



Review

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Book Review «The Mausoleum of Jochi Khan: History of Research». Collective monograph / Emma Usmanova (compiled, ed.-in-chief), Qanat Uskenbay, Mukhtar Kozha, Irina Panyushkina. Samarkand: International Institute of Central Asian Studies, 2024. 284 p.

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This publication boldly challenges the ‘myths’ surrounding the Jochi Khan mausoleum and attempts to uncover the ‘historical facts’ behind the ‘myths’. As is well known, “The mausoleum of Jochi Khan (in Kazakh – Zhoshy-Khan) is located in the historical territory of Ulytau, on the left bank of the Kengir River, 45 kilometres from the city of Zhezkazgan (Ulytau region, Republic of Kazakhstan). It is one of the most famous and probably the most discussed architectural monuments in Kazakhstan. Folk tradition connects this mausoleum with the burial of Jochi Khan” (Усманова и др., 2024: 5). The foundation for the archaeological study of the mausoleum was laid by the renowned archaeologist Alkey Kh. Margulan (1904–85), but it also gave rise to the ‘myth’ that the mausoleum belonged to Jochi Khan. In contrast, it was Elena Kh. Khorosh (1957–2018) who was the first to establish that the construction of the Jochi Khan mausoleum was in two phases, in the late 13th and the first half of the 14th centuries, as opposed to the Jochi Khan period. This book was compiled by scholars who followed in the footsteps of Khorosh (Emma Usmanova, Qanat Uskenbay, Mukhtar Kozha and Irina Panyushkina) as “a kind of encyclopaedia on the Golden Horde period and the restoration of its architecture” (Усманова и др., 2024: 9) (1).

The contents of this book are as follows. In addition to the four authors of the main part, a number of researchers participated in the appendix section (the reviewer also participated as an author of Appendix 5).

Preface (E.R. Usmanova)

Chapter 1: Jochi Khan – son and heir of Chinggis Khan, commander and ruler (Q.Z. Uskenbay)

Chapter 2: History of the discovery, study and restoration of the Jochi Khan mausoleum: the Jochi Khan mausoleum in historical sources and studies (M.B. Kozha)

Chapter 3: Semantics of the Jochi Khan mausoleum (E.R. Usmanova)

Chapter 4: Chronology and historical and cultural significance of the Jochi Khan mausoleum (I.P. Panyushkina, E.R. Usmanova)

Appendix 1: Results of the interdisciplinary approach in the study of the Jochi Khan mausoleum (L.N. Gritsenko, A.E. Erzhanova, E.V. Dubyagina, E.R. Usmanova, A.G. Bersenev, M.Yu. Ishmuratova, L.V. Dubrovskaya, V.N. Fomin, E.F. Gyul', N.K. Kelesbek, M.A. Turovets, O.V. Zemskii, L.M. Saulebekov, S.K. Aldabergenov)

Appendix 2: The Jochi Khan mausoleum: architecture, symbolism, epigraphy (M.Sembi, K.Sadvakasov, E.F. Gyul', T.Turekulov, N.Turekulova)

Appendix 3: From published and unpublished... Elena Khristoforovna Khorosh (1957–2018)

Appendix 4: The Jochi Khan mausoleum (building condition monitoring) (B.S. Kozhakhmetov)

Appendix 5: History of the Ulus Jochi in the studies of Japanese historians: A review of studies (H.Nagamine)

Appendix 6: Legends of Jochi Khan's death

Appendix 7: Legend of Mount Bayesh

Afterword (E.R. Usmanova, Q.Z. Uskenbay, I.P. Panyushkina)

One of the features of this book is the extensive appendix section. The appendices are also an important collection of materials (they also contain relevant articles by Khorosh) and add greatly to the value of this book. However, in this review, the main part of the book will be introduced and critiqued based on the reviewer's interests.

