic stop -γ- and the resulting vowel contraction: **sayuγud* > **sayūd* > **sayud*.[71] The form *-sagut*, then, is best etymologized as a heretofore unattested plural formation of the deverbal noun **sayuγud* that means "dwellings, residences." If my interpretation of *-sagut* as residences proves acceptable, then, it can be argued that the etymology of the Perso-Mongol form Labnasagut is "Dwellings of the Lamas," a meaning that nicely corresponds to the Sankrit term *vihāra*, i.e., "the dwelling place of monks," as defined by Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, v. 2, p. 205.

Having determined the approximate location and etymology of Labnasagut, we are now in position to undertake the principal objective of this paper – proof of Hülegü's conviction in the Buddhist way of life, his pious observances of rites, and personal participation in the communal worship of the monks. The two Armenian accounts to which we now turn document the figure of the Il-Qan not merely as the paramount patron of Labnasagut, but its principal lay devotee. Because the commu-

68 Poppe, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies*, Helsinki 1955, p. 162; also see Larry V. Clark, "Turkic Loanwords in Mongol, I: The Treatment of Non-initial S, Z, Š, Ž," *CAJ* 24, 1980, 36-59, pp. 38-39.

69 Poppe, *Grammar of Written Mongolian*, Wiesbaden 1974, p. 45. Other examples of the deverbal suffix *–γ/-g* that forms nouns designating results of actions and abstract ideas include: *jiru-* to draw > *jiruγ* picture; *bičі-* to write > *bičig* letter; *jori-* to intend > *joriγ* intention. See Poppe, p. 72 for the plural suffix *–ud*.

70 For remarks concerning the development of the *uγu* > *u'u* > *ū*, see Poppe, *Mongolian Comparative Studies*, pp. 62-63.

71 Regarding the phenomenon of vowel length in Mongolian, note the comments of Igor de Rachewiltz, "The Title Činqis Qan/Qayan Re-examined," *Gedanke und Wirkung, festschrift zum 90. geburtstag von Nikolaus Poppe*, edited by Walther Heissig and Klaus Sagaster, Wiesbaden 1989, 281-298, p. 295, and for vowel reduction in Turkish, see L. Ligeti, "Les voyelles longues en Turc," *JA* 1938, 177-204.

nity could depend on Hűlegű for its survival and success, Labnasagut became a clearly defined organizational center very early. The churchman-historian Kirakos Ganjakec'i (1203-1271), in his *Patmut'iwn Hayoc* (completed ca. 1267), referring to events of 1261-1265, relates a few details about the way in which the Buddhist community organized itself, the form its cult took, and the Il-Qan's deference to the spiritual leader of the monastic order:[72]

> During this time, the great Hűlegű started to build in Daran-dasht, a vast populous city. All who had been subjugated by him were assessed a compulsory tribute and carted from all places an enormous quantity of timber necessary for the construction of houses and palaces of this city, which [Hűlegű] built at his summer dwelling place...
>
> He also built a huge dwelling for enormous idols, having mustered there all sorts of skilled workmen: for masonry, for carpentry, and for painting. There is a lineage among them, the so-called *toyins*.[73] These [*toyins*] – sorcerers and wizards, by their magical art compel horses and camels, corpses and felt images to speak. They are all priests, and shave the hair of the head and beard, wear yellow vestments on the breast,[74] and worship everything, but most of all Šakmoni (Śākyamuni) and Madrin (Maitreya).
>
> They deceived him (= Hűlegű), promising him immortality, and he lived, moved, and mounted a horse at their bidding, entirely having given himself over to their will. Many times a day he bowed and kissed the

72 Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *Istoriia Armenii*, Moscow 1976, translated by L. A. Khanlarian, pp. 237-238.

73 The word *toyin* (< Ch. *tao-jen* "a man of the way") is an old Turkic ecclesiastical title originally limited to monks of noble descent. Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary*, p. 820.

74 Although physically remote from what Kirakos described at Labnasgut, William of Rubruck provides a similar account based on his first hand observation of Uyyur Buddhist monastics at their temple in Qara Qorum where they engaged in their devotions, and chanted the Sanskrit mantra *om ma ni pad me hūm*. As Rubruck noted: "All their priests shave the head and beard completely, dress in saffron colour, and observe chastity from the time they shave their heads, living in communities of a hundred or even two hundred." Jackson and Morgan, *Mission of William of Rubruck*, pp. 151 and 153-154. Although the number of monks attached to Labnasagut is nowhere indicated, there most likely were at least ten clerics in residence. Buddhist tradition required a quorum of ten monks to be assembled in order to conduct full ordinations of aspirants to the monkhood. LaMotte, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 56.

ground in front of their leader,[75] and was fed [food] which was consecrated in their heathen temple, and extolled him more than all the rest. And therefore, he had intended to build a temple of their idols in particular magnificence.

Consideration of what Kirakos reports demonstrates that Hűlegű, as the first major figure of Mongol Buddhism in the west, sponsored the building of the temple at Daran-dasht (i.e., "on the plain of Daṙn...which had previously been the place of the summer residence of the great Armenian kings," cf. n. 62), furnished it with images, and deeply immersed himself in the spiritual life and practices of the community of believers. The facts given by Kirakos concerning Hűlegű's prostrations and the homage he paid the chief monk are especially significant. His devotion plainly exemplifies the spiritual behavior of a lay adherent (S> *upāsaka*) who has taken refuge in the Buddha, his law, and the community of monks. It suggests that he accepted the monk-officant as his spiritual master from whom he directly received teachings in accordance with Buddhist fundamentals. One may further surmise that through his acts of devotion and patronage, Hűlegű reached a conspicuous watershed in his beliefs that leave no doubt that he thoroughly embraced the Buddhist creed and cherished its core values.

Before discussing this account further it will prove instructive to consult the remarks of Kiraokos' contemporary, the Christian monk Vardan (died 1271), who unambiguously ascribed Buddhist beliefs to Hűlegű. Vardan, in his *Hawak'umn Patmutean Vardanay Vardapeti* (completed ca. 1269) not only preserves some complementary details pertaining to the objects of Hűlegű's devotions, but also demonstrated himself to be knowledgeable about the Il-Qan's spiritual exercises and the teachings he received. Moreover, from the evidence provided by Vardan, it

75 Kirakos' description of the Il-Qan's behavior implicitly suggests the rite of taking refuge in the Three Jewels. By ceremonially prostrating himself before an exemplary Buddhist master who administered the rite of taking refuge in the Three Jewels, the pious layman received a religious name and entered the spiritual lineage, the effect of which made him the preceptor's disciple. The prostrations associated with the taking of refuge (a reverential act that could be repeated with the same master and with many other revered monastics as well), had the same effect "as if he were entering the *sangha* (i.e., the monastic community)." The ceremony described by Holmes Welch relates to a modern rite but clearly corresponds to traditional practice. Cf. *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950*, Cambridge 1967, pp. 359 and 512-513, n. 5 for the Tantric rite; for the Indian tradition of Taking Refuge, note the comments of Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 69 and 71 both of which illustrate the solemnity of the rite in which the Il-Qan participated. "...[I]t simply consists of a unilateral act through which the candidate [who seeks to become a lay adherent (*upāsaka*)] commits himself in the presence of the Buddha, a monk, or even another *upāsaka*, to observe a particular discipline until the end of his life.

is apparent that the Il-Qan was not a religious eccentric, but in his assertions of faith followed traditional doctrinal and ritual patterns. Nevertheless, for all that Vardan divulged, he must be regarded as a hostile witness to the events he describes, for as an ordained Christian cleric he had little sympathy for Buddhism or its ardent enthusiast, the Il-Qan. In his comments on Hűlegű's death that occurred 8 February 1265, Vardan acidly criticized the powerful influence that the Buddhist monks had exerted over the ruler:[76]

> He (=Hűlegű) was indeed seduced by the astrologers, and false priests of certain idols that they call Šakmonia (Śākyamuni); he is a god, they claim, who is 3,040 years old[77] and who will continue to exist for yet another thirty-seven "*tűmen*;" a "*tűmen*" is equal to [the number] 10,000. Another god, Mondri (Maitreya)), will then oust the former.[78] The priests were called *toyin* by the Tartars. They had the confidence of Hűlegű and their oracles made decisions about whether he should go to war; they told him time and again: "You will live a long time in the body which you now enliven; and when you shall reach extreme old age, you will assume a new

76 Éd. Dulaurier, "Les Mongols d'apres les historiens arménien," *Journal Asiatique* series 5, vol. 16, 1860, 273-322, pp. 305-306. Vardan actually met with Hűlegű in 1264. See Robert W. Thomson, "The Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewelc'i," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43, 1989, p. 127.

77 Without going into the intricate detail that the subject deserves, chronological calculations made by Bsod-nams rtse-mo (1142-1182), a monk of the Sa skya pa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, determined the death of Buddha to have occurred in 2133 B.C.E. (but widely accepted as 544 B.C.E.). If we acknowledge the fact that Vardan's chronicle covers events through the year A.D. 1267, and add the number 1,267 to the Sa-skya calculation of 2,133 the result yields the 3,400 years. With this sum in mind, it is plausible to interpret Vardan's assertion that the Buddha's age had reached the age of 3,040 to be either an error in translation or a scribal error in which 3,400 was mistakenly recorded as 3,040. Concerning the Sa-skya pa calculations of the Buddha's birth in 2133 B.C.E., see Zuiho Yamaguchi, "Methods of Chronological Calculation in Tibetan Historical Sources," *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*, edited by Louis Ligeti, Budapest 1984, 405-424, pp. 422-23. Also see A.J. Vostrikov, *Tibetan Historical* Lrteratur, Calcutta 1970, p. 143, n. 414. Cf. Thomson, *Historical Compilation*, pp. 127 and 139 for the final evetns reported in Vadan's chronicle in the year 1267.

78 Regarding this prophecy, particularly as it applies to the coming of Maitreya is described in the *Maitreyavyākaraṇa*, see Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 701-702 and nn. 82 and 86 below.

> body."[79] They persuaded him to raise a temple to those idols where he used to go to pray; they told him whatever prophecies they wished... Those priests could make felt idols and horses speak. The art of divination furnished them with the skills to be masters of deception.

Taken together, the Armenian sources though a bit different in detail clearly utilize the same narrative strategy. They furnish the most vivid testimony to have emerged about any Buddhist refuge in all the far-flung territories under Il-Qanid authority and that the Three Jewels – the Buddha, the Dharma (as indicated by reference to the tenet of transmigration of the soul at the time of Maitreya), and the community of monks – received their cultic form due to Hűlegű's patronage and pious observances. Both Kirakos and Vardan take a critical stance and dismissively treat Hűlegű's religious aspirations as driven by false beliefs and vanity.[80] In spite

79 The teaching imparted by the *toyins* expressed the distinctive doctrine of transmigration or cycle of rebirth (Sanskrit *samsāra*) and by inference its corollary of *karma*. Good or bad actions (*karma*), as fully attested in meaning and form by both Theravārdan and Mahāyāna scriptures, perpetuate rebirth and their ethical consequences are what determine the individual's next existence. For all Buddhists, *samsāra* or continual rebirth into the world of suffering was something to be regarded with aversion. As a doctrine it was revealed by the Buddha to his disciples as the first of the four noble Truths (*āryasatya*). See Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 26. For the laity, however, moral behavior in accordance with Buddhist precepts brought the benefit of merit in this life and resulted in a good rebirth in the next. As related by the Kashmiri monk Kamālashrī to Rashīd al-Dīn, the fourteenth chapter of the *Life and Teaching of Buddha* entitled "By what deeds is a human reborn as a human" describes the detailed circumstances that enabled rebirth to occur. For example, "He who erects *medreses*, *khanqahs* and mighty temples will reborn without a blemish, with a healthy constitution and build of body, without a defect; he will be a refuge and protector of (all) creatures and will have an abundance of goods and chattels...Furthermore, he who honestly serves his teachers, his parents,...and his spiritual leaders, who fulfills their wishes and heart's desires, will at the regeneration be raised to the rank of a king and monarch." Karl Jahn, Kamālashrī- Rashīd al-Dīn's "Life and Teaching of Buddha," A Source for the Buddhism of the Mongol Period," *CAJ* 2, 1956, 81-128, see pp. 106-107. Vardan's reference to the cycle of rebirth clearly establishes the fact that *toyins* repeatedly ("time and again") taught the Il-Qan a fundamental article of faith and by inference the recognition of suffering that together are central to Buddhist belief. It can be concluded, given his religious behavior and merit-generating acts, that he accepted the central tenet of Buddhist doctrine.

80 For a brief treatment of aspects of Armenian historical sources written by Christian clergy, cf. C.J.F. Dowsett, "Armenian Historiography," in *Historians of the Middle East, edited by Bernard Lewis and P.M. Holt, London 1962, 259-268. Also see Thomson*, "Historical Compilation," pp. 158-159.

of that, their accounts have an especially telling value in assessing the place of the Buddhist community in Hűlegű's scheme of things and the reciprocity between ruler and monks. They reveal much about the course of Hűlegű's religious activities since first hearing Hai-yün preach at the Ta-Ch'ing shou Temple and in establishing the fact that the Il-Qan continued to seek higher religious attainments through ritual and spiritual exercises.

It is now evident that the monumental cult images of Šakmoni/Sagmonia (= Śākyamuni) and Madrin/Mondri (= Maitreya) – discernable as the first of their kind in Il-Qanid times[81] – and the very temple itself in which they were enshrined, were provided by Hűlegű's patronage. Close attention to these merit-making gifts, acts of generosity understood within the context of Buddhist worship, indicate that his pious donations made actual practice of the faith possible for the monastic community and himself. The reverence demonstrated by Hűlegű himself leave no doubt that with the founding of the temple and the placement of its two monumental sculptures, Labnasagut functioned as an active center of Buddhism.

Further consideration of what Kirakos and Vardan have to say about the two "enormous idols" and the community of monks provides extremely valuable information because it enables us to identify a doctrine the Labnasagut clergy believed, taught, and explicitly practiced. In so far as we can tell from the descriptions and in particular the names attributed by our Christian informants to the ensemble of images, the Buddhist cult and order of monks at Labnasagut most likely did not originate in either Tibet or China. The Armenian forms Šakmoni and Sagmonia correspond fairly well to the old Turkic forms Šakimuni and Sakimuni, the names by

81 Visual images of Śākyamuni and Maitreya, whether cast, carved, or painted, in fact all depictions of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas required consecration in order to have divine power. Helmut Hoffmann, *Tibet, A Handbook*, Bloomington n.d., pp. 227-228. All forms of religious imagery had to conform to the canons of monastic art. When it came to the depiction of them, the *Vinaya* (the disciplinary rules of monastic order) prescribed set rules for the design, and treatment of every element of representation. See O.C. Handa, *Buddhist Monasteries in Himachal Pradesh*, London 1988, pp. 153-154 and 175-180. Rashīd al-Dīn, with respect to the consequences of Ghazan's conversion to Islam in 1295, noted the expense involved in the making of Buddhist images: "And this after the honour to which they had been promoted by the Mongol kings, and which was so great that one half of the money which was gathered together in the treasury of the kingdom had been given to them [= the Buddhist monks], and it had to be expended (?) on the work of images of gold and silver." Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 380. The economic case against Buddhism is significant, because of the vast costs and, in Muslim eyes, the irreverence of idol worship that was an affront to Islamic sensibilities.

which Turkish speakers referred to the Buddha Śākyamuni.[82] Moreover, the vocable Madrin and the related form Mondri preserved in Armenian reportage pertaining to Il-Qanid Buddhism, on the basis of internal evidence have correctly been identified by scholars as Maitreya, a fact that is easily corroborated doctrinally.[83] It is immediately evident that Madrin and Mondri are not loan words either from Chinese, which designates Maitreya as "Mi-le," or from Tibetan which renders the deity's name as "Byams-pa."[84] With specific regard to the linguistic facts concerning the proper names Madrin and Mondri about which we have only limited information and appear to be isolated to the attestations of the Armenian sources,[85] I would suggest, that both forms can best be explained as going back to the Uyγur name Maitri, rather than directly from the Sanskrit designation Maitreya.[86] Taking the phonetic shape of Maitri into account as the etymon of the Armenian forms Madrin and Mondri intimates that the sound changes must be resolved by reference either to vernacular forms of Armenian or the textual transmission thereof and hence under the influence of spoken or written forms of Armenian or its dialects. If in fact the Armenian forms are accurate representations of the Uyγur form Maitri, it appears that when the Buddhist community of Labnasagut venerated Maitreya they worshipped the deity using a name of Uyγur origin rather than its Mongol cognate Maidari. The latter form reflects the assimilation of the Uyγur word Maitri to the phonetic structure of Mongolian as the result of having undergone epenthesis.

