

boundary between qualitative and quantitative analysis is blurred to some extent. Modern statistics would have provided sophisticated tools for handling the data and testing their significance. The results thus acquired could then have served as a starting point for discussion and interpretation.

After reading the book, no one will have any doubts that we really do need a new edition of the long liturgy and that scholars are now in a far better position to achieve a more balanced view of the Avesta than Geldner was. It is to be hoped that the new edition will be essentially a digital one. This is not to say that a traditional edition in the shape of a book would not be an additional benefit, but only an electronic edition could do justice to the complicated circumstances of the transmission. Furthermore, it would be less cumbersome to use for systematic research on the texts and more accessible in general than a printed text with a massive apparatus like the one in the example edition (cf. Appendix 6).

Vers une édition de la liturgie longue zoroastrienne is definitely a must-read for everyone working on Avestan: linguists, scholars of religion and Iranologists alike.

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DENISE AIGLE:

The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality.

(Iran Studies.) xiii, 392 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2015. €107.

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This is an unexpected and refreshing historical study of the Mongol Empire by a scholarly commentator whose analysis is always worthy of attention. The book is a combination of new and previously published papers: Aigle has reviewed, rewritten and merged these into the present work, a study in anthropological history. The book is divided into four loosely connected sections which in turn are divided into a number of autonomous essays held together by a common theme. This organization allows for a very wide spectrum of interest and at the same time admits some very penetrating and detailed analyses.

The introduction establishes Aigle as a committed apologist for those who view the Mongol centuries in a more positive and sympathetic light than previous generations of scholars who harkened to Ibn al-Athir's lament on the advent of the Tatar hordes. Her interest in the Mongols was initially sparked by the Ilkhanate of Iran and it is from the perspective of the Ilkhanid experience that she views the greater Chinggisid empire. While acknowledging the trauma of Chinggis Khan's invasion of Iran in 1218–22, Aigle stresses that the Ilkhanid period allowed the "widest freedom for the country's religious communities" (p. 5) and opened up a period of "intense cultural exchange" (p. 6). She stresses that long-distance trade became the key to the transformation of the emerging empire and its economic recovery, with all levels of society becoming beneficiaries of Mongol policies and their imperial vision.

However, Aigle identifies two other traits the Chinggisids nurtured and which led to the sustained growth and wide acceptance of the "invaders". From early on the Chinggisid elite recognized the need for diplomacy and efficient communication, and understood that continued pillaging and destruction would not ensure either their survival or their growth. In addition, the Chinggisids exhibited a great respect

and thirst for scholarship and wisdom as well as a reverence for wise men and scholars. The fostering of these traits led to a proliferation of linguists, and institutions for the translation of texts; an appreciation of multilingualism; and the establishment of centres of learning and technology and the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

Aigle portrays the Mongol centuries as a meeting of cultures, political ideologies, religions and languages, rather than as a clash of civilizations. She sees that meeting as “reciprocal representations between the Far East, the Muslim East and the Latin West” (p. 11). Her concern overall is with mutual perception and understanding. She seeks to explain how enemies perceived their adversaries, how allies understood their political partners, and how each projected their understanding of their place in the new world order which emerged in the thirteenth century.

In the opening section, “The *memoria* of the Mongols in historical and literary sources”, historiography is examined to show how the new rulers were viewed by their subjects who, judging by the great number of histories and chronicles produced in all reaches of the empire, considered unfolding events to be of unprecedented importance. Many chroniclers attempted to put the newcomers into historical context and portray their new rulers in the clothes of their mythical past, hence Juwaynī littering his history of the Great Khans with citations and quotations from the national epic, the *Shāhnāma* (*Book of Kings*), “mak[ing] Genghis Khan a new Afrāsiyāb, thereby integrating [him] into the history of Iran” (p. 23). Mustawfī wrote his verse history, 75,000 distiches long, as a continuation of Ferdowsi’s *Shāhnāma*, while Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Compendium of Histories* was frequently illustrated with scenes from this Iranian epic providing a parallel between the historic present and the legendary past. So too Tabrizī’s verse history, the *Shāhānshāh-nāma*, completed in 1337 two years after the end of Ilkhanid rule, which sought to incorporate the Mongol kings into Iran’s national history.