Chapter 1: Jochi Khan – son and heir of Chinggis Khan, commander and ruler (Q.Z. Uskenbay). This chapter is an empirical study from the historiography of the life of Jochi, the eldest son of Chinggis Khan. The issues are diverse, but one important issue concerns Jochi's birth – Jochi was not the biological son of Chinggis, but the “bastard offspring of the Merkid” when Chinggis's wife Börte was held captive by the Merkid tribe (Rachewiltz (tr.), 2006: §254). The basis for this story is the *Secret History of the Mongols (SHM)*. The theory that Jochi was not the biological son of Chinggis is now relatively widely accepted, with many studies explaining that the meaning of the word 'Jochi' is 'guest'. The author, however, reexamines previous research and the descriptions in various historical sources and, while introducing theories other than 'guest' regarding the meaning of the word 'Jochi', arrives at the conclusion that Jochi was the “legitimate son” and (up to a certain point) the heir of Chinggis Khan (Усманова и др., 2024: 25) (2).

I, the reviewer, would like to consider again the historical character of the *SHM*. In a series of studies by Jun'ichi Yoshida since his article “The Historical Character of the *Secret History of the Yuan Dynasty: An Examination of Its Chronological Aspect*” in 1968, the authenticity of the *SHM* as a chronicle has been questioned (Yoshida, 2019: 3-37) (3), and Nobuhiro Uno, focusing on the often-quoted statement in Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* that Börte was already pregnant with Jochi when the Merkid caught her, judges that the story of the *SHM* that Jochi was a “bastard offspring of the Merkid” is probably a fiction (Uno, 2018. See also Усманова и др., 2024: 245) (4). Considering the above, the author's argument in this chapter seems to be convincing.

However, the epithet of Jochi, '*Ulush Idi*', still seems to be a matter of debate. Since J.A. Boyle's study, '*Ulush Idi*' (the lord of the *Ulus*) in Juwaynī's *Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushāy* has been regarded as Jochi's title “after his death” (Boyle, 1956) and is accepted by a relatively large number of

researchers. I do not dispute that Jochi was called '*Ulush Idi*' in Juwaynī's work, but honestly, I have no proof as to whether it was really a 'posthumous' epithet. We look forward to further discussion on this issue (5).

The following section presents a neat summary of Jochi's life, relying on various historical sources and previous research. As for the controversial date and cause of Jochi's death, the theories of 1225 and death from illness are convincingly presented (Усманова и др., 2024: 41-43). I would like to comment on the date of the conquest of the 'People of the Forest'. The *SHM* states that "in the Year of the Hare (1207), Chinggis Qa'an sent Jochi with the troops of the right wing on an expedition to conquer the people of the Forest" (Rachewiltz (tr.), 2006: §239), and this statement has been adopted in many studies, including this book. However, there is a tendency in the *SHM* to summarise events that occurred several times over a number of years into a single event (Yoshida, 2019: 20-21), and according to Uno, the descriptions in the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh*, the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* 聖武親征錄 and the *Yuan shi* 元史 that place Jochi's expedition not in 1207, but in 1217–18 during the revolt of the Tumat tribe, one of the groups of the 'people of the forest', are closer to historical fact (Uno, 1983: 174; Uno, 1991: 184). The chronology of the subjugation of the 'people of the forest' by Jochi would be an important issue to consider.

There have been many studies on Jochi, and notable studies and collections of articles have been published in recent years (e.g. Миргалеев, 2016; Atwood, 2017; Кушкумбаев, 2020; Favereau, 2021: 26-94; Порсин, 2023). Among them, this chapter will be an important study for future reference.

Chapter 2: History of the discovery, study and restoration of the Jochi Khan mausoleum: the Jochi Khan mausoleum in historical sources and studies (M.B. Kozha). In this chapter, the historical record on the Jochi Khan mausoleum, its research history and legends are painstakingly analysed.

