COULD THE MONGOL EMPERORS READ AND WRITE CHINESE?

by H. FRANKE

After the conquest of China the Mongols were faced with the problem of governing a state with a highly complicated administration. The difference between the educational standards of the Mongol ruling class and the Chinese literati was obviously very wide in the beginning. Knowledge of Chinese language and writing among the Mongol and other Central Asian officials was frequently rather poor. We are informed that in the middle of the fourteenth century even senior officials occasionally still read or wrote certain characters wrongly and were unable to sign the official documents with brush and ink so that facsimile stamps for the signatures had to be carved for them. Conditions among the multilingual administration of Yuan China, therefore, called for a trained staff of translators and interpreters. As higher Chinese officials could often not speak Mongol, oral reports to the emperor or senior ministers had to be translated. Under Qubilai the famous Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 had drafted a decree which he read aloud in the presence of other dignitaries. Aryun Sary阿剌幹撒里, an Uigur who, according to his biography in Yüan-shih, ch. 130, was well versed in Chinese literature, acted as interpreter. Also the lectures on interpretation of the classics (king-yen 經筵) held in presence of the emperor had to be translated into Mongol. Yu Ts'ai 李載 (1272-1348) gives some details on these lectures in a postscript to a memorial submitted by Chao Kien 趙堪. The text mentions the translations which had to be

Quotations, if not stated otherwise, refer to the Shi-pu-teung-kun and Po-an editions.

1 For examples see Li Ch'ung 李詢 (ca. 1360), Jih-uen-hu 日閱録 ed. Hsiao-hai 蕭載, fasc. 68, ch. 1, p. 72b (誤謬是偽為假, 便備為辨別, 等).
3 The various offices of diplomatic intercourse and foreign languages' under successive dynasties have recently been studied in great detail by P. Pelliot, Le Ssu-yi-kouan et Houei-tsong-kouan, T'ang Pao, Vol. XXXVIII (1948), p. 207-272.
4 Cf. Yang Ts'ai's necrologue on Chao Meng-fu, in Chao's Sung-sue-chai ten-ssi 松雪齋文集 Appendix, p. 59.

preparing for exegetical purposes, adding a list of scholars who distinguished themselves in this field.

It is well known that a fair number of Mongols, Uighurs and other people of non-Chinese origin have won literary fame and distinguished themselves as authors, calligraphers and painters, a fact which lies outside the scope of this article and has been brought to attention long ago by Ch'en Yuan 陈垣. It has, however, been believed that the Mongol emperors themselves had no knowledge of Chinese culture, language or script. As late as 1933, Yao Shih-ao expressed this view in his otherwise valuable paper Ein kurzer Beitrag zur Quellenkritik der Reichsannalen der Kin- und Yüan-Dynastie 那拉・王致民, p. 708. In the following a survey of such passages, particularly of those to be found in the literary works of Yuan authors, will be given as evidence for the interest of Yuan emperors in Chinese literature and calligraphy.

Qubilai's (r. 1260-1294) knowledge of Chinese was rather poor, as has already been pointed out by Fuchs. He had to use interpreters when

The translation of Chinese books into Mongol has been the subject of an important paper by W. Fuchs, Anleitung zur mongolischen Übersetzungsliteratur der Yünanzeit, Monumenta Serica, Vol. XI (1946), p. 33-54. The passage from Yu Ts'ai mentioned above is discussed by Fuchs, op. cit., p. 50.

元西域事考略 (The civilization of the Western People during the Yuan dynasty) Yen-kung hsue-tsao (The Yenching Journal), II (1925), 173-232, p. 99 (上) had appeared in Kuo-hua hsueh-k'ao 國學季刊 Vol. I, No. 4 (1933). Both parts had been published together already in 1933 in mimeographed copies (稿本).


Ed. T'ang-wen shu-hsi 読文叢書, 1883, ch. 20, p. 68-79.