The second chapter, on Prester John, is welcome since the subject is so rarely provided any serious attention. Aigle addresses her topic with characteristic zeal. Likewise her examination of Bar Hebraeus, who remains an elusive figure despite being the subject of previous academic papers. Bar Hebraeus was a greatly respected figure with access to the leading elite of the Ilkhanid regime and to communities outside the circle of his fellow Syriac Christians. In this short essay, Aigle contrasts the work of the Syriac polymath with his contemporary, Juwaynī’s, chronicle, and also compares the different versions of his histories, written and compiled for the separate communities with whom he interacted, and considers their often considerable variation.

The book’s other sections examine subjects around which history revolves: religion and legitimacy. Chinggis Khan is portrayed as seeking legitimacy for his acts and for his station throughout his life, and his followers and subjects have revealed themselves to be equally concerned with endowing his rule with harmony and scriptural explanation. Aigle devotes Part II to the comparison of elements of Shamanism and Islam; and Part III to the role of Tenggeri-ism in the conquest of the world. It was not only the Mongol elite who wished to reconcile their traditional beliefs with the practices and faith of their new subjects: these same loyal subjects, with responsible positions serving their infidel masters, had to justify their acceptance and obedience to this new dynamic. It was Juwaynī who famously proclaimed that “There are many of these ordinances (*yasa*) that are in conformity with the *Shari’at*” (Juwaynī, trans. John Boyle, “*Genghis Khan: History of the World Conqueror*”, Manchester: MUP, 1997, p. 25). His words are indicative of the compromises and the will to find a means of reconciling and bridging the gulf which initially threatened to subvert their relationship.

Aigle's final section deals with the Mamluks of Egypt, who inflicted a defeat which, although militarily minor, held great symbolic significance, and who remained a major irritant until the last years of the Ilkhanid regime. Dismissed as double-regicidal lowlifes by the Ilkhanid princes who, after their conversion to Islam, assumed the leadership of the *umma*, the Mamluk sultans legitimized themselves as *ghāzī* sultans defending Islam from the forces of the infidels. The war of words between Ibn Taymiyya and the Ilkhanate in fact inflicted greatest hurt on the Iranians than did the military assaults. Interestingly, one paper assesses the reaction to Ghazan's inclusion of Christian troops in his army which allowed the Mamluks to question the sincerity of his conversion. Unfortunately, Aigle does not consider Dorothea Krawulsky's papers on the nature of *jihād* as perceived by Rashīd al-Dīn and Ibn Taymiyya, which expand the topic of Islam and Ghazan Khan.

The collection closes with a reflection on the post-Chinggisid Mongol empire. It is often overlooked that after the collapse of the Chinggisid khanates, a number of Turkic regimes continued to rule and prosper, and despite being Muslim they claimed their legitimacy from their Chinggisid heritage. Aigle's absorbing epilogue examines the persistence and continuity of this heritage through rulers such as Timur and dynasties such as the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu up until the present day, providing a very satisfactory close to an engrossing book.

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SOUTH ASIA

ROBERT LEACH and JESSIE PONS (eds):

Puspikā: Tracing Ancient India through Texts and Tradition.

Contributions to Current Research in Indology.

Volume 3. viii, 170 pp. Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2015.

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The volume under review is the third in the *Puspikā* series intended to provide a platform for the research of the younger generation of Indologists (volumes 1 and 2 were reviewed in *BSOAS* 78/2, 2015, pp. 399–401). Although only eight articles are presented on this occasion, they are as thematically disparate as those in the previous volumes. As before, the purposes of review can best be served by signalling the main areas of interest addressed by each author. The first two articles address philosophical issues.

In "Is inference a cognitive or a linguistic process? A line of divergence between Jain and Buddhist classifications", Marie-Hélène Gorisse analyses the differing Buddhist and Jain perspectives on inference, concluding that while Dharmakīrti treats inferential reasoning as part of the cognitive process, Digambara Jain philosophers such as Akalaṅka and Māṇikyānandi identify it as a specifically linguistic process. This valuable paper (unfortunately presented without a bibliography) establishes a clear area of differentiation between Buddhist and Jain logicians. It can be profitably read in conjunction with the same author's "Can the rise of Rohiṇī be inferred from the rise of Kṛttikā? A Buddhist–Jaina controversy", in J. Soni, M. Pahlke and C. Cüppers (eds), *Buddhist and Jaina Studies. Proceedings of the Conference in Lumbini*, February 2013, Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2014, pp. 341–66.