A further point may be noted here that will further establish the historical identity of Madrin and Mondri with Maitreya, the Buddha of the future. What lends this connection specific force is a non-Mahāyāna, Therāvadan Buddhist Sanskrit literary source – the *Maitreyavyākaraṇa* – portions of which were preserved in early fourteenth century Persian and Arabic versions compiled by Rashīd al-Dīn with the col-

82 See *DTS.* 520 and 482 respectively; Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, Paris 1959-1961, 2 vols., v. 2, pp. 823-824; compare the New Persian form *saqmūniyā*, Ilya Gershevitch, *A Grammar of Manichean Sogdian*, Oxford 1954, p. 53.

83 Maitreya, the Buddha of the future, appears in a "long list of Buddhas of the past and future who preceded or will follow Śākyamuni. Maitreya is no different from his colleagues, he will be a Buddha like all the others." It is important to realize that there are numerous *Maitreyavyākaraṇa* (see n. 87 below) that describe the coming of Maitreya. See Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 706-707 and 701-702 respectively.

84 Sarat Chandra Das, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary with Sanskrit Synonyms* (Hereafter Das), Delhi 1973, pp. 885-886.

85 Another Armenian source, that is, the record of Journey King Het'um to the Mongol court in 1254 as described by Kirakos Ganjakec'i attests to the form *maṭrin*. See John A. Boyle, "The Journey of Het'um, king of Little Armenia, to the court of the great khan Möngke," *CAJ* 9. 1964, 175-189, p.187.

86 On the Uyγur from Maitri (< Sanskrit Maitreya), see *DTS* 335.

laboration of a Kashmiri monk, Kamālashrī.[87] Consistent with the predictions made in the *Maitreyavyākaraṇa*, a text devoted to prophecies that will come to pass with the coming age of Maitreya, it appears that Vardan in reference to Mondri brought together several doctrinal elements according to which the Buddha of the future Maitreya will take the place of Śākyamuni at a time in the remote future.[88] Vardan accurately relates the sequence as prophesied in the non-canonical *Maitreyavyākaraṇa*.[89] It thus seems reasonable to conclude, given the evidence of the *Maitreyavyākaraṇa* for the "attainment of rebirth at the time of Maitreya," and Rashīd al-Dīn's use of the text or Kāmalashrī recitation of it, that such beliefs already had currency and cachet during the reign of Hűlegű. If this interpretation proves to be correct and the community of monks did draw its teaching and exegesis from the *Maitreyavyākaraṇa*, it can be asserted that at least one doctrine of salvation imparted by the monks at Labnasagut possibly derived from classical Therāvadan doctrine.[90]

Il-Qanid communal piety and worship of the Buddhas Śākyamuni and Maitreya took place at Labnasagut during a time of war, death and suffering for the Mongols as well as their adversaries. In what was perceived by Buddhists as a period of decline during which the Dharma preached by Śākyamuni had diminished,[91] the community of the faithful ardently embraced Maitreya, the Buddhist messiah, for spiritual comfort, compassion and security.[92]

87 The *Maitreyavyākaraṇa* are scriptures devoted to announcing the coming age of Maitreya. For the specific version of the *Maitreyavyākaraṇa* identified by Schopen, see "Hīnayāna Texts in a 14th Century Persian Chronicle," p. 232.

88 Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 701; Jahn, *Rashīd* al-*Dīn's History of India*, pp. lxv-lxvii.

89 Lamotte, *op. cit.*, p. 701; Jahn, *Rashīd* al-*Dīn's History of India*, p. lxvii. Other miraculous conditions predicted to accompany the appearance of the Buddha of the future but not mentioned by Vardan include of a future time-cycle when each individual's life span reaches 80,000 years, and the reign of the universal ruler, a Cakravartin monarch will have dominion that will extend as far as the ocean borders.

90 Schopen, "Hīnayāna Texts in a 14th Century Persian Chronicle," pp. 231 and 235. Schopen has identified two other texts used by Rashīd al-Dīn and Kamālashrī – the *Devatā-sūtra* and the *'Phags pa gnas 'jog gi mdo* – both of which are Therāvadan texts. See his remarks, pp. 225-227.

91 Buddhist theories concerning the decline of the Dharma and their sources have been described and discussed by Jan Nattier, *Once upon a Future Time, Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*, Berkeley 1991, pp. 27-64.

92 Belief in Maitreya was a common to all Therāvadans and Mahāyāna devotees. Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 708.

IV. Antecedents and Models of Labnasagut

Some comments on the temple and monastic residence where Hűlegű received these and other teachings may be made here. As the Il-Qan's forces swept westward, members of the monastic community, as we shall presently see, accompanied them. Consequently, when looking beyond Labnasagut and other Il-Qanid Buddhist sacred sites, no one should be surprised that Hűlegű found suitable antecedents and parallels for constructing sacred sites back in the Mongol homeland. Although no architects or craftsmen are known to have accompanied Hűlegű to the west, they may have joined him later.[93] Its remoteness from the Mongol homeland notwithstanding, Labnasagut shared a principal spatial feature intrinsic to the alignment of state and faith that epitomized the Buddhist establishment at the imperial seat of power at Qara Qorum. While it is not possible without archaeological investigation to identify the artistic and architectural repertoire of the craftsmen who built Labansagut, we can at least note its physical location in relative proximity to the ancient Arshakid citadel of Garni and the sanctuary's spatial position at what must have been a short distance from the Il-Qan's palatial compound as defining features of the city and palaces that Kirakos informs us Hűlegű constructed at Ala-tay. In this effort, as Hűlegű and his Buddhist advisors considered issues of site planning, resource allocation, building construction, and the arrangement of sacred images in the years 1261-1265,[94] they may well have had in mind the contemporary complex of palace and Buddhist sanctuary at Qara Qorum.

93 Significant evidence exists that for various Buddhist sects the construction of religious buildings, including a *vihāra* took place under the supervision of a monk who was an architect (S. *navakārmika*). See Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 515 and Schopen, "On the Buddha and His Bones: The Conception of a Relic in the Inscriptions of Nāgājunikoṇḍa," *JAOS* 108, 1988, 527-537, p. 535. For a different view regarding the role of foreign craftsmen in the construction of Il-Qanid Buddhist edifices, see Allsen, "Technician Transfers," pp. 13-17.

94 According to the canon of traditional Buddhist architecture, the *vihāra*, i.e., the dwellings of the monastic community, is a term that "can also be applied to the abode of a deity. The *vihāra* is therefore both [monastic] cell and temple. If they were joined together, *vihāras* became *samghārāma*, convents or monasteries. Built along the same lines as private houses, they generally appeared as a square construction made up of four rows of cells arranged along the four walls and opening onto an inner hall, the superstructure of which might be supported by pillars....Every Buddhist monastery of any importance necessarily contained a *stūpa* [reliquary] or a *caitya* [sanctuary]." Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 312-313. With respect to the canons of monastic art that prescribe the design, measurements and depiction of sacred images in sculpture, scroll paintings (*thankas*), and wall paintings in accordance with the *Vinaya* (disciplinary rules of the monastic order), see Handa, *Buddhist Monasteries*, pp. 153-180.

Such an impressive provenance is lent conceivable documentary support according to relevant information preserved in the Sino-Mongolian stele inscription of 1346 concerning the construction program followed by the builders at the time Ögödei Qaγan founded Qara Qorum in 1235. The Mongolian version of the stele of 1346 relates that as a consequence of having erected the Qaγan's *ordo* (palace), "he [= Ögödei] had one erect a mansion of images."[95] Ongoing support for the Buddhist community of Qara Qorum is reflected by the fact that work continued on the sacred precinct during the reign of Möngke Qaγan, who in 1256 ordered a reliquary (*stūpa*), the five-story Hsing-Yuan-chih-ko pavilion, and surrounding rooms built to complete the religious complex. Inside the pavilion, "he [= Möngke] installed the [various] Burqan [=Buddhas] in [proper] sequence in accordance with [the prescriptions of] the law."[96] The Chinese text of the stele inscription of 1346 leaves no doubt that the builders adhered to religiously prescribed formulas of construction and the order in which they placed images of the deities:[97] "Around [these rooms] they arranged the [statues of] various Buddhas. [This arrangement was] completely in accordance with the indication of the *sūtras*." As acknowledged by the Sino-Mongolian stele inscription of 1346, the religious complex of Erdeni-dzu at Qara Qorum rose in conformity with holy scripture, a fact that further demonstrates the Mongol capital in the 1250s already stood as a center of Buddhist belief and culture at roughly the same time Hülegü's spiritual concerns and commitment to the faith were maturing.

The building programs undertaken by Hülegü suggests that on the level of architecture and iconography he made Labnasagut a priority and that he clearly was the equal of Möngke and Qubilai when it came to sponsoring Buddhist monasteries and places of worship.[98] They were the generation that undertook Buddhist construction

95 Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346," *HJAS* 15, 1952, 1-123, p.79 for the Mongolian text and p. 29 for the corresponding Chinese text. To avoid confusion and for the sake of convenience, I have omitted the numbers in Cleave's text referring to his footnotes.

96 See the Chinese text, Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346," p. 29 and n. 94 above.

97 Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346," p. 29, n. 93 above and Allsen, "Technician Transfers," p. 14

98 In the opinion of Rashīd al-Dīn, as translated by Ét. Quartremère, Hülegü "aimait prodigieusement à faire bâtir; les edifices élevés par ses orders subsistent encore aujourd'hui pour la plupart. Il avait fait construire un palais dans la ville d' Alatag, et des temples d'idoles dans celle de Khoi. Cette année le monarque partagea son temps entre ses travaux d'architecture, l'administration des affaires du royaume, les soins que réclamaient l'armée et la population. A l'automne, il se dirigea vers son campement d'hiver de Zerineh-roud (la rivière d'or) qui, chez les Mongols, porte le nom de Tchagatou-Nagatou. Étant arrive à Maragah, il montra un vif empressement pour voir terminer la

projects with enviable energy and did so for purposes of the creed. In terms of the norms and interests that contribute to the status of Buddhist kingship, the merit-making acts of the Il-Qan, as principal donor responsible for the formation of the religious complex at Labnasagut closely resembled the family's pious pattern of sponsorship that enabled the Činggisids to claim to be Buddhist sovereigns.[99]

Thus, at the moment Möngke ordered the expansion of Qara Qorum's temple, Hülegü was pushing doggedly forward against the Ismā'īlīs strongholds. When Hülegü himself had the opportunity to construct a suitable sanctuary for the veneration of Śākyamuni and Maitreya, the building program he chose for Labnasagut in proximity to his residence suggests a conscious and perhaps an obligatory imitation of the carefully planned sacred site earlier established by Ögödei and enlarged by Möngke. Other examples of unified palatial and devotional complexes, as well as those at Qara Qorum and Ala-tay, in which sovereign and sacral dimensions traditionally reinforced one another as seats of political power and spiritual authority,

construction de l'observatoire." See Quartremère, *Mongols de la Perse*, pp. 401-403. The contents of this passage suggest that his capital at Ala-tay, and by inference Labnasagut, took precedence when it came to the Il-Qan's building activities and that the other Buddhist sites were later constructions.

99 Cf. the various versions of Buddhist monument of the Chü-yung-kuan. In addition to the Tibetan text edited by Nagao, "The Tibetan Eulogy at Chü-yung-kuan," pp. 844-861; on the Mongolian version, see Poppe, *The Mongolian Monuments in HP'ags-pa Script*, Wiebasen 1957, second edition translated and edited by John R. Krueger, pp. 60-66; and the Uyyur version, Klaus Röhrborn and Osman Sertkaya, "Die alttürkische Inschrift am Tor-Stūpa von Chü-yung-kuan," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 130, 1980, 304-339, pp. 314-326; regarding the Tangut text, see M. V. Sofronov, "The Tangut text of the Chü-yung-kuan polyglot inscription," *AOASH* 23, 1970, 297-326. Also note the contents of the Uyyur Inscription of 1326 of Nom-taš. Cf. Geng and Zhang, "Yuan huihuwen 'zhong xiu wen shu si bei,' chu shi," pp. 253-264. The Mongolian version of the Chü-yung-kuan monument commemorates Qubilai's building activities in reference to the following prophecy: "That blessed bodhisattva the Emperor Sečen (that is, Qubilai) possessed of vast wisdom...who would become a great emperor, who would adorn his country with great and high pagodas...propagated the religion and doctrine of the possessor of merit (i.e., the Buddha), erected great pagodas up to the edge of the sea, and brought vast merits continually to all creatures." See Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva," p. 12. Buddhist scriptures recommend meritorious material deeds by which the laity, including sovereigns, generate merit for themselves. The list of which Hülegü performed the first three deeds, includes 1. giving land to the congregation, 2 building a monastery, 3. furnishing it, 4. allocating revenue to it, 5. assisting strangers and travelers, 6. tending the sick, 7. in cold weather or at times of famine, giving the congregation food and sweetmeats." Lamotte, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 72.

could be cited to illustrate this distinguishing detail.[100] The basic point I wish to make by virtue of this comparison is that the complexes at Qara Qorum and Ala-taγ made visually conspicuous the distinctive Buddhist identity of the temple alongside the sovereign's palace. Furthermore, for much of the thirteenth century and more than half of the fourteenth, the architectural relationship of palace and temple that symbolically linked the fundamental principles of the Mongol state and the Buddhist faith served as a distinguishing marker identified with, and affirmed by, Činggisid domination.[101]

100 The presence of the two symbols of political authority and spiritual power first became noteworthy during the eary medieval period of the nomadic states that supported Buddhism. "Unlike the early centers that naturally developed along trade routes and in cities, many of these new centers were created at or near political capitals: Ye in Hebei under the Later Zhao (Hou Zhao, 328-51) and later Eastern Wei (Dong Wei, 534-50) and Northern Qi (Bei Qi, 550-77); Chang'an under the Former Qin (Qian Qin, 351-94) and Later Qin (Hou Qin, 384-417), and Westrn Wei (Xi Wei, 535-51) and Northern Zhou (Bei Zhou, 561-81): Gansu under Northern Liang (Bei Liang, 397-460; annexed by Northern Wei in 439) and Western Qin (Xi Qin, 385-431), and Datong in Hebei and Luoyang in Henan under the Northern Wei. Many of these nomadic courts sponsored centers for translating and studying Buddhist texts, attracting foreign as well as Chinese monks to the capitals." See Dorothy C. Wong, Ethnicity and Identity, Northern nomads as Buddhist art patrons during the period of Northern and Southern Dynasties," *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geogrphies in Chinese History*, edited by Nicola Di Cosmo and Don J. Wyatt, London 2003, 80-118, p. 83.

Also see, *inter alia*, the building of Ramoche Temple at the Tibetan capital of Lhasa during the reign of King Songtsen Gampo (d. 649/650). R. A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, Stanford 1972, pp. 54 and 58. A Ming dynasty interpolation (A.D. 1405) into the *Hsi-yü-chi*, the journal of the Chinese monk Hsüan-tsang, who went to India from A.D. 629 to 645 in search of Buddhist scriptures, notes a similar configuration: "By the side of the king's palace is the *vihāra* of Buddha's tooth, several hundred feet high, brilliant with jewels and ornamented with rare gems." See, Hiuen Tsiang, *Si-yu-ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World*, translated by Samuel Beal, New York 1968, pp. 248-249. Also cf. n. 100 above.

Kőden Qan, younger brother of the Emperor Güyüg, patron of the Sa-skya scholastic Kun-dga'-rgyal-mts'an, established his nephew, 'Phags pa, at Silimǰi (='Phrul-pa'i-sde Monastery) in relative proximity to Mongol headquarters at Liang-chou. For Silimǰi, see Sayang Sečen, *Erdeni-yin tobči*, I.J. Schmidt, editor and translator, *Geschichte der Ostmongolen*, St. Petersburg 1829, p. 119/4. On 'Phrul-pa'i-sde Monastery, cf. Luciano Petech, "Tibetan Relations with Sung China and with the Mongols," 173-203, *China among Equals, The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries*, edited by Morris Rossabi, Berkeley 1983, p. 198, n. 47.

101 See nn. 99-100 above.

At all events, the religious observances conducted by the order of monks at the Buddhist temples, whether at Labnasagut or Qara Qorum or other centers of Mongol power, provided a divine presence at the hub of national and international political and military affairs, where, as has been demonstrated, the clergy offered prayers for the sovereign and the imperial house, and the well being of the realm.

V. The Alignment of Crown and Clergy

In view of the physical setting of the architectural symbols of state and faith at Labnasagut, it is instructive to move on to investigate and substantiate specific instances in which the monastic community affiliated with Hűlegű directly influenced his policies and actually implemented them. As stated by Kirakos in his account of Hűlegű's religious devotions and reverence for the leader of the Labnasagut community, the opinions of the monks carried considerable weight and affected the decisions of the Il-Qan and the manner in which he "...lived, moved, and mounted a horse at their bidding, [and that he had] entirely...given himself over to their will." It is a measure of Hűlegű's trust in the Buddhist clergy that even before founding Labnasagut he included them in his inner circle.

