

## Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies

<http://journals.cambridge.org/BSO>

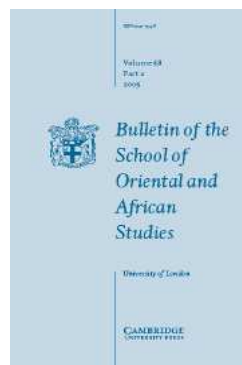
Additional services for *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



---

**alan j. k. sanders: historical dictionary of mongolia. (asian/oceanian historical dictionaries, 42.) lxxiii, 419 pp. lanham and oxford: the scarecrow press, 2003. £40.**

george lane

Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies / Volume 68 / Issue 02 / June 2005, pp 324 - 326

DOI: 10.1017/S0041977X05270155, Published online: 06 September 2005

**Link to this article:** [http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S0041977X05270155](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0041977X05270155)

### How to cite this article:

george lane (2005). Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 68, pp 324-326 doi:10.1017/S0041977X05270155

**Request Permissions :** [Click here](#)

our main source for this story, Juwaynī, can also be accused of biased and tendentious writing. His presentation of the eradication of the Assassins can be seen as a way of justifying Hülegü's campaign and later actions (as well as drawing attention away from the conquest of Baghdad and the eradication of the Caliphate). In any event, other reasons—some more cogent—also present themselves: Mongol imperial ideology, the Mongol move westwards across Iran into Anatolia, and probes into Syria and upper Mesopotamia which preceded Hülegü's arrival in the area, and Möngke's desire to strengthen the Toluids at the expense of the Jochids of the Golden Horde (a convincing suggestion made by T. Allsen in his *Mongol Imperialism* (1987)). Finally there is the whole issue of whether Hülegü was exceeding his brief by establishing a dynasty in Iran and the surrounding countries, a question raised by Peter Jackson in his famous article 'The dissolution of the Mongol empire' (*Central Asiatic Journal*, 32, 1978, 186–244). Readers—be they student or expert—should get a richer treatment of this important topic.

A second matter is that of the nature of the early Ilkhanid state. Lane has provided here a concise summary of the main arguments of his recent book *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth Century Iran* (London, 2003), which has presented a convincing case for looking at the first decades of Ilkhanid rule in a more positive light than has usually hitherto been presented. Certainly, he is correct in suggesting that we have been led astray by the impression created by the atrocities committed by the Mongols in their first campaign in the region (1219–23), as well the sorry state of the country described by Rashīd al-Dīn at the end of the thirteenth century (thus justifying the policies of his patron, Ghazan, carried out by himself). The author is surely right when he shows that the reign of Hülegü and his son Abagha (1265–82) was one of relative stability and even prosperity. At the same time, perhaps Lane has gone a little too far in painting the rosy picture of the welcome accorded to Hülegü by the rulers and people of Iran and its environs. Certainly the people of Mayyāfāriqīn, southern Iraq and Aleppo had little positive to say about the nature of Mongol conquest, and those of eastern Anatolia also may have had some reservations regarding the benefits of Mongol rule after the harsh measures carried out there in 1276–77. It is also not clear that the Sunni Muslims in Iraq and the surrounding countries accepted the eradication of the 'Abbasid caliphate with equanimity. The research of S. Heidemann (*Das Aleppiner Kalifat (AD 1261): vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad der Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo* (Leiden, 1994)) and my own readings in the Arabic sources from Egypt and Syria lead me to think differently.

These reservations do not detract from the value of Lane's volume as a whole. I intend to use it in my introductory lectures and courses on the Mongols, and particularly recommend the volume to teachers, as well as to all those who wish to learn about the Mongol expansion and empire, especially in the Middle East.

REUVEN AMITAI

ALAN J. K. SANDERS:

*Historical Dictionary of Mongolia.*

(Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries, 42.) lxxiii, 419 pp.

Lanham and Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2003. £40.

This second edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Mongolia* is able to focus on the new, emerging, Mongolia and include the names and details of people,

institutions, places and events that have been of great importance over the last decade, a formative period in Mongolia's history. While updating the entries to reflect these new developments, Alan Sanders has not neglected Mongolia's glorious past and the country's pride in its eventful history. This slim volume remains a useful reference book for the historian and general researcher, and a convenient tool for academics as well as journalists.

Alan Sanders has a solid background not only in journalism but also in academia. He worked as an editor for the BBC for five years and has been a regular contributor to the *Far Eastern Economic Review* as well as regularly writing articles and chapters for a wide range of journals, yearbooks, books, collections, and reports concerned with Mongolia. His academic credentials include a lectureship at SOAS between 1991 and 1995, a fellowship of the London Institute of Linguists, membership of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and participation in both the Anglo-Mongolian Round Table conferences and the quinquennial congresses of the International Association for Mongol Studies. He has written two other books on Mongolia and published two books on Mongolian, the spoken language.