It was only after I had finished the draft of this paper in 1938 that I could make a perusal of Yushikawa Keijirô's 友田深次郎's series of articles on the literary production of the Mongol emperors' 元の諸帝の文章, 元史散論の序言 in Tôyôbô henkyô 東洋史研究, Vol. VIII (1944), Nrs. 3, 4, 5/6, Vol. IX (= New Series, Vol. I), Nrs. 1 (1944) and Nrs. 3 (1945). Although the first article in Vol. VIII, No. 3 has remained inaccessible so far, it is clear that Yushikawa's results confirm my view. As the present paper and Yushikawa's articles are not entirely overlapping, and as Japanese periodicals are still scarce in Europe, I venture to express the hope that the publication of my study in this Western periodical may be regarded as justifiable.

receiving Chinese scholars. This fact must arouse suspicion regarding the poem attributed to him in the collection of poetry Yu-tian Yuan-shih 与天元诗 under the heading 帝製. The title is "Record of emotions during an excursion to the mountains in springtime" (彫 graduated in Chinese) and nothing in this elaborate and traditional poem of eight seven-word lines suggests an author who had a poor knowledge of even spoken Chinese. We may perhaps assume that it has been composed by some Poet Laureate on imperial order. There are, however, some passages in the Yuan-shih from which we might conclude that Qubilai could at least read the Uigur script. The biography of *Tie-ko 依哥 contains the following passage: "After his enthronement, Shih-tay paid a visit to the 'Temple of Eternal Peace' (永安寺) on the Incense Mountains (香山) west of Peking, near Yuan-p'ing). There he saw Uigur characters written on a wall and asked who might have written them. The monks answered: 'It is the writing of *Takak, the nephew of our national Preceptor (kuo-shih 国师)'. This incident proves that Qubilai was at least able to discern handwritings. His knowledge of Uigur script is further confirmed by a passage in the annals of the Yuan-shih. The passage states that a Han-lin official proposed to prepare a Mongol version of Ch'in-gis Qan's shih-lu 在 Uigur script. Qubilai was to read it and to give his approval.

Whatever the level of Qubilai's literary interests may have been, it is certain that he provided for literary education of the imperial princes. The heir-apparent Jingin, 蒙古 (dynastic title Yu-tsun 英宗) received lessons in Chinese writing and had to practice every day. We learn this fact from a very interesting text which shows that specimens of the imperial handwritings (yu-shu 御書) must have been quite numerous under the later Yuan rulers. They were considered to be of sufficient importance to justify the inclusion of a specific chapter yu-shu in the administrative and ritual encyclopaedia King-shih ta-tien 家世大典. Unfortunately the integral text of the King-shih ta-tien is lost and only the short prefaces to the various chapters have been preserved. It is significant for the compilers of the Yuan-shih that the chapter on the imperial handwritings has been omitted in the ritual chapters of that work whereas the other monographs.

---

1 Ed. of 1709, introductory chapter (卷2), p. 10.
2 Yuan-shih, ch. 125, p. 146. The name *Tie-ko would suggest an original *Takak. It is tempting to see *Takak as Turkish taku (ancestors). *Takak's family came, however, from Kipin (Kashmir) so that a Turkish etymology of that name is not very probable.
3 Ch. 14, p. 110, 3363 year chu-yuan = 1256.
4 In the Collection of Yuan Literature Ku-ch'iao wen-lei 國朝文類 肘於文类. The preface to the yu-shu occurs in the ritual codes, hi-ten 恭典. Ku-ch'iao wen-lei ch. 41, p. 58. Apart from the prefaces and some longer extracts in the King-shih ta-tien, the chapters of the King-shih ta-tien have been preserved in the Yuan-shih, cf. H. Franke, *Gütt und Wirtschaft in China unter der Mongolenherrschaft*, Leipzig 1949, p. 25.
Meng composed by Huang Tsün where we read that the emperor “ordered the 
T'ai-hien ta-hii-shih Wang Yang to write the two big characters
T'iu-hu as a present for Li Meng”.
It must remain an open question
whether both entries refer to different events or to the same. In the latter
case Huang Tsün’s evidence obviously must be regarded as more reliable.