Several details provided by Rashīd al-Dīn corroborate the point indicating that the monks helped to shape the policies and engaged in the government of the Il-Qan. His respect for the judgment and abilities of the clergy led him to entrust them with a voice in the deliberations of his war council, where they advised him on matters crucial to the outcome of the conquest and its consolidation. This is demonstrated by the fact that in February 1258, when the Mongol high command met to discuss launching the attack on the 'Abbāsid capital of Baghdad:[102] "[T]he monks (*baqsis*) and commanders (*noyan*) said, agreeing [with Hűlegű], it is most fitting to march on Baghdad." This episode serves to illustrate that Hűlegű had the benefit of the support of the monks who endorsed the critical decision, the result of which sealed the doom of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate. Another example shows Hűlegű placed his confidence in individual monks for purposes of governing his domain. In 1259, following the fall of Aleppo, he turned to a *baqsi*, who bore the Uyyur Turkic proper name Tűkel, and appointed him to the post of commissioner.[103]

102 G. Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* (hereafter *TMEN*), 4 vols. 1963-1975, v. 2, p. 271. It is altogether likely, that the *baqsis* involved in military campaigns and civil affairs temporarily were released from their monastic vows. See Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, "'Baysi' and 'Baysi-s' in Tibetan Historical, Biographical and Lexicographical Texts," *CAJ* 39, 1995, 275-302, p. 293.

103 Doerfer, *TMEN*, p. 271. For the proper name Tűkel, see *DTS* 596. Concerning the context of events at Aleppo, see Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 350.

The significance of these two details is that they illustrate the facts that Buddhist clergy not only concerned themselves with the spiritual welfare of the Il-Qan, and at his discretion provided their knowledge and abilities on behalf of the realm. That on occasion he resorted to individual monastics for their recommendations and competence for secular purposes were exigencies that fall well within Buddhist tradition. In their proximity to the throne, and uncompromising attitude toward their Muslim adversaries, the *baqsis*, as Kirakos makes plain and Rashīd al-Dīn confirms, were engaged in the formation and enactment of policy.[104] By the time he arrived in Western Asia, the Il-Qan's high regard for the *baqsis* and his willingness to put his trust in them were known, but far from universally shared according to historical works authored by contemporary Muslim observers. 'Atā-Malik Juvaynī, for one, and Jūzjānī, for another, relate that Uyγur Buddhists, and in particular the Buddhist monks, were the staunchest enemies of Islam.[105] Consideration of the services to the crown provided by Tükel *Baqsi* and other monks partially substantiates Kirakos' observation that Hülegü did in fact rely on them for guidance and advice.

Given Hülegü's intense Buddhist propensities, it is relevant to our purpose, so far as our sources allow, to account for the ecclesiastical identity of the monks who officiated at Labnasagut. Both Armenian authors refer to the Buddhist clerics of the Labnasagut order of monks as *toyin*, a Turkic ecclesiastical title reserved for monks

To the best of my information, Tükel is the only monastic among Hülegü's councilors and officers whose identity can be established on the basis of the Islamic sources.

104 Perhaps the preeminent example of monastic involvement in secular affairs is that of the Sa-skya pa abbot, Blo-gros-rgyal-mts'an, revered and acclaimed by the honorific name 'Phags-pa, who represented Činggisid domination in central Tibet during the reign of Qubilai. See Petech, "'P'ags-pa," pp. 649 and 651. Other examples of clerical involvement in secular affairs include the Qara Qitai monk appointed by the Gür Qan to supervise the affairs of the Uyγur city of Qočo (=Kao-ch'ang) during the early 1200s. Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng hia-sheng. *History of Chinese Society – Liao (907-1125)*, Philadelphia 1949, p. 667.

In addition, note the earlier activities of the learned Buddhist monk, Hsüan-tsang, during the reign of T'ang T'ai-tsung (626-649). Although the T'ang emperor wanted the monk to renounce his vows so that he might serve as an advisor, Hsüan-tsang declined to do so. Nevertheless, he performed a valuable service to the throne because of his knowledge of Indian affairs (and presumably for what he had learned during his travels in Central Asia). See Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, Cambridge 1987, p. 25.

105 Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, v. 1, pp. 48-52 regarding for the hatred the Buddhist Uyγurs manifested towards Muslims; concerning Jūzjānī's remarks preserved in his *Tabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, see H.G. Raverty's translation, *Tabaḳāt-i Nāṣirī: a general history of the Muhammadan Dynasties of Asia*, New Delhi 1970, v. 2, pp. 1157-1160. See n. 50 above regarding the "fraternity of recluses,"i.e., the *toyins* who were part of Güyüg's retinue.

of noble descent. However, if I am correct in the etymology of the word Labnasagut I have proposed as meaning the "Dwellings of the Lamas," in other words a *vihāra*, there appears to have been at least one if not more lamas, who either resided in the community or else were identified as *toyins*. This detail, supported by the presumptive Sa-skya pa dating of the death of the Buddha (cf. n. 77), strongly suggests a Tibetan presence as part of the ecclesiastic organization of the community. The clerical title *lama* (< Tibetan: *blama*) that represents the core meaning of Labnasagut, is a dignity of preeminence attached to a spiritual teacher and to all fully qualified monastics. It also designates a monk who has obtained the highest ordination (Tibetan: *dge-slong*) and consequently pertains to the leading teachers and more learned monks.[106] Like its Tibetan counterparts, Labnasagut constituted a full-fledged community that adhered to typical Buddhist practices, and apparently followed the forms of communal organization typical of established communities in India and Tibet. With respect to the possible influence of Tibetan Buddhism, Elliot Sperling has provided a well documented case for the fact that Hülegü and his descendants had deputies in western Tibet who looked after Il-Qanid interests and patronized the Phag-mo gru-pa religious community and the G.ya'-bzang-pa, both subsects of the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastic order. Despite considerable jockeying by various Činggisid princes for power in Tibet, Hűlegű's descendants maintained both their authority and patronage throughout the latter half of the thirteenth century.[107]

106 H.A. Jäschke, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, with special reference to the prevailing dialects (hereafter *Jäschke*), London, 1972, p. 86 and 382 and Das 900.

107 Elliot Sperling, "Hülegü and Tibet," *AOASH* 44, 1990, 145-157, pp. 147-151 and 153-155. Sperling prudently avoids connecting Hülegü with specific Buddhist practices, direct evidence for which is fugitive in the Tibetan sources. For the location of Hűlegű's fifteen "extraterritorial" properties in western Tibet from which he derived income, see Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols, The Yüan – Sa-skya Period of Tibetan History*, Rome 1999, pp. 38, 56 and 89.

Nor were Hülegü's holdings outside his own domain restricted to Tibet. He and his descendants held extensive rights in both Mongolia and China. These proprietary interests included 7,000 households of hunters and falconers, the management of which was under Yuan administration and income derived from 25,056 silk producing households in Chang-te in Honan. For the origins of these holdings, see David M. Farquhar, *The Government of China under Mongolian Rule, A Reference Guide*, Stuttgart, 1990, p. 198, and Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, Cambridge 2001, p.46 respectively. These arrangements were the outcome of the division of spoils that accompanied the formation of the Mongol Empire. As cogently described by P. Jackson, the Mongol conquests were regardedt as the "joint property of the entire family of Chinggis Khan. Nevertheless, this ideal found concrete expression in the granting of local rights to individual princes, who were given not, of course, territorial appanages, but lordship over specified groups among the subject peoples: ...The concept of the indivisibility of the empire was expressed in the composition of the armies detailed to conqueror fresh

Given Sperling's findings, there is reason to believe that Labnsagut may have been an offshoot of one or both of these commuities and possibly other monastic orders as well.[108]

Whatever the case, it can be concluded that the Ch'an Buddhism to which Hűlegű had earlier shown deference no longer preoccupied his devotions. Although the evidence is thin for the Uyγur provenance of the cult of Śākyamuni and Maitreya, in so far as it pertained to the worship of Maitreya, there is significant body of Uyγur textual support for the existence of a Uyγur Maitreya cult.[109] While the question requires additional study, the evidence suggests that, in a fashion similar to the core institutions of the Mongol empire, the Labnasagut monastic community as a

expressed in the composition of the armies detailed to conqueror fresh territories – the so-called *tama* system...The prince in command of an expedition was accompanied by relatives drawn from every other branch of the family, each bringing his own contingent. In the case of lesser campaigns, this reprentative function was performed by commanders (*noyans*) of non-imperial extraction." Jackson goes on to observe that the *tama* system "produced a situation in which a sizable proportion of the troops quartered within the *ulus* of a particular prince owed allegiance not so much to him as to some external authority, whether the Qa'an or some other relative, with whom he might well be at variance. In other words, with the maintenance of the *tama* method of organization, the occasions for internal conflict were multiplied rather than diminished." Jackson, "Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," pp. 191-193.

108 At this point I want to stress the fact that the three ecclesiastic titles – *toyin*, *baqsi*, and *lama* – noted in the revue of Hűlegű's religious activities commonly occur both separately and in compounds in Uyγur Buddhist texts of the Mongol period. See Peter Zeime, *Buddhistche Stabreimdichtungen der Uiguren*, Berlin 1985, pp. 73, 108, 157, 174, and 180. The question of contact between Uyγur and Tibetan Buddhism in the first half of the 1260s is difficult to corroborate from historical sources; however, it should not be considered beyond the realm of possibility. G. Kara, "Uiguro-Tibetica," *Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Memorial Symposium*, Budapest 1978, 161-167, pp. 162-163. See also Zeime, *Religion und Gesellschaft im Uigurischen Konigreich von Qočo*, Düsseldorf 1992, pp. 40-42. It is noteworthy that Jūzjānī, for his part, refers to Chinese and Tangut monks as *toyins*, see n. 104 above. For that matter, to the best of my information, no evidence has emerged regarding individual Mongols having received clerical ordination in the 1250s-1260s as full members of the Buddhist clergy.

109 Zeime, "Zum Maitreya-Kult in uigurischen Kolophonen," *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 49, 1994, pp. 219-229; and *Religion und Gesellschaft im Uigurischen Konigreich*, pp. 20-22; also see Zeime, *Die Stabreim-texte der Uiguren von Turfan und Dunhuang*, Budapest 1991, pp. 65-67.

religious body possibly was a composite entity, staffed by monks of diverse ethnic backgrounds and had trained at different monastic schools.[110]

A final detail of which to take stock is that the religious behavior that the Armenian historians attribute to Hűlegű coincides with the period in which he progressively withdrew from military affairs. It is especially conspicuous that Hűlegű became more and more devotionally inclined during the time he pulled back his forces from Syria to await the outcome of the dynastic struggle between his brothers Qubilai and Ariγ Bőke. It was also at this juncture that he gave precedence to spiritual exercises after his forces had suffered defeat in the Caucasus at the hands of the Qipčaq Qanate in the war of 1261-1263.[111] In light of the contemporary military and potential political clashes that Hűlegű had to consider, it is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that he increasingly turned to the spiritual consolation, empowerment, and self-actualization of Buddhism.

With the establishment of the temple at Labnasagut, Hűlegű's support that made religious life possible, his deference to and reliance on the *toyins* and *baqsis*, and the profound adoration he paid to their cult under the guidance of the principal monk at Labansagut, prove beyond any real doubt that Hűlegű acted as a fully observant believer who revered the Three Jewels: the Buddhas Śākyamuni and Maitreya, the Dharma, and the clergy.[112] In doing so, Hűlegű manifested the attributes

110 As a Buddhist, Hűlegű need not have favored one school over another. With respect to Tibetan Buddhism, Giuseppe Tucci has called attention to the fact that the layman "knows no partiality in his worship of monks and monasteries. In his eyes every monk possesses the sacred value which comes to him through his belonging to the Community, the third of the 'Three Jewels,' and is therefore deserving of the greatest veneration, without distinction of doctrinal affiliation or sect." See *Religions of Tibet*, p. 169.

111 See P. Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," pp. 230-231 and 233 ff.; and Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," pp. 353-354. Interestingly enough, this was the time when Hűlegű sought and subsequently received confirmation as ruler of domain he had carved out. According to the *YS*. 3/51, after the fall of the Caliphate in 1258, the Il-Qan sent an envoy to Qara Qorum to present captives taken in the war. In 1262, Qubilai's officials arrived to invest Hűlegű as "the ruler (*pādshāh*) of the lands from the waters of the Amu Darya to the farthest reaches of Egypt and Syria." See Allsen, "Changing Forms of Legitimation in Mongol Iran,' *Rulers from the Steppe, State Formation on the Eurasian Periphery*, edited by Gary Seaman and Daniel Marks, Los Angeles 1991, 223-241, pp. 226-227.

112 Scriptural sources define an individual as Buddhist as someone who takes refuge in the Three Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma and the monastic community. The Buddha, his teaching and the community of his followers are called jewels "because they are precious and rare. It is said that it is difficult to encounter them in the cycle of rebirth and when they are encountered they are of great value." The refuge ceremony by which one takes refuge in the Three Jewels constitutes the "most widely performed ritual in the Buddhist

that define Buddhist civilization and he, along with the majority of his descendants who ruled as Il-Qans until Ghazan's conversion to Islam in 1295, belong in the company of religiously-inspired Buddhist dynasties engendered by the faith.[113]

VI. The Heritage of Il-Qanid Buddhism

What is distinctive about Hűlegű's convictions is that he was neither a solitary religious eccentric nor an extremist whose beliefs and practices died with him. His

world." See Lopez, *Buddhism in Practice*, edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr., Princeton 1995, p.12. For his part, Giuseppe Tucci notes that taking refuge in the Three Jewels is what "divides the Buddhist from the non-Buddhist." Tucci also states that in everyday life the layman constantly repeats the threefold formula of taking refuge. See *Religions of Tibet*, pp. 48-49 and 169.

113 The colophon of a commentary to the *Madhyamakāvatrabhāyşā* refers to an "unbroken family line of religious emperors" of Hsia. See Van der Kuip, "*Jayānanda*," p. 192, and Ruth Dunnell, "Hsia Origins of the Yuan Imperial Preceptor,"p. 95. For numerous examples of the righteous and venerable religious epithets by which the Uyyur colophons of scriptural sources refer to members of the Mongol/Yuan imperial line, see Zieme, *Religion und Gesellschaft im Uigurischen Königreich*, pp. 74-89. For its part, the Mongol/Yuan dynasty proclaimed members of its ruling line in a similar fashion. Thus, the Mongol version of the Chü-yung-kuan inscription, ca. 1343, refers to the emperor in terms of his religious attainments and merit-generating deeds: "Because of the firmness of [this] Bodhisattva (Toyon Temür Qayan), performing various matters faultlessly, he impeccably completed with no delay this stupa with long-lasting stones that line the ravine [of Chü-yung-kuan]. Having erected this immaculate stupa-temple, he entrusted the Lama Anandadhvaja sri-bhadra to perform the consecration, saturating it (the stupa-temple) with [supernatural] power and increasing the merit; he perfectly completed for His Serene Holiness (*alt'an geg.en*) what was intended. Let the requital for the aforesaid fruits of merits [which accrued due to constructing the stupa-temple] be fulfilled with the potency of this true, sublime and great merit to the protector of the nation, the emperor, the genius-inspired Bodhisattva-master, and let blessings and prosperity increase eternally: May the Three Jewels, the greatly virtuous ornaments of the crown of the head (*sinciput*) of the master of all, the emperor of the nation, the imperial grace, delivering immense merits and powers, transfer [those same merits for] the bliss of the great multitude of creatures....May the lifespan , merit and happiness(?) of the Bodhisattva-Emperor, who is like a golden ornament [and] red ruby, of the senior wives as well as the heir-apparent, increase while the bliss of the worthy Dharma is always bestowed upon them." My translation is based on text established by Louis Ligeti, *Monuments en écriture 'Phagspa, pieces de chancellerie en transcription chinoise*, Budapest 1972, pp. 95-97.

abiding faith in Buddhism and the forms of devotion he followed were not peculiar in any way. Far from being unique or superficial and having a negligible effect, Hűlegű's convictions had a discernible impact on the Buddhist sensibilities of later generations of his descendants, particularly those who reigned as Il-Qans. In the larger scheme of things, there is sound support for these assertions based on known parallels in the Sino-Mongol donative epigraphs (e.g., see the Appendix at the conclusion of this paper regarding the support Qubilai provided to the dynastic Cult of Mahākāla). In addition to Hűlegű's early patronage of Ch'an Buddhism, and his sponsorship of the temples at Khoy and Marāgheh and Tibetan subsects, the continuing development of Il-Qanid Buddhism took shape under the influence of preeminent monastics such as those at Labnasagut and other clergy invited from far and wide to serve the ruling line. Though no further reference to Labnasagut *per se* occurs in the sources, the Il-Qans continued to use Ala-tay as their summer pastures and hub of political and military affairs. Whether at Labnasagut or other sanctuaries, Rashīd al-Dīn verifies the fact of their enduring reverence for the faith of their fathers, and that like Hűlegű they too showed a marked preference for inclusion in the religious pursuits to which the Buddhist monks devoted themselves:[114]

> It should not be kept secret from the people of the world that when the sovereign of Islam (i.e., Ghazan) – may his realm be forever fortified – was in childhood, his grandfather, Abaqa Qan, himself supported, cared for and protected him. [Abaqa Qan] appointed to look after him and nominated as his tutors *bakhsi*-idolaters. And in consequence of that, their teaching became firmly established within him, in particular because the religious beliefs of his forebears were of the same teaching, and they followed its way. Idolatry, which was entirely eliminated with the start of Islam in all regions, where they use to profess it, in their time (i.e., the time of Ghazan's forebears) showed itself again. This community [of idolaters] became stronger as they (i.e., Hűlegű and his descendants) conveyed with full honors and respect *bakhsis* from India, Kashmir, Khitai, and Uyγuristan, built everywhere idol-temples,[115] and spent enormous wealth on this [community]. The cause of their doctrine prospered extraordinarily as all could observe with their own eyes. The sovereign of Islam (i.e., Ghazan) was continuously found together with the *bakhsis* in the idol-temples, and used to study their religion, and with every [passing] day his disposition for that subject grew and belief in this way became stronger. When Abaqa Qan died and his (i.e., Ghazan's) father, Arγun Qan, sent him to rule over and command the troops in Khurāsān, at the city of Khabūshān he built impos-

114 Rashīd al-Dīn, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 3, p. 204.

115 See nn. 95-100 and 113 above for the comparable building activities that occurred during the reigns of Mongol emperors and princes.

ing idol temples and a large part of his time he spent in debates,[116] eating with the *bakhsis* in these idol-temples.