This new edition of his *Historical Dictionary* makes a welcome and timely appearance. New interest in Mongolia has been evident in recent years and in 2004 three major studies of Chinggis Khan and Mongol rule have appeared. Unfortunately this book has a serious omission: it contains only one very inadequate map, which shows administrative districts and little more. Other maps showing geological features, historical sites, economic activity, agricultural zones, and industrial developments would have proved very useful. This and the small black and white photographs are the only shortcomings of what is otherwise an excellent reference guide to Mongolia.

Certain aspects of this compact reference tool deserve particular mention. The chronology from 1162, the birth year of Chinggis Khan, to the present (2002) is accessible and gives a Mongol-eyed view of history. The entries become progressively more detailed towards the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the new. The revised and enlarged bibliography is comprehensive and is sub-divided into eight broad categories which are further divided into more specific subject areas. It is served by an introductory commentary on the current situation in Mongol and Mongolian studies. Five appendixes detail the membership of the government and assemblies since 1992, listing members of the Great Hural or national assembly, the Little Hural or executive council, and the Democratic Party's National Advisory Council for 2001. Select biographical details of the members can be found in the main body of entries.

The main body of the book contains a comprehensive selection of entries all clearly cross-referenced. There is no attempt to categorize the dictionary entries, but this is in no way a criticism. Subjects are easily located and related entries are clearly marked in bold print. Chinggis Khan is given three pages but he is cross-referenced not only to his sons and successors but to modern history, with the attitudes of political leaders and institutions towards their famous ancestor scrutinized in a revealing summary. Chinggis Khan's birthday has only been celebrated in recent history since the death of Stalin but the official government view of the great man was negative, and sympathetic to the virulently anti-Chinggisid attitude of Soviet Russia. He was applauded for uniting the steppe tribes of Eurasia but otherwise denounced as a cruel reactionary and oppressor. The dictionary traces the rehabilitation of Chinggis

Khan with another network of cross-references to connect this particular entry with the wider scope of the book.

In the medieval period the boundaries of Mongolia were considerably larger than they are today. Simple, concise entries deal with these outlying outcrops of the empire from its glory days. The Ilkhanate of Iran receives only thirteen lines and the Yuan dynasty of China nine, though the Golden Horde of Russia is awarded a full page. Inner Mongolia has two pages devoted to its affairs and Xinjiang half a page in recognition of its scattered Mongol-speaking communities.

The potential audience for this book is reflected in the background and achievements of the author. The detailed information pertaining to Mongolia's current political, economic, industrial and social situation make it an indispensable and accessible tool for journalists, but its equally detailed data on historical and academic issues, coupled with the excellent bibliography, also make it a valuable volume for scholarly use.

GEORGE LANE

---

EAST ASIA

STEPHEN ESKILDSEN:

*The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters.* (SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture.) vii, 274 pp. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004. \$50.

The Quanzhen (Complete Realization) School of Taoism emerged in northern China in the twelfth century when the rule of the Northern Song-dynasty had crumbled and foreign powers held a firm grasp on the region. Adherents of Quanzhen Taoism developed a preference for life in celibate communities, which makes this branch and organization of Taoism acceptable to today's Chinese government. The White Cloud Monastery in Beijing is the leading Taoist centre for the education and the pious life of Taoists in northern China. It calls to mind the patriarch Qiu Chuji (1148–1227) who in the early thirteenth century departed to visit Chinggis Khan. The Mongol potentate wished to learn about the techniques of longevity, a reputed concern of Taoism. This event was described by A. Waley in *The Travels of an Alchemist, The Journey of the Taoist Ch'ang-ch'un from China to the Hindukush at the Summons of Chingiz Khan* (reprinted London, 1963). Any study of the historical setting for the developing Quanzhen School will consider the article by P. Demiéville, *La situation religieuse en Chine au temps de Marco Polo* (Oriente PolianoRome 1957, pp.193–236). In the work under review Eskildsen shows that such studies still have much to offer. Qiu Chuji was one of the 'Seven Realized Ones', who form, almost exclusively, the 'early Quanzhen masters' of the title of this book. They in fact founded Quanzhen Taoism in the provinces of Shandong and Shensi where they established individual affiliations or lines of transmission. Some of these affiliations still flourish today, for example, the *Longmen pai* that claims Qiu Chuji to be the ancestor patriarch.

The speciality of these Taoists was the sublimation of the way of life in order to retrieve the original transcendent quality and integrity of the heavenly life endowment. The literary collections of the Seven Realized Ones show a