Ying-tsung’s (r. 1321–1344) ability to read and write is first of all
proved by the King-shih ta-tien where specimens of his handwriting are
mentioned as present to his favourites. Already before his accession to
the throne he could write as witnessed by a eulogy of Yuan Kue on a gōtha
which Ying-tsung had copied as heir-apparent.
When in 1324 Yuan was ordered to write a eulogy on the portrait of the chancellor Baiju 花柱, the
emperor himself wrote four lines from a poem by Pi Jih-siu 皮休日
as a present for Baiju. As the poem concerned is an appendix of the T’ang
emperors Fang Hsuan-sheng 房玄齡 (578–648) and Tu Hua-shui 杜如晦
(d. 650), it becomes clear that Ying-tsung had chosen a very appropriate
text in order to honour his own minister.
Another example of Ying-tsung’s calligraphy is referred to in Yu T’ai’s collected works, viz., a scroll
by emperor Huie-tsung of Sung where the four characters of the title had
been written by Ying-tsung. According to that passage the emperor had
written these characters in 1323 when visiting the Wu-hua shan 五華山
and presented the scroll to his chancellor Baiju who in turn gave it later
to Sheng Hsi-ming 鄭審明, a famous calligrapher originating from
K’u-sien 曲陽 (Kušan, Kusa). A further passage in Yu T’ai’s works
mentions imperial handwritings without giving a date. In this case the
emperor wrote down a verse and an inscription on a zither (kiun琴).

Only one entry on specimens of T’ai-t’ing’s (r. 1324–1327) writing
can be found in the P’ei-ten-ch’ao she-hua-p’u. The source quoted is the

1. Kin-hua Huang sheng-wen-ti, p. 24, p. 5; a text...王旭秋谷等大字御書以賜公。Wang Yang was the son of Wang Shou-tao 王守道
who died in 1620, cf. Yuan-shih, 553, p. 6a.
2. Kin-ch’ao wen-ti, p. 54; a text...董國翰, etc.
3. Collected works of T’ung-yung-shih shih shih biaotao 諸侯集, 17, p. 6b; 仁廟
御書御筆御書御筆御書御筆御書御書御筆御書御筆御書御筆御書御筆御書御筆御筆御書御筆御筆御書御筆御

---

1. Collected works of Yi-p’ac-hui kao, yun-tsi 外百皆漢, etc. p. 42b... 仁皇帝親御御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御

2. Kuo-ch’ao wen-ti, ch. 7, p. 32a; 花朝觀風, etc.

3. Collected works of T’ung-yung-shih shih shih biaotao 諸侯集, 17, p. 6b; 仁廟
御書御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御筆御

4. 與國親政, Yuan-shih, ch. 24, p. 11b.

5. Biography of Cayan 花朝, Yuan-shih, ch. 137, p. 32a/b; Fuča, op. cit., p. 759.


p. 38.

8. H. Franke, loc. cit.; O. Franke, Keng-teh-i’-tu, Hamburg 1913, p. 59 f., 79 f.,
128 f., n. 4.

9. Yuan-shih, ch. 175, p. 203; 鄧書秋谷二字質以賜而賜之。
Local Gazetteer of Hunan province, *Hu-nan t'ung-chi* (湖南通志). After having successfully carried out a diplomatic mission to the ruler of a tribe of "Southern Barbarians" (南蛮), Chen Ch'un-chou 謝蕃舟 was received in audience by the emperor who, in acknowledgment of the fact that Chen had declined to accept bribes by the barbarian king, wrote the two characters *p'eng-sue* 賡雪 and presented them to Chen. Chen then adopted *p'eng-sue* as his hao.1