As is well known, the earliest record of the Jochi Khan mausoleum is Ḥāfiẓ Tanīsh's *Sharaf-nāma-yi Shāhī* (or '*Abdullāh-nāma*') of 1582. This chapter begins by collecting and analysing the descriptions of the Jochi Khan mausoleum in the *Sharaf-nāma-yi Shāhī* and other historical sources. From the analysis of the descriptions in the various sources, the author's point is of great importance that "Ulytau was the geographical and one of the main political centres of late medieval Kazakhstan", where the Jochi Khan mausoleum is located (Усманова и др., 2024: 54). It is also an excellent idea that the author identifies the toponym "Jowan-ana" or "Jang-ana" found in the *Lexicon, or topographical dictionary, of the Orenburg province*, compiled in 1776, with the Jochi Khan mausoleum (Усманова и др., 2024: 55-56, 76-77).

The history of research and restoration is organised below. It is explained that Margulan's studies in the mid-20th century were important but formed the 'myth' that the mausoleum belonged to Jochi and his wife. At the same time, it is noted that various objections to Margulan's theory have been presented; then, in the 1990s, Khorosh found that there were two different construction dates for the mausoleum. By tracing the above research history, the position and significance of this book's interdisciplinary research in the study of the Jochi Khan mausoleum becomes clear once again.

As for the human bones found in the two grave chambers of the mausoleum, only one of the skulls has been judged to be that of an "adult male" (which Margulan judged to be that of Jochi's

wife, thus invalidating his theory). As the author states, we look forward to future palaeogenetic studies of these human bones (Усманова и др., 2024: 63, 70-71).

This chapter and Appendix 6 collect and analyse legends concerning the death of Jochi. Through the analysis, it is highly suggestive of the author's point that "the archetype of folk legends about the death of Jochi Khan is the disappearance of the body after the death. It is possible that the mythologem voiced in this way is indirect evidence of the absence of Jochi's burial in the mausoleum of the same name" (Усманова и др., 2024: 76).

In fact, when I, the reviewer, visited the Jochi Khan mausoleum for the first time (2019), I had the following impressions: "most likely, Ulytau, by virtue of its natural features and its landscape, had an important sacred character even before it became associated with Jochi and his descendants. The mausoleum of Jochi Khan is mentioned under his name in sources from the second half of the 16th century; however, from what time and why it was so called, how it related to Jochi Khan and from what time the veneration of the mausoleum began, are all important questions waiting to be answered by new research" (Усманова и др., 2024: 252-253). This chapter answers or hints at precisely the question of "how the Jochi Khan mausoleum has been narrated" and will be an important reference for future studies of the mausoleum.

Chapter 3: Semantics of the Jochi Khan mausoleum (E.R. Usmanova). This chapter begins with a detailed analysis of the field diary of archaeologist Geronim A. Patsevich, who witnessed the excavation in 1946, with comments by the author. The analysis of this field diary is a valuable study that vividly reconstructs the excavation conditions at the time. Through the same excavation, Margulan claimed that the human bone without one hand belonged to Jochi, that the other was Jochi's wife and that the mausoleum was dated to 1228. However, due to discrepancies between Patsevich's field diary and Margulan's studies, the fact that the human bones that Margulan attributed to Jochi's wife were those of an "adult male", the 1998 resurvey and the research of Khorosh, this chapter states that "some conclusions of Alkey Kh. Margulan regarding the interpretation of the burial artefacts should obviously be questioned" (Усманова и др., 2024: 98).

In the following, the semantics behind the secondary burials, the design of the grave chamber, the colours, the dome, etc. are read and understood. Among them, regarding the camel skull found as a secondary burial, the author's point is noteworthy that "the image of a camel, denoting sacral places and the world of ancestors, symbolised the sanctity of the person buried in the mausoleum, most likely belonging to the Muslim religion. The camel's head probably referred to the animal that carried the body of the deceased to the place of burial and was then sacrificed according to the principles of the sacrificial code of Islamic ritual" (Усманова и др., 2024: 100-101).

It is also interesting that Zoroastrian influences have been noted in the design of the tomb chamber. The notable slabs with Arabic script found in the grave chamber are analysed in Appendix 2.