This account reveals the transmission of Buddhism as a cultural heritage. It links the Il-Qans to their ancestral line (as the Sino-Mongol sources attest to Činggisid sponsorship of the monastic community since Ögödei's reign) and connects generations of Hülegü's descendants with the ongoing teaching of the doctrine. It was no small matter, then, as Rashīd al-Dīn relates that Hülegü's son, Abaqa, saw to it that the *baqsis* took charge of Ghazan's education, instruction that went beyond spiritual matters. Abaqa's choice of the *baqsis* as his grandson's mentors is entirely consistent with what one would expect of a family devoted to Buddhism. And as we shall see presently, Ghazan's father, Aryun, was himself an idolater," who built a temple for the religious community.[117] As members of the older generations of the Il-Qanid dynasty, they did

116 In this context it is instructive to note the routine of daily life in the monastic community. In the foremost monasteries (at least those instituted by Tsong kha pa and his successors who became successive Dalai Lamas), but no doubt earlier, the most significant observances took place every day in the central chapel where all the ordained monks assembled and tea was served three times. The religious ceremonies consisted of the reading of scriptures and the performance of prescribed rituals. With respect to Rashīd al-Dīn's comments concerning the time Ghazan spent in debates, it is noteworthy that disputations among students were an essential factor for students who aspired to be monks. Formal debate was regarded as a method necessary for the acquisition of religious truth and an important feature of schooling and examination. Tucci, *Religions of Tibet*, pp. 142-143; F. Sierksma, "Rtsod-pa: The Monachal disputations in Tibet," *IIJ* 8, 1964, 130-152, pp. 141-142; Alex Wayman, "The Rules of debate according to Asaṅga," *JOAS* 78, 1958, 29-40.

117 Abaqa, according to Rashīd al Dīn, assigned Bārqi, a Qatai *baqsi*, to educate Ghazan and instruct him Mongol and Uyyur writing and in their sciences and arts. Doerfer, TMEN, v. 2, pp. 271-272. Spuler, in his entry on the IlKhāns, *Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 1122*, describes Aryun as a promoter of the Buddhist mission who built many temples and that Abaqa was "zealously devoted to Buddhism." P. Jackson, for his part, holds that both Abaqa and Aryun personally acknowledged Buddhism but were not particularly pious. Under the medical care of an Indian monk, Aryun withdrew into "virtual seclusion [at his capital] in Tabrīz, where he was accessible only to the baksis" and a few others. Note the entries written by Jackson in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, London 1987, v. 1 pp. 61-63 for Abaqa, and v. 2, pp. 402-404 for Aryun.

W. Barthold identifies the temple built by Aryun as being located in the Shanab (also known as Arghuniyya), a village in the vicinity of Tabrīz. A painting of Aryun adorned the temple's walls. See Barthold, *An Historical Geography of Iran*, translated by Svat Soucek and edited with an introduction by C.E. Bosworth, Princeton 1984, p. 219.

not neglect to pass on Buddhist learning to younger members of the ruling line. Ghazan, an able and intelligent student, devoted himself to Buddhist precepts and espoused the teachings of the faith, because, according to Rashīd al-Dīn, "the religious beliefs of [Ghazan's] forebears were of the same teaching, and they followed its way." As the sequence of belief passed from generation to generation, "[t]he cause of their doctrine prospered extraordinarily as all could observe with their own eyes." By reference to these details, Rashīd al-Dīn plainly establishes the fact of the continuity of the dynasty's Buddhist identity. On this matter, it is instructive to recall that the Činggisid elite had accepted the guidance of Buddhist masters at least since the reign of Güyüg. And Ghazan, for his part, not only knew the creed of his extended family and kept faith with it – but he appears to have gone so far as to seek monastic training – and thus exceeded his most devout kinsmen in personal piety and in sponsorship of the monastic community. Taking the Činggisids of Mongolia as an example, whom we have noted each generation's involvement corroborated by the Sino-Mongol sources, and as declared by Möngke, Buddhism's universalist ideals lent force to the imperial enterprise.

Consequently, it can be concluded that Buddhism comprised a persunasive and abidng influence in the lives of the early Il-Qans. As far as successive generations were concerned, with the exception of Hülegü's seventh son, Tegüder, who became a Muslim and ruled as Sultan Ahmad (1282-1284), the ruling house not only took pride in its Buddhist heritage, but continuously undertook measures to invigorate it. All manner of foreign monks received invitations to the Il-Qanid court, which built a number of sanctuaries across the realm, thereby enabling the various clerical orders to achieve their religious goals and assisted them in spreading the Dharma. Given Rashīd al-Dīn's account of the relocation of foreign monks to the Il-Qanid domain and the momentum they lent to the teaching of the Buddhist doctrine, it is not surprising that Ghazan's merit-generating efforts of building temples, and his active involvement in communal religious learning followed in steps reminiscent of Hülegü's solemn Buddhist convictions, as related by Kirakos and Vardan. In contrast to the received interpretation that the Il-Qans dabbled in Buddhism, then, the evidence reveals that Hülegü, his successors, Abaqa, Aryun, Ghazan, and as shall be demonstrated, Gaikhatu too, kept faith with the belief of their forefathers.

VII. Gaikhatu~Īriṅgin Dūrji, Acolyte of Vajrayāna Buddhism

In the interests of completeness, some substantive remarks can be made concerning Aryun's younger brother, Gaikhatu, whose penchant for Buddhism was consistent with those of other princes raised in the Buddhist milieu of the House of Hülegü. Although only a single event – Gaikhatu's accession as sovereign in 1291/1292 –

reveals a great deal about his personal Buddhist zeal, and provides evidence of the development of the monastic practices.[118] All told, Gaikhatu began his reign (1291-1295) at Ala-tay in a ceremony at which local *baqsis* took a visible and vocal part, conferring on him the name of Īriñgin Dūrji (as transcribed in Arabic script).[119] By holding the induction rites in this setting, i.e., at Hűlegű's old summer capital, in relative proximity to Labnasagut, it became possible to align those components of faith and state much cherished by the Činggisids. Those in authority sought to justify Gaikhatu's induction as sovereign by connecting him with traditional potent Buddhist symbols, especially those transmitted by means of a form of royal unction (*abhiśeka*), a rite employed for the coronation ritual of kings that has a history stretching back at least as far as the seventh century C.E.[120] Vajrayāna Buddhism

118 Scholarly disagreement persists over the exact date of Gaikhatu's formal accession. Jahn's edition of Rashīd al-Dīn's *Ta'rīkh-i mubārak-i Ghāzānī, Geschichtedes IlHāne Abāgā bis Gaiḫātū (1265-1295)*, 'S-Gravenhage 1957, pp. 47 and 49. Jahn, cites Waśśaf, *Ta'rīkh-i Waśśaf*, Bombay 1852, p. 260 in his article, "Paper currency in Iran, A Contribution to the cultural and economic history of Iran in the Mongol period," *Journal of Asian History* 4, 1970, 101-135, pp. 105 and 126, n. 106. Jahn dates Gaikhatu's ceremonial coronation at Ala-tay to have occurred on 29 June 1292. Gaikhat's investiture by Buddhist monks is said by Allsen to have taken place in July 1291 and a second time a month later. *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, Cambridge 2001, p. 29. According to Spuler, Gaikhatu ascended the throne 22 July 1291, at which time he "adopted the Buddhist (Tibetan) name Rin-chen rDo-rje 'precious jewel." See"Gaykhatu," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, edited by B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat, and J. Schacht, Leiden 1965, v. 2, p. 982. Another opinion is that Gaikhatu first received acclamation at the *quriltai* held near Akhlāt on 23 July 1291," and that his actual enthronement ceremony was held a year later. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History," p. 373.

119 Pelliot called attention to the edict of investiture sent by Qubilai, in which the epithet question was conferred on Gaikhatu. See *Notes on Marco Polo*, v. 2, p.817; Jahn, "Paper currency in Iran, p. 126. It is as *I-lien to-erh-chih* (<Mongol: *Irinǰin-dorǰi* < Tibetan: R*in-chen rdo-rje*) that the *YS* 107/2721 preserves his name.

120 It has pointed out by D.L. Snellgrove that a "form of royal consecration had been adopted in certain Buddhist circles by the seventh century A.D." As sketched by him, the *abhiśeka* ceremony derived from the text of the *Manjuśrīmūakalpa*, indicating that the aspirant, seeking the *abhiśeka* of universal sovereignty declares: "I wish to enter the secret circle of that release which transcends all that pertains to this world; I wish to attain buddhahood involving universal sovereignty in the dharma. In brief, may I become a Buddha." Snellgrove underscores the fact that the aspirant appears to "desire as much worldly success as buddhahood, and thus it was brahmanical ritual that most easily provided the substance of the actual ceremonial." See "The Notion of Divine Kingship in Tantric Buddhism," *The Sacral Kingship, Contributions to the Central Theme of the*

holds the *abhiśeka* ritual to be of special importance and a variety of Tantric texts contain a wealth of information concerning initiations and coronation rituals, both of which Mongol traditions ascribe to the *abhiśeka* that Qubilai obtained from the Tibetan lamas attached to his court.[121] In attempting to determine the religious aims of Gaikhatu's accession, and more tellingly, to comprehend the evolution of Il-Qanid Buddhism and its network of interrelations with the monastic community, it will prove instructive to focus attention on two matters pertaining to his investiture: First, we need to determine the Il-Qanid ruling house's communal preferences, so as to know the doctrinal derivation of the royal *abhiśeka* ceremony; and, second, we have to identify the specific exegetical tradition and procedures that the officiating *baqsis* observed when they solemnly installed Gaikhatu as sovereign and Buddhist postulant.

VIIIth International Congress for the History of Religions (Rome Aprill 1955), Leiden 1959, 204-218, pp. 206-207.

A further factor to consider arises from the realization that the royal consecration goes back to Indian Buddhists who had appropriated the ceremony of *abhiṣeka* (=*dbang*), a rite first encountered in the *Brahmaṇas* and *Vedas*, as the ceremonial anointing of sovereigns. In Indian usage, the *abhiśeka* rite was received by emperors as part of the elaborate *rājasūya* ritual. Reduced to its simplest contours, the ceremony included the ruler's purification; anointment by the royal chaplain; accession on an astrologically auspicious day; presentation as sovereign by the royal chaplain, after which the newly consecrated sovereign is proclaimed by the names Brahman, Savitr, Indra, and Rudra. See F.W. Thomas' article, "*Abhiṣeka*" in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, New York 1908, v. 1, pp. 20-24. A more recent investigation of the *rājasūya* indicates that at the time the king receives unction, he "impersonates the god Varuna: 'It is Varuna whom they anoint,'" according to the *Śāṅkhāyana-śrautasūtra*. J.C. Heesterman, *The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration, The Rājasūya Described according to the Yajus Texts and Anno[ta]ted*, 'S-Gravenhage 1957, p. 85. For additional comments, see nn. 119 and 139 below.

121 Regarding Vajrayāna Buddhism and its place in the evolution of Buddhist beliefs and practice, see the introductory comments of Donald S. Lopez, Jr., editor, *Buddhism in Practice*. Princeton 1995, 3-36, pp. 6-7, 25-26, and 34. Vajrayāna, in its Tibetan form, assimilated the traditional Indian schoold (i.e., magico-gnostic teachings transmitted by means of the master-disciple relationship). Particularly significant was the spiritual continuity that linked master and disciple. Their spiritual bond represented a "link in a chain whch guarantees the continuing existence of the doctrine and of the mystical experience." Tucci, *Religions of Tibet*, p. 44; Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet*, London 1956, p. 33. See n. 163 below regarding the *abhiśeka* ritual received Qubilai.

Communal Connections

As already ascertained, a core group of lamas had taken up residence at Labnasagut in 1259, when Hűlegű founded Ala-taγ in 1259. As a sacred center, Labnasgut provided a constant and suitably solemn presence for monastics and belief in the efficacy of their doctrines explain why the site endured as an important destination over decacades for Hűlegű and his decendants. Intrinsic to its survival and liturgical practices were the ideas and devotional practices perpetuated by the lamas who drew on Tibetan religious precedents and rituals. Tibetan literary sources firmly support the proposition of links between the Il-Qans and the Phag-mo gru-pa and G.ya'-bzang-pa, both of which were Bka'-brgyud-pa subsects of Tibetan Buddhism. Spiritual ties between Labnasagut and these subsects may seem more reasonable if we recall that in 1253 Hűlegű's forces campaigned through Mnga'-ris in Western Tibet, then under the influence of another Bka'-brgyud-pa subsect, the 'Bri-gung-pa; then his troops undertook operations in Ho-hsi, the former Tangut territory, whose ruling house had earlier received the precepts of prominent lamas of several Bka'-brgyud-pa subsects.[122] Admittedly, the account of these incursions as preserved in the *Yuan-shih* lacks sufficient detail to confirm that the Mongol units either absorbed or captured lamas, and if so, if they were the clerics whom Hűlegű resettled at Ala-taγ's palace-*vihāra* complex of Labnasagut. Nevertheless, other telltale links between the Il-Qanid realm and the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastic order plainly show that the Il-Qans looked with favor on several of the school's subsects. Tibetan references to Hűlegű's patronage of the 'Bri-gung-pa abbot, Spyan-snga rin-po-che Grags-pa 'byung-gnas (d. 1256) and the Phags-mo gru-pa abbot, Rgyal-ba rin-po-che Grags-pa brtson-'grus (d. 1257), reveal that both hierarchs received offerings from the Il-Qan on several occasions. At the very least, in convention with Buddhist custom, where such gifts were essential for obtaining a Buddhist master's precepts, Hűlegű conformably made offerings for spiritual purposes, either in requesting or in return for receiving religious teachings.[123]

122 On the 'Bri-gung-pa influences in the west of Tibet, see Petech, "The Bri-guń-pa Sect,"p, 313-325. Concerning Bka'brgyud-pa relations with the Tangut ruling line, see Sperling, "Lama to the King of Hsia," *The Journal of the Tibet Society* 7, 1987, 31-50 and "Rtsa-mi lo-tsā-ba Sangs-rgyas grags-pa and the Tangut Background to Early Mongol-Tibetan Relations," *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Fagernes 1992*, edited by Per Kvaerne, Oslo 1994, 801-824, pp. 804-805; Dunnel, "Hsia Origins of the Yuan Imperial Preceptor," pp. 97-102. For the advance of Mongols forces into Western Tibet and the old Tangut region, see n. 54 above.

123 Both abbots were active during the time that Hűlegű's forces made the incursion into Western Tibet in 1253. Concerning these leading religious figures, see Sperling, "Hűlegű and Tibet," p. 151, n. 25. It also should be noted that a final presentation of Hűlegű's gifts reached Rgyal-ba rin-po-che Grags-pa brtson-'grus in 1267. As was noted in the

Il-Qanid interests in Bka'-brgyud-pa subsects, at least as measured by the Tibetan materials, more likely than not first arose from Hűlegű's share in the way the spoils system of the Mongol conquest was organized.[124] Under Hűlegű and then his descendants, lieutenants (T. *yul-bsrungs*) of the Il-Qans took up residence in Tibet among the Phag-mo gru-pa. And in 1290, an Il-Qanid contingent provided military assistance to the 'Bri-gung-pa in their conflict with the Sa-skya pa order favored by Qubilai; troops loyal to him took the field to gain victory for the Sa-skya-pa .[125] Il-Qanid dominion over locales in Western Tibetan long under 'Bri-gung-pa influence and direct relations with the Bka'-brgyud-pa subsects suffice to demonstrate several degrees of interaction between the House of Hűlegű and elements of the Tibetan monastic order for thirty-five years.