By far the most erudite emperor of the Yuan dynasty was, however, Wen-tsung (r. 1330–1333). Recently a article devoted to Wen-tsung's cultural activities among which the establishment of the academy called *Kuei-chang ko* 奠章閣 is the most notable feature. Famous authors, calligraphers, and painters like Yu Tai, Kie Hsi-su 揚會斯 (1274–1344) and K'o Kiu-si 剃九思 (1290–1343) belonged to this foundation which, under a different name, still governed the short rule of Wen-tsung. Yoshikawa gives a detailed description of the *Kuei-chang ko*, its functions and activities.2 He also quotes evidence that Wen-tsung liked to pass his free time there surrounded by books, paintings and calligraphy which he discussed with the officials. Mention must be drawn, however, to the essays by Yu Tai.3 This essay was composed by the emperor on the 20th February 1331, and an engraved stone with his handwriting was erected in the premises. Rubbings were occasionally taken from this stone and given to certain dignitaries. Yang Yu, the author of the *Shan-hsi sin-hua*, informs us proudly that he owned one of these rubbings (loc. cit.). This particular specimen of imperial calligraphy has obviously not failed to evoke laudatory comments from the Yuan literati. Yu Tai wrote a postscript and other writers composed either eulogies or colophons.4

---

1 Hu-nan t'ung-chi, ed. Comon, Press, 1934, ch. 164, p. 3269 f; 泰定帝賜契闊御書蓬雲二字牌之鑑以爲號.

2 Kanda Shinkichi 神田幸治, 元の文宗の風流について in *Hekotai hakase stoko kosen Tōyōshi no kiso*, Kyoto 1950, pp. 477–488. The author deals with Wen-tsung's collection of calligraphy and paintings and lists the items according to their seals have been part of his collection.


4 This text may be found either in the *Tao-yuan hsü-kuei lu*, ch. 20, p. 18, the *Shan-hsi sin-hua*, ed. cit., p. 248–253 or the *Cho-keng-lin*, ch. 2, p. 121–125.


---

1 The text of the decree is reprinted Tao-yuan hsü-kuei lu, ch. 10, p. 186. In Huang Yen's Collected Works Kin-hwa Huang sien-cheng ten-tsu, ch. 21, p. 24b, we find a colophon to this document (恭敬命哈刺魯兀捧書官御書). 2 Op. cit., ch. 21, p. 28 (one document concerning Qara Batur his name, ming: 賜賜諡名哈刺魯兀御書). We are not informed what his former name was, nor are any details of his career known.


5 *Collected Works of Kie Hsi-su, Kie Wen-hung kuei ts'ian-tsu* 揭文安公全集, ch. 3, p. 7b. Presumably Sze-pan was a hao of Chao Shih-an. The short biography dedicated to Chao in *Shih Yuan-shih*, ch. 143 does not, however, mention this name. See also Yoshikawa, op. cit., p. 79.

6 *Tao-yuan hsü-kuei lu, ch. 21, p. 80... 獻御翰書為勳其上, etc.*

7 Kin-hwa Huang sien-cheng ten-tsu, ch. 21, 1b/3a; 隨書以佩刀刻蓋毁作永垂二等. Copies were made and Qara Batur is said to have been presented with one of these. — The words *hsü-hua* are taken from the Shih-kung where they occur in odes No. 3 and No. 192 (Karlgren, *The Book of Odes*, Stockholm 1930, p. 137, "constant anxiety"). Another copy was given to Nao-nao 奈. P'ei-chen-chai shu-hua-p'u, ch. 20, p. 72. Copies were still in existence as late as the Ch'ing dynasty. A detailed description taken from Ch'en Cho's 謝焯 (b. 1733) *Collected Works* has been reprinted by Kanda, op. cit., p. 482–483.
Not even the precious objects preserved in the K’uei-chang ko collections were safe from Wen-tsun’s craze for calligraphy. He wrote on a sounding stone from Ling-pi 靈溪 (in Anhui province) the words “Black Jade of the K’uei chang” and Yu Ts’i had to celebrate this with a poem. For further specimens of Wen-tsun’s writing I have had to rely on Yoshikawa who first quotes the Collected Works of Ma Tau-ch’ang. Ma wrote a colophon to the characters sii-yue 雪月 written by the emperor as a present for Kien-tu-pan 健德。2 Yoshikawa further mentions that the name of Yu-k’u 雅古 (Yaqu) was changed by Wen-tsun to Ya-hu 良, which implies a wide knowledge of characters on the part of the emperor. 3