Chapter 4: Chronology and historical and cultural significance of the Jochi Khan mausoleum (I.P. Panyushkina, E.R. Usmanova). The final chapter of the main part finally delves into the 'myth' of the Jochi Khan mausoleum; namely, the question of when the Jochi Khan mausoleum was built and who were the interred. The method introduced by the authors here is 14C dating. 14C dating, and the Islamic architectural style, Arabic inscriptions and secondary burials (e.g. camel bones) lead to the conclusion that the first phase of the construction of the Jochi Khan mausoleum dates to the mid-14th century, the second phase to the late 14th–early 15th century and that the buried person is not Jochi but a descendant of Jochi after Islamisation. Of course, as pointed out in this chapter, it is possible that a mausoleum was later built over Jochi's tomb, or that Jochi's body,

secretly buried somewhere, was later moved here, but the authors' consideration process is logical and convincing (Усманова и др., 2024: 139-140). In doing so, it is interesting to note the influence of Sufism and pre-Islamisation rituals.

Furthermore, this chapter states: “[the mausoleum] has been known as the *mazar* of Jochi Khan since the 16th century and under the name of Jochi Khan mausoleum it still exists. It is also difficult to establish the reason for the designation of the *mazar* by the name of Jochi Khan – whether it was the attitude to the *mazar* as a symbol of the ancestor's memory or as a supposed place of his burial. Perhaps the mausoleum under this name was known in folk tradition before it was mentioned in written sources”. The next important issue regarding the Jochi Khan mausoleum is still presented here: when and how was the Jochi Khan mausoleum associated with Jochi, and what kind of place was it before it was associated with Jochi?

Including the extensive appendices that follow the main part, this book is truly “a kind of encyclopaedia on the Golden Horde period and the restoration of its architecture” and an excellent collection of materials. The wealth of rare and beautiful historical illustrations and photographs related to the Jochi Khan mausoleum is another attraction of this book.

I, the reviewer, sincerely hope that this book, which challenges the ‘myth’ of the Jochi Khan mausoleum and successfully demonstrates the history and achievements of research on the Jochi Khan mausoleum, will be read by many readers not only in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, but also around the world. Finally, I would like to express my sincere respect to the authors of this book for their courage and sincere research attitude in challenging the ‘myth’ of the Jochi Khan mausoleum.

Notes

1. Papers by the authors preceding this publication are as follows: (Усманова и др., 2022; Panyushkina et al., 2022).

2. Regarding the theory that Jochi was the heir of Chinggis, in addition to the works of Christopher Atwood and Marie Favereau, to whom the author refers, Yoshiyuki Funada also points out that Jochi may have been the heir of Chinggis up to a certain point (Funada, 2018: 9-10).

3. Recently, a series of studies by Yoshida was published as a monograph (Yoshida, 2019).

4. Atwood also points out the political bias toward the Jochid of the *Secret History of the Mongols*, but is sceptical of Rashīd al-Dīn's account of Jochi's birth (Atwood, 2007: 27).

5. For example, Hodong Kim states “the epithet, probably posthumous, of Jochi” (Kim, 2019: 272). The epithet of Tolui is considered to be ‘*Yeke Noyan*’ and the epithet of Ögödei is ‘*Qa’an*’ (Boyle, 1956). As a related and interesting case, in the ‘*jadwal*’ (dynasty table) of the Timurid historical source *Muntakhab al-Tawārikh-i Mu’inī* and of the Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, B. 411 attributed to the same author, the ‘*laqab*’ of Tolui is marked as ‘*Yeke Noyan*’ and the ‘*laqab*’ of Ögödei as ‘*Qa’an*’ (and the ‘*laqab*’ of Chaghadai as ‘*Sächän*’). However, the ‘*laqab*’ of Jochi is marked as ‘*Şayın Khan*’ in the former (as is well known, this was the epithet of Jochi's son Batu), and ‘*Uzbek*’ in the latter (Нагаминэ, 2023).

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