Whatever decisions had led Hűlegű to found Labnasagut in 1259, his sponsorship of the 'Bri-gung-pa since 1255 and the Phag-mo gru-pa in 1257, and his dominions in Western Tibet provide chronological and organizational markers that the Bka'-brgyud-pa school and its subsects were in a position to furnish a channel for spiritual and cultural contacts with the Il-Qanid court. As a result of the Tibetan evidence, there certainly is reason to emphasize the fact that Hűlegű would have found Bka'-brgyud-pa monks acceptable for the establishment of the palace-*vihāra* complex at Ala-tay. So, finding no other monastic order pertaining to the Il-Qanid court mentioned in the Tibetan sources, it provisionally may be concluded that Labnasagut and the Bka'-brgyud-pa had common communal origins, jointly held doctrines, and shared interpretations of what they stood for. In short, this common ground, as shall be demonstrated, agrees perfectly with the context of the Buddhist rite that accompanied Gaikhatu's coronation. That the officiating clergy of the rite came from nearby Labnasagut stands to reason; that they emulated the Bka'-

case of the alms Hűlegű gave the Chan monk, Hai-yün, (cf. nn. 13-16 above), generous donatins to leading clergymen were the norm for postulants seeking religious teachings and initiations. Most, likely, the lamas of the Bka'-brgyud-pa subsects who transmitted their precepts to Hűlegű resided in the Il-Qan's domain and the gifts were expressions of thanks made to the monastic order's main houses in Tibet. On the subject of gifts made for spiritual teachings and guidance, see Tucci, *Religions of Tibet*, p. 26.

124 A Tibetan source, the *Si-tu bka'-chems*, by T'ai Si-tu Byang-chub rgyal mtshan (1302-1364), relates that at an undetermined date following Mőngke's accession in 1251, the Toluids parceled out among themselves the Bka'-brgyud-pa subsects: Mőngke had mastery over the 'Bri-gung-pa. Qubilai held rights to the Tshal-pa, Hűlegű had authority over the Phags-mo gru-pa, and Ariγ Böke had control of the Stag-lung-pa. Each of them dispatched lieutenants (T. *yul-bsrungs*) as resident overseers to look after their interests. Sperling, "Hűlegű and Tibet," pp. 148-149 and 151.

125 Sperling, "Hűlegű and Tibet," pp. 153 and 155-156.

brgyud-pa's *abhiśeka* ritual will become clear from the ensuing reconstruction of the Buddhist rite that occurred at the time of his accession.

Exegetical traditions and initiatory techniques of Vajrayāna Buddhism

Established relations, even those based in part on tribute, between the Il-Qans and the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastic order and its subsects should not be taken to overshadow the personal spiritual bonds that the Il-Qanid court formed with the clergy. Once the ecclesiasitc authority of the Bka'-brgyud-pa is recognized as being the called for source of exegetical authority and initiatory patterns pertaining to Gaikhatu's investiture, his accession will be seen to fit into the broader Tantric doctrinal systems of Vajrayāna Buddhism that the cream of the Činggisid family upheld.[126] To give substance to these points, we need to be concerned with the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* and closely related commentarial traditions, a cycle of texts on which the founding masters of the Bka'-brgyud-pa placed major emphasis.[127] The texts of the

126 The aim of Tantric practice is to relate the individual to supramundane forces or divinities. "In so doing, it makes use of two widely disparate systems of analogy. One procedure associates man and the divine by means of rules applicable to all practitioners. The other procedure assigns persons to one or another Buddha family according to the dominant personality traits of the individual practitioner." Wayman, "Esoteric Buddhism," *Buddhism and Asian History*, edited by Joseph M. Kitagawa and Mark D. Cummings, London 1989, 241-256, p. 246. See David Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva in the Governance of the Ching Empire," *HJAS 38, 1978, 5-34*, pp. 11-15, regarding Qubilai's devotion and that of his descendants to the Tibetan form Vajrayāna Buddhism.

127 The *Guhyasamāja-tantra* is perhaps the most important Tantric text associated with the Bka'-brgyud-pa and was widely circulated in Western Tibet due to the earlier influence of Rin-chen bzang-po and his circle. See Tucci, *The Temples of Western Tibet and Their Artistic Symbolism, Indo Tibetica III.2*, New Delhi 1989, p. 182. The exegetical literature of the Bka'-brgyud-pa is replete with the record of transmissions of Vajrayāna teachings, initations, and precepts inspired by Indian Buddhist masters. For a review of the doctrinal development of the Bka'-brgyud-pa, especially the efforts of its early Indian masters and their Tibetan disciples, see Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet*, pp. 140-157.

Wayman has provided a list of the principal texts, commentators, literary history and teaching lineages of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. He has tentatively dated the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* as a work of the fourth century C.E. and notes that its commentaries continued to be written by Tibetan through the twelfth century. For an introduction to the substance of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, see his *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra, the Arcane Lore of Forty Verses, A Buddhist Tantra Commentary*, Delhi 1977, 84-136, especially pp. 91-104. As noted by Snellgrove, the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* provides authoritative insights into the subject of royal investiture. See "The Notion of Divine Kingship," p. 215.

Guhyasamāja cycle indicate a recognized procedure existed for the *abhiśeka* (T. *bum dbang*), a ritual aspersion consisting of five interlated *abhiśekas*. As required by the precepts laid down in the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, postulants had to commit themselves fully to the guidance of a preceptor who moulded their spiritual behavior in accordance with the requisite vows and pledges that they took.[128] By submitting to his incontestable authority in matters of faith, and by dint of undertaking a direct path to enlightenment, the postulants successfully experienced the purification of their stream of consciousness needed to pursue Vajrayāna practices. Only then would the preceptor, a learned Vajra-teacher (S. *vajra-ācārya*) grant them access to the mandala ceremony where he bestowed the *abhiśeka*.[129]

Royal Unction (Abhiśeka)

To clarify: Gaikhatu, at the quriltai of 29 June 1292, with an edict of investiture in hand, ascended the throne at the capital at Ala-tay, where he received the name Īriñgin Dūrji from the Buddhist monks (*baqsis*) known to be present.[130] In the aftermath of this event, his decrees, correspondence, and currency identified him by the Tibeto-Mongol name Īriñgin Dūrji. Interestingly enough, this name change can be traced directly to the Bka'-brgyud-pa prerference for the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* and the structure and sequence of ritual aspersions required by the so-called Flask *abhiśeka* set forth therein. The Flask *Abhiśeka*, in the accounting of it in the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, had to take place in the mandala ceremony where the Vajra-teacher conferred the aspersions in accordance with stringent rules required for the higher forms of practice.[131] Reduced to its simplest contours, the Flask *Abhiśeka* entailed that the postulant receive five separate but interrelated *abhiśekas*: 1. Diadem *abhiśeka*; 2. Diamond *abhiśeka*; 3. Mirror *abhiśeka*; 4. Name *abhiśeka*; and 5.

128 Wayman. *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, p. 69.

129 As regards the liturgy of the mandala rite propounded by the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, see Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, New York 1970, pp. 85-107, especially p. 89.

130 Jahn, "Paper Currency in Iran," p. 126. For the bestowal to Gaikatu of the name Īriñgin Dūrji by resident *baqsis*, see Allsen, *Culture and Conquest*, p. 29.

131 Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, pp. 146-147 and 161-163. In reference to the Flask *abhiśeka*, Mkhas-grub-rje (1385-1438), a disciple of Tsong-kha-pa, states: It is not right to confer the [three] higher initiations upon one who has not been conferred the initation of the flask; and the one who has not been introduced into the mandala and has not faced the deities should not be conferred any initation, because the attaintment of any initiation would be indecisive [in his case]. Mkhas grub rje, *Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras, Rgyud sde spyihi par gźag pa rgyas par brjod*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, The Hague 1968, p. 329.

Bell *abhiśeka*. Although the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* does not supply a description of any of these *abhiśekas*, their content can be discovered by analogy with the ensuing brief explanation of *abhiśekas* found in the *Hevajrasekaprakriyā-tantra*.[132] Submitting to the instructions of the Vajra-teacher, the postulant went through the necessary steps and obtained the first three *abhiśekas*, after which he advanced to the Name *abhiśeka*. At this juncture, the postulant was instructed to envision himself as the Buddha Vairocana.[133] The Vajra-teacher then proceeded to bestow the Name *abhiśeka*, telling the postulant: "I anoint you Vajrasattva,[134] by means of consecra-

132 Louis Finot, "Manuscrits sanskrits de Sādhana's retrouvés en Chine," *JA* 225, 1934, 1-86, pp. 31-34 and Snellgrove, "The Notion of Divine Kingship," p. 215. Wayman, "Esoteric Buddhism," pp. 253-254, has outlined the five *abhiśekas* according to the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. A similar system, in which the order of the *abhiśekas* varies somewhat, is described at length by Mkhas-grub-rje: "Although there are many inconsistencies in other schools, if one takes it [i.e., initation] in accordance with the *Guhyasamāja* school, there are eleven types of flask initations, which together with the higher initations, make fourteen." Mkhas grub rje, *Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, p. 313.

133 Vairocana (T. Rin-chen 'byung-ldan) is one of the thirty-two deities of the *Guhyasamāja*-cycle. For the deity's iconographic description, see Tucci, *Temples of Western Tibet*, p. 182. As stated in the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, one should contemplate Vairocana, one of the five celestial Buddhas (S. dhyāni-Buddhas or jinas), "stationed in the center of a clear sky. Having imagined a wheel in his hand, one would be a *cakra-Vidyādhara*. Having imagined the 'Great Wheel' family as the best praxis of Buddha body, one would enact with the knowledge diamond the best evocation (*sādhana*) of knowledge. Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, p. 30.

134 The Buddhist Tantras refer to Vajrasattva as the sixth Buddha, including the deity among those generally referred to as the family of Five Buddhas – Vairocana, Amitābha, Aksobhya, Ratnasamnhava, and Amoghasiddhi. Wayman, "Esoteric Buddhism," p. 241 and *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, p. 130. On the Buddha families, see n. 135 below.

Another commentator on the *Guhyasamāja*-cycle, Śri Lakşmi, in her *Pañcakrama-ṭīkākrmārtha-prakāśikā*, describes in the following manner the adept who has united samsāra and nirvāna: "Just that is the non-dual knowledge, the Nirvana without fixed abode, Buddhahood, the state of Vajrasattva, as well as universal sovereignty." Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, p. 312.

According to a late Ch'ing dynasty iconographic work, the *Chu Fo Pu-sa sheng hsiang tsan*, a test ascribed to an unnamed Lcang-skya Qutuytu, the depiction of Vajrasattva is glossed in Mongolian as *bodhi saduwa vačir saduwa* "Bodhisattva-Vajrasattva." See Walter Eugene Clark, *Two Lamaistic Pantheons, from Materials collected by the late Baron A. von Staël-Holstein*, New York 1965, p. 273, illustration no. 193.

tion (*abhiśeka*) with the name Vajra, oh Majesty (*Śrī*) [and added the name to which he attached the form] – vajra."[135]

A commentary on the Flask *Abhiśeka* by the Tibetan monk, Mkhas-grub-rje, supplies additional information on the efficacy of the Name *abhiśeka*: "Through the name initation [= *abhiśeka*], one esatablishes the capacity of the name indicated by the prophecy, 'You will be a Tathāgata of such a name when becoming a Buddha in that family.'"[136]

Gaikhatu's investiture as sovereign, a real-life situation, happening to a well-known historical figure, at a place often frequented by the Il-Qans, most likely was witnessed by Rashīd al Dīn, who at that time served the court as a steward. Nfortunately, his references to these events pay scant attention to the Buddhist aspects of Gaikhatu's accession. The Buddhist significance of the ceremony nevertheless is underscored by several well-marked elements: first the investiture took place at Ala-tay – near to Labnasagut, the cradle of Il-Qanid Buddhism and one of the realm's most hallowed sites – where in times past Hűlegű had immersed himself in merit-making and devotional acts; second, Gaikhatu's assumption of the Tibeto-Mongol name Īriṅgin Dūrji that the *baqsis* bestowed on him; an event which coincided with his investiture; and third, his edicts, correspondence and money thereafter bore the name received from the *baqsis*.

Given what the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* advocates that the Vajra-teacher instruct the postulant and the conferral of the Flask *Abhiśekas* it seems clear that the spiritual aspects of Gaikhatu's investiture were unlikely to be lost on the Il-Qanid monastic community. But if the community of the faithful did in fact adhere to the *Guhyasamāja*-cycle, as I have reconstructed its use of the Flask *Abhiśekas*, we may ask what did these aspersions portend for Gaikhatu? For purposes of discussion, close examination of the Name *abhiśeka* (T. *ming-gi dbang bskur*) yields the following insight: the name Īriṅgin Dūrji carried with it sacral overtones associated with the higher forms of initiation. The name itself is analyzable as a direct borrowing from Tibeto-Mongolian *Irinjin-dorji* (< T. *Rin-chen rdo-rje*). While it has been correctly rendered as "Jewel Diamond," such an interpretation fails to account for the reli-

135 I have amended the statement translated by Finot, "Manuscrits sanskrits," p. 40, n. 1. He explicates the passage as follows: "Cele signifie que le disciple recoit, lors de son initation, un nom qui doit se terminer en –vajra, le premier terme étant laissé au choix de maitre: Amoghavajra, Advayavajra, Śāśvatavajra, etc." This observation indicates that it was the Vajra-teacher who chose the name Rin-chen > Irinjin for Gaikhatu following his *abhiśeka* as Vajrasattva.

The acquisition of the Name *abhiśeka*, according to Mkhas-grub-rje, endowed the postulant with the capacity of being a Tathāgata in accordance with the name when he became a Buddha in that family. *Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, p. 315.

136 For the identifaction of Mkhas-grub-rje, see n. 131 above. Regarding the Buddha familes, cf. nn. 133-135 above.

gious context in which the name was received. More precisely, the word *rdo-rje* stands for the Sanskrit vocable *vajra*, itself symbolic of Tantric sacred knowledge and power.[137] Another insight is provided by direct reference to the details of the Name *abhiśeka*: we may recall that the Vajra-teacher granted unction (*abhiśeka*) to the postulant, saying "I anoint you Vajrasattva, by means of consecration (*abhiśeka*) with the name Vajra, oh Majesty (*Śri*)," and then added a name that he attached the word – vajra (see nn. 134-135). This statement serves to illustrate that the name Gaikhatu received from the *baqsis* on the occasion of his coronation had define sacral overtones. If the description contained in the *Hevajrasekaprakriyā-tantra* accurately characterizes the Name *abhiśeka*, it follows that Gaikhatu obtained confirmation as Vajrasattva. Moreover, if we accept Mkhas-grub-rje's understanding of the Flask *Abhiśekas* as an interpretation consistent with the *Guhyasamāja* school, then it can be reasoned that Gaikhatu (~Īriṅgin Dūrji) as prophesied would become a Buddha in his lifetime.[138]. All in all, his complex status as Vajrasattva and Buddha in this lifetime and Bodhisattva-Vajrasattva carried with it associations of universal sovereignty (see n. 134). In no uncertain terms, then, the sacerdotal character of the Flask *Abhiśekas,* and especially the Name *abhiśeka*, plainly were intended to enlarge Gaikhatu's (~Īriṅgin Dūrji's) sacral status as sovereign.

As a matter of course the *abhiśekas* also would have entailed intimate spiritual bonds of the leading *baqsi* and the postulant Īriṅgin Dūrji.[139] The liturgical frame-

137 Vajra, according to Tucci, signifies "both 'thunderbolt' and 'diamond' but the latter meaning is the usual one and it indicates precisely the indefectibility of gnosis and the intangibility of the Divine Essence." *Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, p. 33, n. 1.

138 Tsong-kha-pa emphasizes the best praxis for becoming a Buddha in one's present life in his quote of Candrakīrti's *Pradīpoddyotana*, a commentary on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, pp. 280-281.

139 Direct instruction of the postulant was regarded as an essential guarantee for correctly interpreting the Tantric texts and properly understanding the spirit concealed in the content of the words. Instruction was geared to "leading the postulant to a better understanding of his own mind and to the achievement of insight into 'voidness' as the limiting state of things..., together with compassion." The preceptor held the highest authority in making the meaning of texts accessible and enabling them to be operative to the postulant. In other words, *the Guhyasamāja-tantra* required the explication of a learned preceptor to provide sufficient details in order for the postulant to go beyond the simple reading of the text and put the procedures it advocates and how to enact them into practice. On these points, see Tucci, *Religions of Tibet*, pp. 23 and 44-46.