It is not surprising that Wen-tsun was a connoisseur of ink. Yu Ts’i relates how the outstanding ink manufacturer of the 1330s, Chu Wan-ch’u 朱萬初 once supplied ink to the K’uei-chang ko and the emperor appointed him as a minor provincial official in acknowledgment of the quality of his ink. In addition to his interests in calligraphy which occupied a prominent place among his pastimes and sometimes gave occasion to a critical appraisal of other calligraphers’ achievements, 4 the emperor also indulged in painting. When he was still heir-apparent and sojourning in Nanking (1325), he ordered Fang Ta-nien 房大年 to paint the Wan-sui shan 萬歲山 in Peking. Fang first declined because he had never been there, but the emperor drew a sketch of the locality and Fang had to execute the painting according to Wen-tsun’s drawing. 5

The evidence supplied by the passages quoted above will be sufficient to prove Wen-tsun’s familiarity with the Chinese script so that we can be

---

1. Ta-yüan hsi-lu lu, ch. 2, p. 15a/b 御書其上奕玄山玉, Yoshikawa, op. cit., p. 80, apparently quotation from a Ch’ing edition, writing 文 instead of 素.


4. Ta-yüan hsi-lu lu, ch. 29, 22b-23a (Nr. 2 of the four poems dedicated to Chu Wan-ch’u, introduction) and ch. 2, p. 10a (poem when Chu left for his post in Kuang-tung province).

5. He compared Pan Wei-Chih’s 蒲維志 writing with a drunken using bad language in the street 龍溪 their, cf. P’ei-wen-ch’i shu-hua pu, p. 37, p. 78. Cho-heng, lu, ch. 26, p. 13b 文宗應. According to Kanda, op. cit., p. 482, there is a colophon to Wen-tsung’s painting in the Collected Works of the Yuan monk Ta-hsin 大信, Pu-shih ni 薔集, ch. 13. Ta-hsin, who died about 1344, had frequency been in company with the emperor when the latter was staying in Nanking before his enthronement, cf. Ta-hsin’s biography in Yuan-shih 元史, ed. 1911, ch. 95, p. 23a/b.

---

Could the Mongol Emperors Read and Write Chinese?

brief about his reading. When K’ie Hsi-ts‘i had presented the juridical codex, hsien-tien 憲典 of the King-shih ta-tien in 1330, the emperor read it and proclaimed his full approval. 6 For some other references I am indebted to Yoshikawa who shows that Wen-tsun liked to read Ma Ts’u-ch’ang’s prose 7 and showed interest in the works of a T’ang poet. 8 A book which is said to have been frequently read by Wen-tsun is the K’uei-chang cheng-yao 奎章政要 (Statutes of the K’) by K’ie Hsi-ts‘i. 9

Chinese anthologies contain some poems attributed to Wen-tsun. One of these, however, is of questionable authenticity, and regarded by some critics as being composed by Ming T’ai-tsu. 10 The poem is, in spite of the condescending attitude of literary critics (see note), rather difficult in style and its authorship would demand a thorough command of literary technique. On the other hand, the two poems on a Green Plum (青梅詩) and Looking at the Kiu-hua Mountain (in Anhui province) (望九華) are much more primitive and there is some chance that they might be genuine productions by Wen-tsun. But it is unquestionable that he did write poetry. 11

Wen-tsun’s literary and artistic interests are almost equaled by those of his successor, Emperor Shun (r. 1333–1368). As a boy, Emperor Shun had been brought up in the Ta-yüan 大圓 monastery in Ta-shiang 賽江

1. Biography of Kie, Yüan-shih, ch. 18, p. 16a/b; Collected Works of Ou-yang Hsüan 歐陽玄 (1292-1357), Kuei-chien wen-t’ie, ch. 10, p. 32a/b; Kin-hua Huang tsien-sheng wen-t’ie, ch. 26, p. 19a.


