

MONUMENTA SERICA MONOGRAPH XV

Western and Central Asians in
China Under the Mongols

元西人華化考

CHIA YUAN 卷五

Translated and annotated by

Wang Ching-nai 王景淦 and I. Carrington Goodrich

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by

Ch'ên Yüan 陳垣

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PREFACE

This work had its genesis about 1949, when my old friend, Mr. Ch'ien Hsing-hai, then recently retired after long service with the China Medical Board of the Rockefeller Foundation and the Peking Union Medical College, and the undersigned agreed to work together on an annotated translation of an important Chinese work of scholarship. We hit upon Ch'ên Yüan's monograph partly because of its intrinsic interest and partly because of the high praise given it on its publication. Unhappily, our relationship was cut short in the summer of 1951; in the years since I have continued, with many fits and starts, to bring the work to completion.

In so doing I owe much to such libraries in New York, Canberra, and Tokyo as the East Asian Library of Columbia University, the Chinese and Japanese Collection of the Australian National University, the Toyo Bunko, and the Library of International Christian University; also to such individuals as Dr. Igor de Rachewiltz in Canberra, Miss Nakako Ishida in Tokyo, and Professor Chiang Yee in New York. To my colleague of many years, Professor Wang Chi-chên, I am particularly grateful, for at the end he reviewed the whole text with me, and led me again and again to correct interpretations. Naturally there are still places, especially in renderings of snatches of poetry, where we found the meaning obscure. I alone am responsible for whatever mistakes remain, not only in translation but also in annotation. I trust nonetheless that, as a result of our joint efforts, this significant contribution to the cultural history of the Yüan period will reach many more readers than it has so far in the original.

LCG

Spuyten Duyvil
New York
July 5, 1965

This book is a study of the sinicization of many of the people from western and central Asia who penetrated China during the century and a half of Mongol rule, first in the north and then in the center and south. Like the latinization of the Lombards in Italy at an earlier day this process was a rapid one. Within a generation or two the author finds them becoming Confucians, Buddhists, and Taoists, writing poetry, essays, and lyrics in Chinese, competing with the conquered people in such arts as calligraphy, painting, and architecture, and taking on the customs of the country of their adoption. The author concludes with a chapter about the ladies as well, and ends with a valuable list of the writings due to the western and central Asians.

Ch'ên Yüan, the author of this work, was born in 1880 in Hsin-shui, Kuangtung province. At an early age he displayed his scholarly aptitudes, achieving the *chü-jen* degree in 1898. In the year 1921 he served for a time as vice-minister of education. In the same decade he became associated with National Peking, Yenching, and Fu-jen Universities as professor, and was made president of the last in 1929. When that institution was taken over by the new government in 1952 Ch'ên was appointed president of the Normal University (1954-56). Mr. Ch'ên is the author of many books and papers of significance, ranging from comparative calendars and indexes through biographical studies, analyses of Tun-huang manuscripts preserved in Peking, researches into imperial taboos, the Old History of the Five Dynasties, and the Institutes of the Yüan dynasty, to monographs on the history of religions in China, particularly ones that flourished from the 8th to the 17th centuries: Manicheism, Judaism, Nestorianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It is in the Yüan period that he seems most at home. Here he has been able to reveal his extraordinary grasp of the sources as his mature and critical approach. The book translated herein is perhaps the finest example of his work in this field.

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