The Indian master, Nāgārjuna (fl. second half of the eighth century) had a profound influence on Bka-brgyud-pa thought and practice. In his *Pancakrama*, Nāgārjuna stresses that the disciple should urge the preceptor (i.e., S. *guru*) to bestow the Flask *abhiśeka* and reveal to him its intrinsic meaning. As instructed Nāgārjuna, the postulant was to propitiate the preceptor (Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamāja-tantra*, pp. 320-321),

work, as propounded by the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* and other Tantras, unquestionably justifies us in placing in the foreground the preeminent authority of the principal *baqsi* (i.e, the Vajra-teacher). A key consequence of making the precepts of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* accessible and explaining its effectiveness to Īriṅgin Dūrji was the formation of the master-to-disciple bond that spiritually replicated the familial relationship of father to son.[140] In short, Īriṅgin Dūrji's commitment to Vajrayāna beliefs and his vested interest in the the master-to-disciple lineage into which he had been initated, makes it all but certain that, more likely than not, he continued to seek the oral instructions of his preceptor for understanding both the letter and spirit of the doctrine.[141] In recognition of the close bonds between the preceptor and the postulant, there is little reason to doubt that the monastic community and its privileges remained secure under Īriṅgin Dūrji's protection.

Īriṅgin Dūrji's investiture and royal unction at Ala-taγ, especially if viewed from the perspective of nearby Labnasagut, reveals the fact that Vajrayāna Buddhism had gained ascendancy as the source of Il-Qanid spiritual authority, religious culture, and the manner in which the sovereign and preceptor dealt with their shared religious interests. As a unifying, centralizing institution active in the ecclesiastical sphere, we may say that Īriṅgin Dūrji's master-to-disciple bond, as we have reconstructed it here, appears to represent a very rough equivalent to the Tangut/Hsi-hsia

> for a month or even a year, he should make offerings as he is able to that pleased guru....[The guru for his part, by] engaging the 'mind of enlightenment'...well disposes the flask [*abhiśeka*] and so on [to the disciple]; and at midnight the guru kindly initiates the good disciple. Having received initiation, the disciple at the time of dawn respectfully bows to the guru and pleases him with worshipful verses of praise....When that disciple, desirous of seeing the *abhisambodhi* which is the intrinsic nature of the universal void, had praised, then respectfully bowing to the guru, he should exhort him further ....the yogi [=guru], thus gratified by the recital of holy qualities, feeling compassion, then begins...
>
> In addition to supplying new details on the Flask *abhiśeka,* Nāgārjuna emphasizes the intimate relationship of preceptor to postulant.

140 Tucci has indicated that the master (guru), by means of living and direct contact, transmits the letter and spirit of the teaching. "The bond between master and disciple is a father-son relationship of a spiritual kind (*thugs sras)*, and as such incomparably more important than the bonds of blood relationship. *Religions of Tibet*, p. 44.

141 Initiation (i.e., *abhiśeka*) "conferred by one's master is the power (*dbang*) to practice a particular group of meditations together with the official transmission and the 'authority' (*lung*) to read the texts in which these are described; to which are added the the mastre's more precise instructions (*khrid*). He inherits this 'power' from his line of direct transmission (*bla-brgyud*), which goes back to a supreme divinity. So, the meditator does not forget to invoke the lineage in his ritual practice, to ensure the validity of what he is doing." R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, Stanford 1972, p. 179.

and Mongol/Yuan institution of Imperial Preceptor (Ch. *Ti-shih*) during the twelfth and thirteenh centuries. As the paramount office of faith and state of the Mongol/Yuan Empire, it reappeared with the appointment of the Sa-skya pa Lama 'Phags-pa Blos-gros rgyal-mtshan as Imperial Preceptor in 1271.[142] His successors, all Sa-skya-pa lamas, monopolized the office until the collapse of the Yuan dynasty in 1368.

Thus, if we accept the historicity of Il-Qanid-Bka'-brgyud-pa relations, and also acknowledge as valid the factual information of the monastic order's dependence on the *Guhyasamāja*-cycle, it follows that Gaitkhatu's *abhiśeka* as Īriñgin Dūrji took place in accordance with contemporary Tantric precepts and practices of Vajrayāna Buddhism. However imperfect our information about his Buddhist convictions and the historical details of his investiture may be, there shouldn't be any doubts that he had the appropriate means, motive and opportunity to engage in Tantric practices under the guidance of the spiritual leader of the Buddhist community. I stress these points because they illustrate how far the development of Il-Qanid Buddhism had come by the early 1290s in terms of the sovereign's personal relationship with his preceptor, the doctrines that influenced them, and the status of the sovereign as a sanctified ruler.

Titulature

This would bring our discussion to a close were it not for evidence regarding the use of name Īriñgin Dūrji. The numismatic evidence of the coinage and paper notes issued and circulated during his reign unambiguously identify this sovereign by the name Īriñgin Dūrji. In conformity with Islamic numismatic practice, this usage professed the faith of the head of state, albeit in this instance it referred to the ruler whose ceremonial accession had required the participation of the court's *baqsis* for its realization. As a consequence of his *abhiśekas*, the name Īriñgin Dūrji not only declared his Vajrayāna convictions and spiritual attainments, but explicitly stated his sovereignty.

Īriñgin Dūrji's accession as ruler enabled him to identifty himself as a Bodhisattva-Vajrasattva and future Buddha. Up to that time, Qubilai alone could claim the exalted prerogatives of the status of a reigning Bodhisattva-emperor. Only with his death in 1294 do Mongolian documentary sources begin to refer to his successors by their Buddhist titles.[143] For the time that their reigns of overlapped, Qubilai~

142 Sperling, "Lama to the King of Hsia," 85-111 and Dunnell, "Hsia Origins of the Yuan Imperial Preceptor," 85-111.

143 The medieval Sino-Mongol historical sources preserve initiation names in the form of propiatory epithets of a number of Mongol sovereigns, but the relevant texts provide no explanation of where or why they received them. Note, for example, the auspicious and

Sečen and Gaikhatu~Īrinğin Dūrji each assumed the religious mantle of Bodhisattvas and future Buddhas and because of the sacral identity inherent therein could claim to rule as Buddhist sovereigns charged with the duty of spreading and protecting the Dharma. The importance of this fact for the circumstances of Il-Qanid Buddhism appear to be fairly significant in that it suggests the the House of Hűlegű had acquired an advanced level of Buddhist learning and culture clearly comparable to that held by the House of Qubilai. Obviously, those who followed Īrinğin Dūrji on the throne of the Il-Qan's governed in accordance with Islamic principles and thus ruled as Muslim sultans and not as Bodhisattva-Vajrasattvas.

Judged by Muslim sources, Gaikhatu's name became synonymous with dissipation and licentiousness and his historical reputation probably received its dark colors as the result of Ghazan's conversion to Islam. Nevertheless, as Īrinğin Dūrji, however scandalous his personal behavior was, there exists no evidence to show that it ever imperiled the monastic community as a mainstay of the imperial line and that its spiritual activities presumably continued unabated. What still remains murky, apart from these sparse details, is how his belief in Buddhism crystallized beyond his name and in what ways it benefited the Buddhist community.

Whatver the case, there is no doubt as already noted and as we shall see again, up to the time of Gaikhatu accession as Īrinğin Dūrji, and most likely throughout his reign, members of the ruling house could immerse themselves diligently in religious studies and persevere in their pursuit of religious goals. Though Buddhists gained considerable notoreity among contemporary Muslim intellectuals who strongly objected to the conspicuous idolatry of the Il-Qans, successive generations of Hűlegű's descendants engaged in Buddhist practices much as did their cousins who ruled the Mongol/Yuan Empire. However, as a religious movement in Western Asia, nowhere do we find an indication that Buddhism constitued anything other than the concern of the Il-Qanid imperial household and court, with virtually no support even among the non-Činggisid Mongol elites themselves.

VIII. Dissolution of Il-Qanid Buddhism

Rashīd al-Dīn's comments, previously cited, have enabled us to see that Ghazan's faith ran deep. As the Il-Qanid regime neared the end of its fourth decade of rule, Buddhism remained the abiding faith of the ruling line. Ghazan, as could be expected of a pious imperial prince devoted to Buddhism, ascetically persevered in the

distinguished Mongol epithets, in addition to the Mongol forms of Sanskrit and Tibetan names of Qubilai and the majority of his decendants who bore such characteristic designations in addition to their personal names and Chinese reign titles. That such epithets of the Mongol sovereigns had religious resonance and sacral significance merits further investigation. I reserve discussion of this subject for another occasion.

established usages of observing the rites, being mindful of the Dharma as expressed in religious self-discipline, and in the building of temples for the purpose of advancing the religious life of the community of the faithful.[144]

> Out of a deep devotion to the [Buddhist] doctrine, he (i.e., Ghazan) built in Khabūshān in Khurasan soaring temples, and in this way followed all the prescriptions of this faith.[145] All the *bhikshus* and monks were highly astonished at these mortifications and exercises of self-denial.

It is hard to quarrel with the record of Ghazan's merit-generating acts combined with his immersion in Buddhist studies and practices as evidence of a sincere quest for spiritual fulfillment. Moreover, the active part he took in the clerical debates that were an essential component of monastic training signal his search for religious understanding and an intense engagement in the motifs and patterns of Buddhist cultural life. To place the aspirations of Hűlegű's brother, Qubilai, and their cousins in the Čaγatai Qanate for self-improvement, social harmony, and well-being of humanity as preserved in the epigraphical sources side by side with Il-Qanid Buddhism is instructive.[146]

Ghazan's conversion to Islam is all the more difficult to explain given the strength of his Buddhist devotions, so that his apostasy must have bewildered his monastic teachers and their clerical colleagues. His repudiation of Buddhism mirrors the transitional time of Mongol rule in the mid-1290s when Ghazan turned his intellect and talents to energetically direct political changes and economic reforms. While his religious interests changed dramatically, his initial motives apparently were guided by pragmatic concerns. The data tend to support the interpretation that initially he became a Muslim not from any conviction in the truth of Islam, but based his decision on factors of *realpolitik*. It was of course Aryun Aqa's son, Nawrūz, military governor of Khurasan, who posed a great danger to Prince Ghazan and the Il-Qanid Domain in rebelling agains the Il-Qan Aryun in 1289 and who continued the fight against Īriŋgin Dūrji until 1294.[147] The serious threat Nawrūz posed

144 Rashīd al-Dīn as quoted by Spuler, *History of the Mongols/ based on Eastern and Western Accounts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, Berekeley 1972, p. 145.

145 Blessings were said to result from commissioning the construction of temples, sacred sites, and images from which the sponsor of such meritorious acts would accrue spiritual benefits. Tucci, *Religions of Tibet*, p.24. Ghazan's efforts in this regard are consistent with the religious works of his great-grandfather Hűlegű who built Labnasagut, and temples at Khoy and Marāgheh, as well as the work of his father, Aryun, who built the temple at Shanab (i.e., Arghuniyya), near Tabrīz.

146 See nn. 6, 98, 112, 139, and 142.

147 At the time of Aryun's death in 1291, Nawrūz had caused Ghazan to be in full retreat, and as described by Rashīd al-Dīn, the "rapine and slaughter caused by the rebels were

to the regime set in motion the event leading to Ghazan's apostasy, with devatating effects for the Buddhist community. Ghazan's breach with Buddhism and his willingness and that of his amirs to become Muslims may be traced to their awareness of the genuine cultural and religious grievances of their Muslim subjects.

Nor for that matter can it be considered apart from the shift in the international balance of power. It is neither without interest, nor in my opinion coincidental, that Ghazan reportedly ceased his Buddhist devotions only a year and half after the death of Qubilai on 18 February 1294. It might therefore be argued that his decision to convert made it possible to distance himself and his regime from the Buddhist Great Qaγans who ruled the Mongol/Yuan Empire in the east. Doctrinal differences between the Bka'-brgyud-pa and Sa-skya-pa monastic orders, disgust over the outrageous personal behavior of Īriṅgin Dūrji, and Ghazan's need to set himself apart from his Buddhist predecessor all may be added to the mix of reasons culminating in his conversion. In any event, on 19 June 1295, Ghazan declared his faith in Islam to be followed nearly a month later by the conversion of his *amirs*. Even before his accession to the throne on 3 November 1295, when he assumed the Muslim name Mahmud and received the title of sultan, his new Islamic regime implemented an official policy of persecution of the non-Muslim population, attacks that seemingly fell hardest on the Buddhist monks:[148]

> When the Lord of Islam, Ghazan, became a Muslim, he commanded that all the idols should be broken and all the pagodas (*but* khāna) and (ātash-kada) destroyed, together with all the other temples the presence of which in Muslim countries is forbidden by the sharī'a, and that all the community (*jamā'at*) of the idolatrous bakhshi should be converted [forcibly] to Islam. But since the Most High God did not aid them, they had no true faith, but were Muslims only outwardly and by necessity, and in their district (*nābiya*) there were signs of unbelief (*kufr*) and of aberration (*dalālat*). After a certain time the King of Islam perceived their hypocrisy and said to them: "Let those among you who wish it return to India, to Kashmir, to Tibet, and to the countries whence they came; and let those who remain here

on a scale 'beyond description.'" Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," p. 370. For a time, Nawrūz aligned himself with the Ögödeid-Čaγataid bloc and convinced Qaidu and Du'a to invade Khurasan. Rashīd al-Dīn, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, translated by John A. Boyle, New Yor k 1971, p. 141. Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, University Park 1994, p. 123, notes that widely known stories depicted Nawrūz "as having demanded the conversion of Ghāzān in return for his pivotal [political and military] support."

148 Rashīd al-Dīn as cited by A. Bausani, "Religion under the Mongols," *The Cambridge History of Iran*, volume 5, edited by J.A. Boyle, Cambridge 1968, 538-549, p. 542. Also see Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," pp. 378-381.

cease to be hypocrites, and let them believe in that which they have in their hearts and cease from defiling with their hypocrisy the true religion of Islam. And if it should come to my ears that they are building fire-temples or pagodas, I will without hesitation put them to the sword." But some persevered in their hypocrisy, while others again returned to their wicked beliefs. And Ghazan said: "My father [Aryun] was an idolater and died an idolater and built for himself a temple which he made *vakf* for the community [of the bakhshi]. That temple I have destroyed; go ye there and live on alms [among those ruins].

It is in these terms that Rashīd al-Dīn conveyed the triumph of Islam, while at the same time revealing Ghazan's ambivalence in renouncing Buddhism. Overall, the narratives of Rashīd al-Dīn presented above furnish evidence of Ghazan's earlier devotion to Buddhism, reverence for the community of monks, and participation in its way of life. Nor is it coincidental that the description of Hülegü's and Ghazan's religious behavior, passion for building temples, and deep immersion in the community's way of life bear a close resemblance to one another. After becoming a Muslim, Ghazan stiplulated those who remained true to Buddhism be banished to their homelands, threatening to execute any monks found to have apostatized in that they sought to restore their temples. In the end, however, his former strongly held Buddhist beliefs appear to have resurfaced to the degree that he relented somewhat and permitted the remaining handful of monks to continue to persevere in their beliefs, living on alms in the temple he had caused to be demolished. It is worth noting, that in common with other the other Činggisid dynastic clusters that adhered and maintained devotion to the Dharma, Hülegü's descendants, by intellect and circumstances, attained more than a modest level of Buddhist lore that left an indelible mark on the regime. There is no doubt, given Ghazan's previous heartfelt religious motives and absorption in the teachings of the Dharma that Buddhist learning sharpened his intelligence, enriched his expereinces, and expanded his view of himself and the world around him.[149]

These few details enable us to determine that despite Ghazan's official stature as a Muslim sultan, and his open embrace of Islamic culture and its institutions by

149 Abaqa Qan, according to Rashīd al-Dīn, assigned Bārqi, a Qatai *baqsi*, to educate Ghazan and instruct him in Mongol and Uyyur writing and in their sciences and arts. Doerfer, *TMEN*, v. 2, pp. 271-272. In Boyle's opinion, Ghazan was the "greatest "of the Il-Qans. He clearly possessed great intelligence and purportedly had an understanding of "natural history, medicine, astronomy and chemistry (or more strictly alchemy)." A further indication of his intellectual development is the fact that in addition to his native Mongolian, "he was said to have had some knowledge of Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Kashmīrī, Tibetan, Chinese and Frankish (i.e. French or perhaps Latin) languages." Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," pp. 396-397.

which he sought to govern his realm, Buddhism continued to endure, albeit in severely reduced circumstances. It also is pertinent to our exposition that Rashīd al-Dīn furnishes explicit evidence that demonstrates the international composition of the Il-Qanid monastic community whose members had come from India, Kashmir, Tibet, Khitai, and Uyγuristan. This information is striking because it establishes a significant characteristic of Il-Qanid Buddhism. On the one hand, it identifies the composite makeup of the Il-Qanid Buddhist community at large, and, on the other hand, illustrates that ordained clerics and groups of monks found it advantageous to spread the Dharma among the Il-Qans, enabling the ruling house to have a wide array of sectarian doctrines and cultic forms to patronize. At all events, the relevant sources pertaining to Il-Qanid beliefs illustrate how the earlier generations of Ghazan family educated their heirs in the faith, and in many and significant ways, took responsibility in seeing that they were knowledgeable and observant Buddhists.[150]

Summing up the information germane to the discussion of Buddhism after the death of Hülegü in 1265, although Labnasgut receives no direct further mention in the Persian and Armenian sources, nevertheless we can draw the conclusion that Buddhism remained relevant to the ruling house.[151] Over the next three decades, as Rashīd al-Dīn relates, Hülegü's descendants sponsored the construction of Buddhist sacred sites and the installation of cult images, committing themselves and their offspring to the teachings of Buddhist masters of various streams of the faith, under whose guidance they studied religion and engaged in ritual practices. They maintained their faith openly. That is to say, the teaching of Buddhism as the preeminent influence in the religious and cultural lives of four generations of Il-Qans provides a benchmark for measuring the commitment to the Dharma of their Činggisid cousins

150 The medieval curriculum of higher education in the Buddhist universities of India and in the monastic centers of Tibet consisted of linguistics, grammar, and Sanskrit literary studies, requiring students to master epistemology, logic, and the art and rules of debate. Students also received instruction in medicine, pathology, arts and crafts, astrology and astronomy. See Lalmani Joshi, *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India (During the 7th and 8th Centuries A.D)*, Delhi 1967, pp. 161-162For comparative purposes, note that the Mongol/Yuan dynasts and their wives and children received initiations (*dbang*) from the Imperial Preceptor, 'Phags-pa, providing them with homilies on Tantric subjects. János Szerb, "Glosses on the oeuvre of the Bla-ma 'Phags-pa: III. The 'Patron-Patronized' Relationship," *Tibetan History and Language, Studies dedicated to Uray Géza on his seventieth Birthday*, herausgegeben von Ernst Steinkellner, Wien 1991, 165-173, pp. 166-167.