3. During a lecture on exegesis the conversation turned to Nie Yü-ch’ung’s 趙彝中 poems. Wen-tsun asked whether there was a collection of his works, but nobody had ever heard of an edition of his poems. Finally somebody mentioned that the Ch’ung Ch’ung family in Shanghai had a particularly large library and a decree was issued for empires to be made. It turned out that Mr. Ch’ung’s library actually contained a copy of Nie’s collected poems which was presented to the emperor who rewarded Ch’ung with a professorship in his native district. Nung-t’ai yu-hua 通天話 by Ch’ung-ku ch’en-yi 長谷真逸, ed. Piao-yen-t’ang pi-ti 祭賢堂題笈, ch. 1, p. 32b, Yoshikawa, op. cit., p. 81.


5. 自集麗鷹入正大統途中偶吟, Yu-yuan Yüan-shih, shou-huan 首卷, p. 18a, the same poem also in Yüan-shih shih poetry (1751), ch. 1, p. 8a. Yoshikawa, op. cit., p. 82, and Kanda, op. cit., p. 478-479 seem to reject the poem as spurious on the authority of Ch’en Yen’s 陳衍 Yüan-shih shih poetry 玉屑詩話. Apparently a Chinese critic has disapproved of Pseudo-Wen-tsun’s literary style; in the Yüan-shih shih poetry copy preserved in the Cambridge University Library (Wade, Nr. D237) we find an interleaved manuscript entry stating that the phrase 夢驚睛 is like children’s talk, 此云| | | 便以小兒語.


7. Cf. Yoshikawa, Töisyö Kenkyū VIII, 4 (1943), p. 32, quoting a poem by K’o Kiu-si according to which Wen-tsun in 1329 sent a present together with some poems, to the emperor (from T’an-k’ü sheng ts‘i 丹邱生集, ch. 1).
March 14th, 1340, Yang Yu being present. A passage runs, “On the very day when the decree is received (詔書到日) everybody has to go back to his former garrison”. The emperor pointed out that a day lasted from morning to evening and that he had better write “At the very moment the decree is received (詔書到時)”. Yang praises the insight of the emperor who by changing one single character secured the due arrival of troops.

The years following the elimination of Bayan and his anti-Chinese clique were marked by an intense activity in the field of Chinese traditional civilization. The Kuei-chang ho (the name of which had been changed in the meantime to Siu-an-wen ho (宣文) was again the centre of literary and artistic life at the court of the emperor, who in 1341 called such eminent scholars as Ou-yang Hsiian, Li Hsiao-wen 李孝文, Huang Tain and Hu Yuen to assist in the meetings in the Siu-an-wen ho. Readings of the Five Classics and the Four Books were a feature of these meetings as well as calligraphy and classical music. In painting the emperor apparently was a great admirer of Sung Hui-tsung, a taste which was by no means shared by some of his officials who strongly objected on the grounds of Hui-tsung’s inefficiency in government affairs. Emperor Shun’s fancy for calligraphy is responsible for his order to engrave the Ts’ien-tsu-wei 千字文 in the ts’ao-shu of Chih-yung 智永 (6th cent.) on stone. Some of the rubbings were given as presents to high dignitaries and comments can be found in Yuen works. Like some of his predecessors Emperor Shun occasionally wrote with his own hand appointments of officials. This, of course, was regarded as a particularly high distinction. Another favourite way of honouring officials was to write some characters for them. Emperor Shun wrote thus for his teacher Sha-la-pan 沙剌班 the characters of the latter’s hoa, Shan-chai 山齋. In other cases the emperor chose expressions taken from literature, or epitaphs thought appropriate for the person.