151 Labnasagut most likely suffered the same fate as the other Buddhist sacred sites that Ghazan ordered expunged. Note the remarks of Ball, "The Imamzadeh Ma'sum at Vardjovi: A Rock-cut Il-Khanid Complex near Marageh," pp. 329-340.

in other Mongol Qanates.[152] Moreover, if the meritorious acts and declarations of faith made by Möngke, Qubilai and Hülegü are any indication, then, with the exception of Tegüder/Ahmad and perhaps Baidu, Il-Qanid imperial princes from Abaqa to Ghazan and possibly Öljeitü (the latter two prior to their conversion to Islam) can be regarded as observant believers cognizant of Buddhist thought and doctrines.[153]

IX. Conclusion

The findings of the various parts of the foregoing exposition may be stated as follows:

1. Labnasagut constitutes a focal point and organizational center of Buddhism from the very beginning of the Il-Qanid Empire, the one site for which conclusive historical sources have survived. Most remarkable in terms of relative chronology is the fact that Il-Qanid Buddhism emerged before the impact of Tibetan Buddhism had taken institutional form in the Mongol/Yuan Qanate under the patronage of Qubilai and the guidance of his spiritual advisor, the Lama 'Phags-pa Blos gros rgyal mtshan dpal bzang pa in 1271. Persian and Armenian texts serve to establish the facts that Hülegü provided land for the order of monks in 1259, had the temple built at his capital of Ala-tay in the years 1261-1265, and donated sacred images of

152 See *inter alia*, Zeime, *Religion und Gesellschaft*, pp. 50-51, 52-60, 72-82. Nor were Činggisid devotees of Buddhism unknown beyond the Mongol/Yuan and Čayatai Qanates. Buddhism, as a number of investigators have intimated, was practiced by members of the ruling house of the Qipčaq Qanate, the Činggisid domain that would later be known as the Golden Horde. A reference to the presence of an elite group of Uyγur Buddhist monks is found in the work of the Mamluk historian al-Birzālī (d. 1338-1339). In his *al-Muqtafā li-tārīkh ash-Shayk Shihāb ad-Dīn Abī Shāmah*, he records that the Jočid Qan Toqtoγa (r.1290- 1312) was a member of the "school" of idol-worshippers and that he accorded great respect to the "Uyguriyah" *baqsis* and sorcerers. See DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, p. 112. It was also noted by al-Birzālī that Toqtoγa's successor, a convert to Islam, implemented a totally different policy: Özbäk Qan [r. 1313-1340] put to death many Uyγurs who were *baqsi*-priests and sorcerers. Dorefer, TMEN, v. 2, p. 274.

153 Given the Buddhist propensities of his father Aryun and the religious education his grandfather, Abaqa Qan, ordered that Ghazan receive, it is reasonable to assume that his brother and successor, Khar-Banda, also favored the Dharma and its adherents. See Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans," pp. 400-401. In light of the naming pattern described earlier (cf. n 118 above), one may surmise that Khar-Banda's auspicious epithet "Öljeitü," the name under which he ruled as Il-Qan, recalls the names by which the Buddhist sovereigns of the Yuan dynasty appear to have styled themselves.

the Buddhas Śākyamuni and Maitreya as the devotional objects that made Buddhist worship possible. In addition to these merit-generating acts, the Il-Qan wholly devoted himself to spiritual exercises under the guidance of Labnasagut's celebrant-monk, observed the essentials of the faith, and took part in the religious life of the monastic community. His efforts, as seen from the standpoint of the Buddhist tradition, represent veneration of the Three Jewels – the Buddha, the Dharma, and the order of monks – thereby leaving no doubt that as a layman Hűlegű complied to the full extent with the beliefs and practices of Buddhism. One is, then, fully justified to speak of him as the initiator and primary sponsor of Il-Qanid Buddhism, whose real and active concerns were those of a devout believer and underscore the importance of Labnasagut for its religious and architectural heritage.

2. In contrast to his image as a conqueror, Hűlegű's commitment to the faith – his piety, practice and patronage – is essential for getting a fuller understanding of his character and temperament. He carried on the tradition of Mongol imperial devotion to Buddhism in the Il-Qanid domain in a manner consistent with the faith as already practiced by the Činggisid imperial house in the 1240s and 50s. Religious devotion and patronage emanated from the throne of the Il-Qans in conformity with the tenets professed in holy scripture and were handed down as a family regime from generation to generation of the ruling house.

3. At the present level of research pertaining to Il-Qanid Buddhism, the most that can be said regarding the general composition of its layered monastic community is that it consisted of Kashmiri, Indian, Uyyur, Tibetan, and Khitai (Northern Chinese) Buddhist clergy, of whom the Tibetans orders of the Bka-brgyud-pa subsects seem to have received the most favors as recipients of Il-Qanid patronage.

4. Taken as a whole, the Il-Qanid order of monks was concerned primarily with teaching and exegesis, although individual aristocratic monks (*toyins*, *baqsis* and *lamas*) apparently with impeccable connections with the ruling circle served Hűlegű in secular matters of state. Over the course of four generations – from the reign of Hűlegű until the conversion of Ghazan – monks engaged the Il-Qanid imperial family in Buddhist devotions and learning. However imperfect their understanding of the Dharma, the Il-Qans performed merit-making activities, promoted and actually practiced the faith with enthusiasm. All the evidence underscores the fact that Buddhist beliefs, learning, and rituals, as well as patronage, were the exclusive interest of members of the Il-Qanid imperial family. In its heyday, the monastic community and individual preceptors provided the Il-Qans with admonitions, solace, and counsel, as the situation required.

5. Rashīd al-Dīn and Waśśāf attest to the fact that Buddhist monks witnessed the investiture of Gaikhatu at the time he acquired the name Īriñgin Dūrji. Their testi-

mony and the Buddhist meaning of his name as standing for a Bodhisattva-Vajrasattva make it possible to connect him the practices of Vajrayāna Buddhism. Beyond Činggisid blood-ties, his identity as a Buddha-to-be represents a conception of authority that he unambiguously shared with his older contemporary Qubilai who ruled as the Bodhisattva Mañjuśri. Īriñgin Dūrji's Bodhisattva-Vajrasattva status, an identity that he openly embraced, provides dramatic evidence of the assimilation of Buddhist ideals and values at a level generally comparable to developments of the Buddhism of the Mongol/Yuan Empire.

6. Il-Qanid sponsorship of Buddhism, more specifically, the rulers's reverence of the Three Jewels, and patronage of sacred sites came at a significant cost in national wealth. While no document has emerged giving even approximate numbers of the realm's monastic establishments, a single piece of evidence indicates that the cost of imperial patronage was so great that "one half of the money which was gathered together in the treasury of the kingdom" was passed on to the monastic community for the "works of images of gold and silver" (see n. 81 above). If that figure is even marginally accurate, the cost of supporting the Buddhist community, feeding and clothing it, building its temples and residences, and providing the precious metals for the images that made worship possible was truly substantial, and needs to be factored into any assessment of the overall impact of Il-Qanid Buddhism.

7. Whatever the details, the preliminary findings pertaining to Il-Qanid Buddhism provide a meaningful supplement to Činggisid proselytism and complement Tibeto-Mongol historical sources concerning the conversion of the Mongols. Hűlegű and Qubilai, insofar as Buddhism is concerned, were typical of their bloodline and generation. Buddhist culture and belief influenced the ways in which both Činggisid ruling houses perceived matters, their models for doing so, and the transmission of patterns of religious thought and spiritual feelings from individual to individual and from generation to generation of their respective households. More specifically still, in their religious pursuits and the way they applied themselves to achieve salvation, they acted in conformity with the central tenets of Buddhism as a world religion. There is support for the assertion that Hűlegű and his descendants stood nearly equal to Qubilai and his progency in terms of their Buddhist convictions. This correspondence occurred at the levels of patronage, and personal relations with their preceptors, one the one hand, and the relationship of the Činggisid line and the Buddhist faith over generatons, on the other. Consequently, the correspondence has implications for understanding the worldview, values, and inner workings of these two regimes and the links between them

Appendix

Consideration of another line of research provides significant and useful parallels regarding the evolution of Činggisid Buddhist piety in the Mongol/Yuan Empire that underscore the religious culture of the Il-Qanid ruling house. More than any other Činggisid sovereign, Qubilai and his devotion to Tibetan Buddhism and its legacy are familiar to specialists and often cited in discussions of the Mongols alignment of state and faith.[154] It will therefore prove instructive to examine an example of Qubilai's merit-making activities as attested in a contemporary donative epigraph that documents his motives for the establishment of a particular cult at the Hu-kuo ssu (Temple of Protecting the Nation) and briefly compare his intentions in doing so with Hűlegű's purposes and expectations in sponsoring Labnasagut and its cult.

Founded in 1271, as one of the great imperially sponsored temples that glorified Mongol rule in China, the Hu-kuo ssu was the repository of the image and cult of Mahākāla, from whose presence emanated the sacral quality and apotropaic properties most associated with the Buddhist temples built by the Činggisid dynastic line. Examination of the 1318 stele inscription at the Hu-kuo ssu reveals that Princess Nangiaǰin,[155] a daughter of Qubilai, sponsored the restoration of the temple. The introductory section of the stele identifies the cult of Mahākāla Buddha with the fortunes of the ruling dynasty and the involvement of Qubilai, the conqueror of China, as the cult's principal devotee. The pertinent passage of the text, composed by Liu Kuan (1270-1342), reads as follows:[156]

> Qubilai Qayan (Shih-tsu Huang-ti) pacified China (*Hua*), set the armies in order, and accomplished the labor of conquest. Regularly and reverently, he served Mahākāla Ḍeva (*Mo-ho-ko-la Shen*).[157] Because he made [Mahākāla

154 Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva in the Governance of the Ch'ing Empire," *HJAS* 38, 1978, pp. 5-25.

155 Princess Nangiaǰin was married to Manzitai, a descendant of the Qonggirad tribal leader, Dai Sečen, the father of Bőrte, Činggis-Qan's senior wife. See, Louis Hambis, *Le chapitre cviii du Yüan che*, Leiden 1954, p. 18.

156 Liu Kuan, *Liu tai-chih wen-chi*, Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an, ch. 9/1a-b. For further information regarding Liu Kuan and his collected writings, see Tetsuji Morohashi, *Daikanwajiten*, 13 vols., Tokyo 1955-1960, vol. 6, 282b.

157 Chinese sources credit 'Phags pa Lama with introducing the Mongol court to the worship of Mahākāla. See János Szerb, Glosses of the oeuvre of Bla-ma 'Phags-pa: III. The 'Patron-Patronized,' Relationship" *Tibetan History and Language*, 165-173, p. 157. Mahākāla, it should be noted, was the tutelary deity of the Sa-skya-pa sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Mireille Helffer, "Traditions musicales des Sa-skya-pa relatives au culte de Mgon-po." *JA* 264, 1976, 357-404, p. 360, n.113. Votaries of Mahākāla, according to a

Deva] the state guardian and relied on Him, he also called Him the Great Protective Deity (*Ta hu-shen*). He arrayed the great [ancestral] temple[158] and prayers [to Mahākāla Deva] were immediately answered. Moreover, the respected acolyte of the Western Region (*Hsi-yü*), Dam-pa (*Tan-pa*),[159] also brought this doctrine into the realm and prayed on behalf of the emperor at the ancestral shrine. Consequently, [Dam-pa] requested that they establish a temple, south of the capital at Cho-chou.[160] Sacrifices thereafter

variety of sources, venerated the deity in the belief that He bestowed warlike ferocity and power. He was thought to be an incarnation of the Dhyānī Buddha, Vairocana, whose purpose it was to destroy demons. As an article of faith, worshippers believed the characteristic fury of Mahākāla had a special potency for those who did not revere their spiritual teacher and showed disrespect to the Buddha, the doctrine, and the religious community. Concerning these attributes and the role of Mahākāla as a tutelary deity of Mongol Buddhism, cf. Soothill and Hodous, *Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 97. Consistent with the inscription of 1318, the *Yuan-shih* attributes the power of Mahākāla as a combative force indicating the deity accompanied the armies of Temür Qayan in the campaign against the invasion of Mongolia in 1300 led by Qaidu, ruler of the Central Asian Ögödeid Qanate. See *YS* 202/4519.

158 Concerning the trappings with which the ancestral temple was decorated, cf., *YS* 74/1832. The passage identifies the National Master, i.e., presumably Dam-pa, as the Buddhist monk who established Buddhist ceremonies at the Imperial Ancestral Temple.

159 Dam-pa, i.e., Sga A-nyan Dam-pa Kun-dga' grags, was the disciple of the Sa-skya monk, 'Phags pa, the Imperial Preceptor and spiritual advisor of Qubilai. Dam-pa, perhaps the best known member of the inner circle of Buddhist advisors to the throne after 'Phags-pa, stood at the forefront of creative and integrative thinking about politics and religion. The Mongol/Yuan imperial annals corroborate the stele inscription's information that in 1269 (a year after 'Phags-pa had returned to Tibet), Dam-pa took steps to modify the protocol and ceremony of the imperial cult of Činggis-Qan by introducing Buddhist ceremonies at the ancestral shrine of the ruling family. For Dam-pa's biography, see *YS* 202/4519 ff. and the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, v. 49, no. 2036, 725c-726a. Rashīd al-Dīn identifies Dam-pa (= Tanba) as one of the *baqsis* who attended Qubilai, noting that the monk had great "authority and importance in the Qa'an's eyes" and that he retained high status in the service of his successor, Temür Qayan (r.1295-1307). Rashīd al-Dīn, *Successors of Genghis Khan*, pp. 302 and 329-330. For additional remarks concerning 'Phags-pa Lama as Imperial Preceptor and his essentially spiritual relationship with Qubilai, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, "*Mchod yon, Yon mchod and Mchod gnas/yon gnas*: On the Historiography and Semantics of a Tibetan religio-social and religio-political concept," *Tibetan History and Language/Studies Dedicated to Uray Geza on his seventeenth birthday*, edited by Ernst Steinkellner, Wien 1991, 441-453, pp. 443 and 448-449.

160 The temple was designed and built by the Nepalese architect and sculptor Anigo (1244-1306), whom 'Phags-pa had ordained. Anigo received commissions from 'Phags-pa

were conducted daily with solemn reverence, and the deity brings benefit by means of the sacred place (*sheng-fang*).[161]

Many of the particulars remain unknown, but the larger points are clear: military conquest and devotion to imperial ancestors are two themes given pride of place in the cult of Mahākāla at the Hu-kuo ssu. At the time of the temple's founding in 1271, Mongol forces were engaged in the conquest of south China, a venture that also proposed the unachieved conquest of Japan.[162] It suffices to say that the building of the Hu-kuo ssu and the establishment of its cult were keyed to military conquest and that the efforts of the two lamas, 'Phags-pa and Dam-pa, were regarded as instrumental in propagating the doctrine of Mahākāla, propitiating the deity and, as the inscription declares, obtaining the Deva's assistance in achieving Mongol military objectives, and protecting the Mongol nation.

Lama and Qubilai for a number of major building projects of temples and stūpas. Cf. Ishida Mikinosuke, "Gendai no kōgeika Nepāru no ōzoku 'A-ni-ko' no den ni tsuite," *Moko gakuhō* 2, 1941, 244-260, pp. 250-251; as cited by Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, p. 266, n. 73. For a partial translation of Aniko's biography in the *Yuan-shih*, see Sylvain Lévi, *Le Nepal, etude historique d'un royaume Hindou*, Paris 1908, pp. 185-189. Also see Petech, *Mediaeval History of Nepal (c. 750-1482)*, Roma 1984, pp. 99-102.

161 That is, the Temple of Protecting the Nation, the *Hu-kuo ssu*. It can be asserted that not only did the temple enshrine the image of Mahākāla as the palladium of the Mongol/Yuan dynasty, but that it also accentuated the primary role of the Sa-skya-pa sect in the dynasty's religio-social culture. There are important institutional features of Tibetan Buddhism that were linked to the political culture of the Mongol court that are particularly important to understand. Spefically, the office of Imperial Preceptor (*Ti-shih*) to which Qubilai had appointed 'Phags-pa Lama in 1271 (the year in which the *Hu-kuo ssu* was built) became institutionalized. Until the fall of the dynasty in 1368, aristocratic Sa-skya hierarchs succeeded one another as imperial preceptors, acting as the personal chaplains of the ruling sovereigns and their families. It is surely significant that the imperial preceptors maintained a presence at court, where they had the opportunity to mingle with the imperial family, its councilors and offices, and were in a position to comment on governance, statesmanship, and international relations, as indicated by the dynastic annals, the *YS* 202/4520-4521: "In the course of 100 years, the ways in which the court (*ch'ao-t'ing*) showed deference and devout faith in [the imperial preceptors] lacked nothing to achieve that end. Even the emperor's senior consorts (*hou-fei-chu*) all consequently received initiations and made prostrations in obeisance to them (=the imperial preceptors). On occasions of formal audiences at court, the various officials were arranged according to rank, while the Imperial Master very likely sat apart off in a corner." For a list of the imperial preceptors resident at the Yuan court, see Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols*, p.144.

162 Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, pp. 76-152.

Whatever their personal spiritual aspirations, Qubilai and Hülegü, separated by vast distances, were in tune with one another and with a religious ideal widespread in Mongol ruling circles during the period of the 1250s to the 1290s. Each had much in common in the most important respects by sponsoring Buddhist temples and participating in devotional observances that were monastically-centered for the benefit of the sovereign. A measure of Qubilai's devotion, suggested by a pattern of religious consecrations and attested in Mongol, Tibetan, and Chinese sources,[163] is

163 Franke, *From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God*, pp. 59-60. Tibetan sources ascribe the first contacts between Qubilai and 'Phags-pa Lama to 1254 and that the prince's introduction into Tibetan mysticism began in 1258. For these developments and the secular outcomes of the consecration the lama conferred on Qubilai in 1264, see Petech, *Central Tibet and the Mongols*, pp. 14-17. Mongol chroniclers gave considerable attention to the ritual itself, certainly the best known instance of consecration (Mongol *abasig* < Sanskrit *abhiśeka*) of a Činggisid sovereign. Most interesting for the matter under consideration are specifics preserved in two passages provided in the historical work by an ordained lama, Siregetü Guosi Dharma, in his *Altan kürdün mingyan gegesütü bičig* (completed 1739). An edition of the text has been published by Walther Heissig, *Altan kürdün mingyan gegesütü bičig, eine mongolische Chronik von Siregetü Guosi Dharma (1739)*, Kopenhagen 1958, hereafter *AKMGB*). Siregetü Guosi Dharma provides considerable details regarding the consecrations that 'Phags-pa conferred on Qubilai and his wife Čambui Qatun in 1264. *AKMGB* III 5v-/7-6r/2: *(7) egünü yidam kei vačar-un abasig (8) kemen qutuγ-tu qubilai* {gloss: *(8a) enedkeg-ün qayan törül kemegsen-iyar (8b) qutuγtu ba qubilai kemegsen kememü*} *sečen qayan-a ayiladqsan-dur (9) abasig abuqsan-u ači tusa yayun bui. yosun jirum anu yambar bui. či urida abču (10) nadur ügüle kemen jarliγ boluqsan-dur. čambui qatun süsüg-lüg-e tegülder tangγariγ-yi (11) šasin čidayči. qorin dörben kümün-i dayayulju. abasig abuyad. qayan-dur blam-a (12) – yin jarliγ. baq-a kala. sedkil-iyen ergükü jarliγ-ača ülü daban tangγariγ-yi sakiqu (6r/1) amitan-i asaraqu, bodhi sekil-i bisilγaqu. nigen nasun-dur burqan bolqu kemen jarliγ bolbai. (2) minu toγtaγaqsan ene bui kemen ayiladqaqsan-dur.* When [Čambui Qatun] had said to Qutuγtu Qubilai Sečen Qayan [gloss: Because they called him a rebirth of an emperor of India, they called him Qutuγtu (Blessed) and Qubilai.], "let us receive the *Yi-dam* consecration of the *He-Vajra*;" he replied "what is the benefit of having received the consecration, what are the rules and regulations? Receive it first and then tell me about it." Čambui Qatun had herself accompanied by twenty-four men, masters of the doctrine, who had taken the holy vow and received consecration. She told the instruction of the Lama to the Qayan. "He instructed that [the *Yi-dam* consecration] will bestow his *Baq-a kala* (Mahākāla) intellect, will protect the oath of not breaking the law, will make you pity living beings, will make you contemplate the thought of illumination, and will make you a Buddha within a single lifetime. This is my impression." The second passage (*AKMGB* III 6r/8-6v/4) describes Qubilai's consecration as follows: *(8) yidam kei vača-run dhaqa(?) abasig-yi qorin dörben-i dayayulun tangγariγ nigen (9) bolju abqui-dur.*

that he actually venerated Mahākāla well before the founding of the temple in 1271. There also were other symmetries between the careers and lives of Qubilai and Hűlegű: both were conquerors of their respective realms, both deeply committed

angq-a abasig-tur ayuu yeke ed tavar-i ergűged. qoyarduyar (10) abasig-tur qatan-u ergűűten yaryan. kitad ulus-un qadaqu alban yubčiyur-yi (11) bayily-an. yurbaduyar abasig-tur tőbed ulus-i darayalan blam-a quvaray-i alba (12) ulay-a sigűsű-űgei bolyan kűndűleg-e dőtűger qbasig-tur baq-a kala sedkil yurban (6v/1) sedkil-iyan ergűjű jarliyčilan bodusadvi kemen abasig-yi sayitur abuyad. nom-un (2) qayan qutuytu blam-a čola ergűjű. arban buyan-u jasay-yi delekei dakin-a yabuyulju (3) tőrű šašin-i qoslan naran metű badarayulun mingyan altan kűrdűn-i ergigűlűgči cakravard sečen (4) qayan kemen qotala jűg-űd-tűr aldarsin yayiqamsiytu bolbai. [...Qubilai] had himself accompanied by twenty-four [men who had taken] the consecration of the receptacle of the *He-Vajra*, and took the pledge at once. In the initial consecration, he donated vast property. In the second consecration, he carried out the offering of firmness, and left unchanged the tax imposed on the Chinese nation. In the third consecration, he organized the Tibetan nation, voided the clergy's taxes, corvée, and rations [provided for imperial envoys], and began to show respect [for the religious community]. In the fourth consecration, he fully received consecration in order that the Bodhisattva (i.e. 'Phags-pa Lama) issue instruction, and adopted his three-fold mind, the *Baq-a kala* (Mahākāla) intellect. [The emperor] bestowed the title *Nom-un qayan Qutuytu* Lama (King of Religion, Holy Lama) and put the *Arban buyan-u jasay* (The Law of the Ten Virtues) into practice in the world. Law and religion harmoniously united, blazed like the sun, and Sečen Qayan, the Cakravartin Who Causes to Turn 1,000 Golden Wheels, became remarkably renowned in all directions." The content of the account of Siregetű Guosi Dharma, effusively rendered mostly in secular terms for the interests of his lay contemporaries, can be gauged against the substance of the *He-Vajra* ritual itself. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the *He-Vajra* consecration is replete with the symbols of sovereignty, and specifies that candidates for consecration "should be *kshatriyas*, those who have been consecrated great kings, or their sons and daughter, those who are unacquainted with the ways of common people." entitled to universal monarchy of the Cakravartin, and the future attainment of buddhahood. See D.L. Snellgrove, "The Notion of Divine Kingship in Tantric Buddhism," *The Sacral Kingship*, Leiden 1959, 204-218, p. 205. For a brief discussion of Cakravartin monarchy, cf. Joseph M. Kitagawa, "The Many Faces of Maitreya, A Historian of Religions' Reflections, *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, edited by Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre, Cambridge 1988, 7-22, pp. 9-10; an ideal universal monarch, the Cakravartin ruled the entire world governing ethically and benevolently. His authority is embodied in his skill as a unifier and his prestige was highest amongst the *kshatriyas*, who served Indian society as soldiers, ruled its courts, and felt themselves most fit to rule. William K. Mahony, "Cakravartin," *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Mircea Eliade, vol. 3, New York 1987, pp. 5-7. The title of Cakravartin held by Qubilai is epigraphically attested in the Sino-Uyyur stele inscription of

themselves to the religious masters who established cults at their courts, and both sovereigns saw to it that Buddhism was the faith of the ruling house for succeeding generations.

There is, however, a fundamental contrast between the two imperial sponsored cults. Rewards said to follow from prayers to Mahākāla at the Hu-kuo ssu consisted of the intervention of the deity on behalf of the Mongols in military affairs, while spiritual exercises at Labnasagut were devoted to extending the Il-Qan's life span and the transmigration of his soul. Obviously, in neither case can we regard these few details as the totality of the eastern and western branches of medieval Mongol Buddhism, and, as might be expected, it appears that the two sovereigns sought and achieved distinctly different benefits in establishing cults at critical moments in their reigns.

What is most intriguing and especially informative about these facts is that both Qubilai and Hűlegű established cults and solicited the prayers of the Buddhist clergy who appear with them at the forefront of events in connection with the expansion and defense of the frontiers of the empire. It was of course no accident that Hűlegű found his religious convictions were, to an extraordinary degree, shared by Qubilai, and that both of them saw to it that the scions of the ruling line became ardent devotees of the Three Jewels.[164] In the end, the Il-Qanid Buddhist community founded by Hűlegű was short-lived. But throughout the nearly four decades of its existence Il-Qanid Buddhism followed a similar religious trajectory, rivaling, and on occasion, through the merit-generating acts of the Il-Qans themselves, equaling, the levels of steadfast faith, conscientiousness, and opulence achieved by the Buddhist community of the Mongol/Yuan dynasty.[165] Buddhism was one of the principal cultural forces of the Il-Qanid and Mongol/Yuan imperial families and was brought to bear in binding the two ruling houses together. What distinguished

164 Note the strikingly beautiful silk tapestry mandala with imperial portraits of Qubilai's descendants, the emperors Tuγ Temür (r. 1328, 1329-1332) and Qośila (r. 1328), and their wives engaged in religious devotions. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Legacy of Genghis Khan, Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, edited by Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni, New York 2002, p. 109. With respect to the religious educations of generations of the Il-Qanid house, see n. 125 above.

165 In most respects, the Yuan dynasty outdid its Il-Qanid counterpart in terms of lavish and extensive support for the Buddhist community. Chinese official sources report that in 1291 there were a total of 42,318 temples and 213,418 monks and nuns, not all of whom of course received imperial support. Many of these institutions had been in existence prior to the Mongol conquest. See Chen, *Buddhism in China*, p. 420. There exist no comparable numbers for the Il-Qanid domain. But as was seen above in n. 80, the Il-Qans reverence for Buddhism came at a considerable cost in national wealth amounting. "...[O]ne half of the money which was gathered together in the treasury of the kingdom" went to the Buddhist clergy and "on the work of images of gold and silver."

Qubilai was that he continued to enlarge his faith and often "summoned famous monks to preach and discuss mysterious secrets" while also dispatching envoys in search of the relics of the Buddha.[166] The Il-Qans, for their part, also sought the teachings of a variety of monastics whom they "conveyed with full honors and respect" from India, Kashmir, Khitai, Uyγuristan," and Tibet and "built everywhere idol-temples and spent enormous wealth on this [community]."[167] These details are instructive because they show that neither of the qanates were insular when it came to their spiritual interests or parochial in the choice of preceptors. However inexact, the comparison underscores the religious and cultural links that tied the two qanates together. The enthusiastic quest for spiritual masters throughout much of the Buddhist world and the search and acquistion of the Buddha's relics perfectly demon-

166 Qubilai's efforts along these lines are described in a donative inscription at the Ta sheng-shou wan-an Temple, the building of which coincided with construction of the Mongol Capital of Ta-tu (modern Beijing). See Herbert Franke, "Consecration of the 'White Stupa' in 1279," *Asia Major* 7, 1994, 155-183, p. 170 and Hok-lam Chan, "Siting by Bowshot: A Mongolian Custom and Its Sociopolitical and Cultural Implications,: *Asia Major* 4, 1991. 53-78, pp. 63-65. Throughout his reign, Qubilai took pains to become better acquainted with the teachings of the leading monastics of the time and acquire the Buddha's scared relics. A biographical account of Yīγmīš, a one time imperial guardsman of Uyγur stock, lays bare these efforts. As related by the *YS* 131/3198-3199, Yīγmīš (I-hei-mi-shih) twice was ordered by Qubilai to proceed to Nepal (Balpo<Pa-lo-po). The second time, in 1275, Yīγmīš brought back a Nepalese National Preceptor (*Kuo-shih*), named Yao-lai-hsien. In 1284, he once again was ordered overseas, this time to Ceylon (Seng-chia-la < Sinhala), where he inspected a relic of the Buddha's alms bowl. Subsequently, Yīγmīš was sent to Ma'abar (Ma-pa-erh), the region corresponding to the Coromandel Coast of southeast India on the Bay of Bengal, and obtained another relic of the Buddha's alm's bowl, returning to court a year later. Marco Polo relates the success of "a great embassy" sent by the Great Kaan in to Ceylon in 1284. He describes Qubilai's envoys as having succeeded in obtaining the Buddha's "two molar teeth which were very thick and large, and...some of the hair and *they had too the bowl in which he used to eat.* The bowl *indeed* was of green porphyry very beautiful. You may know quite truly that all the people of Cambaluc go to meet these relics with very great devotion and the regulars [= the clergy] receive them with great reverence and carry them to the great Kaan who received them with very great joy and with great festival and with great reverence." Marco Polo, *The Description of the World*, translated by A.C. Moule and Paul Pelliot, London 1976 reprint of 1938 edition, 2 vols. v. 1, p. 411.

167 It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of Buddhist teachings to both Qubilai and Ghazan (prior to his conversion to Islam) who took extraordinary pains to be well informed about their beliefs. Given the fact that Buddhist teachings came to the Mongol elite from a number of traditions, Spuler's observation that Buddhism became "familiar to the Mongols from China" stands in need of revision.

strate a simple fact: whatever the strategic significance of Tibet and control of its internal affairs may have been, and it did prove to be considerable for both Qubilai and the Il-Qan Aryun who found compelling reasons for taking sides in the war between monastic communites,[168] it was the unifying standards of faith in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the community of monks, and the personal goal of salvation that made Buddhism important to the Činggisid dynasties of the Mongol/Yuan and Il-Qanid empires.

168 In the mid-1280s, events in Tibet put the forces of Qubilai that sided with the Sa-skya-pa and those of Aryun who backed the 'Bri-gung-pa in direct conflict with one another. While the cause of the discord remains obscure, it was the Sa-skya-pa and their Mongol allies who emerged victorious. Sperling, "Hülegü and Tibet," pp. 145-146 and 154-156. For an opposing interpretation of the identity of the 'Bri-gung-pa's Mongol partisans as the forces of the Čayatai Qan Du'a (1274-1306), see Petech, "Tibetan Realtions with Sung China and with the Mongols," pp. 189-190. The conflict most likely was precipitated by local reprentatives of the various Činggisid princes who had divided the spoils in accordance with the *tama* system. Each prince and their successors had the right to appoint permanent representatives to look after his respective sphere of interest in the conquered regions. For examples of such officials assigned in accordance with the *tama* method of Mongol occupation and exploitation of resources and revenues, cf. Jackson, "Dissolution of the Mongol Empire, pp. 212-215, 220, and 231.