1 Shun-hui sin-hua, p. 2b; Keng-shen wai-shih, p. 6; Ch’o-keng lu, ch. 2, p. 18; Yuen-shih, ch. 40, p. 44.
2 Keng-shen wai-shih, sub 1341, p. 6.
3 Kuei-hua Huang shen-wen-ten, ch. 25, p. 7a. We find the same objection raised against Emperor Shun’s son, who too admired Hui-tsung and studied his calligraphy, Keng-shen wai-shih, p. 26, sub 136a.
4 Kuei-chai ten-wei, ch. 14, p. 50/b. Yoshikawa also refers to Hui Yu-uen’s Chih-cheng ts’i, ch. 73, for additional evidence, op. cit., Toshiya kensyo, N.S. 1, 1 (1944), p. 40.
5 Tao-yuan hsu-hu lu, ch. 10, p. 3a, mentions the handwritten appointment of Ch’ou-li, 敗御筆翰五於圖太平。There were two Ch’ou-li who obtained their ts’i-shih degree in 1313, one of Tangut and one of Qoddog origin, see Yuen-shih shih-tsu piao, p. 60 and 88 (5356 and 5834) respectively. The Tangut Ch’ou-li has a biography in Yuen-shih, ch. 195.
6 Shun-hui sin-hua, p. 34. Sha-la-pan was Ugur, cf. his biography in Yuen-shih, ch. 124. The name is probably Tibetan, corresponding to Sae-sa-bpal.
A special studio was established for the heir-apparent, the Tuan-pen t'ang 順本堂. An amusing anecdote concerning his studies can be found in the Cho-k'ang lu: the boy complained about being constantly annoyed during his studies by the noise and disturbance caused by the courtiers riding out for falconry.

Another scholar with whom the heir-apparent had friendly relations was Ou-yang Hsian. His works contain postscripts to characters written by Ayuširidara. He also was presented in 1354 by the prince with the characters king-hsuan 経訓. A general appreciation of Ayuširidara's calligraphy can be found in the P'ei-wen-chu shu-hua p'u where he is said to have succeeded in acquiring Yu Shih-nan's 傳世 (358–357) technique.

The evidence collected above certainly allows the conclusion that the educational standard of the later Mongol emperors was not as poor as has sometimes been believed. To be sure, no great artist or poet can be found among them and the flattering eulogies of various authors will certainly not prevent the modern reader from feeling that the achievements of at least some emperors can hardly have been above a schoolboy level. We may affirm, however, that the last heir-apparent had received an education which was preponderantly Chinese. The rebellions of the chi-heng period, culminating in the overthrow of Mongol rule in 1368, interrupted a development which might have produced another K'ang-hsi or K'ien-lung. But the loss of the empire forced the descendants of Ch'inggis Qan back into the steppes and to a military life. Finally we must bear in mind that the problem discussed in this paper is but a single element of the more complicated question concerning the use of language in the multilingual society of the Yuan period. This latter deserves further investigation.

---

1. Ch. 2, p. 2b.
2. (a) Kuo-chai tsen-ku, ch. 15, p. 1b. 騰風二大夫箋, given to the official Cheng Shen 鄭軾. lin-feng, unicorn and phoenix, is a frequent binom which can be traced back to the Li-kı, ch. 9. (b) Op. cit., ch. 14, p. 7b, dated 1357. 眉二大夫箋, given to Cheng in acknowledgment of the latter's filial piety for his octogenarian mother. Mai-hsun is an expression borrowed from the ode Ts'ei-yü (Nt. 124; Karlgen, The Book of Odes, Stockholm 1950, p. 99). "... make this spring wine in order to increase the vigorous old age": Legge, Ch. Cl., p. 234: "... for the benefit of the old eyebrows") and a very appropriate quotation for the purpose.
3. Kuo-chai tsan-ku, ch. 16, p. 13a. (Vita of Ou-yang Hsian). The expression apparently occurs first in Cheng Hsiian's biography in Hua Hsun-shu, ch. 65. Cheng and Ou-yang had the same personal name Hsia 現; the choice of king-hsuan as a calligraphic present was no doubt meant to be an allusion to Cheng Hsuan and therefore rather flattering for Ou-yang. Two bottles of wine from the imperial cellars emphasized the honour accorded to the latter.
4. Ch. 29, p. 7b, quoting the Shu-shih hui-yao.