

## Ghiyathuddin Naqqash

### Report to Mirza Baysunghur on the Timurid Legation to the Ming Court at Peking

Embassies were exchanged between the Timurids and Ming China on a fairly regular basis.<sup>1</sup> After Timur's death, the first Chinese embassy to Shahrukh arrived in Herat in 815/1412.

The second embassy arrived in Rabi' I 820 (April 1417) with three hundred horsemen and gifts and presents sent by the Emperor of China consisting of falcons, brocades, velvets, silks, porcelain vessels, Chinese paper, etc. In the letter from the emperor expressing friendship for Shahrukh, he sent his gratitude to Sayyid-Ahmad Tarkhan for a white horse he had sent when the first embassy returned to Peking. A picture of this horse, commissioned by the emperor, was sent with the embassy.<sup>2</sup> When the second embassy set out for Peking in Rabi' I 820 (May 1417), Shahrukh sent Ardashir Tovachī, who is mentioned in Ghiyathuddin's report.<sup>3</sup>

A third embassy from Ming China arrived in Herat with Ardashir Tovachī in Ramadan 822 (October 1419),<sup>4</sup> and the embassy to which Ghiyathuddin Naqqash was attached seems to be a reciprocal legation, departing some two months later. Although the purpose of the delegation is not given, it is certainly of significance that not only Shahrukh, but Baysunghur, Ibrahim-Sultan, Soyurghatmish, Amir Shah Malik and the king of Badakhshan all sent emissaries on this mission.<sup>5</sup>



In the year 822 [A.D. 1419] His Late Highness Mirza Shahrukh appointed a group, at the head of which was Shadi

Khwaja, on a mission to Cathay. Along with them Prince Mirza Baysunqur sent Sultan-Ahmad and Khwaja Ghiyathuddin Naqqash, who was an artist of no mean talent. He established with the khwaja that, from the day they departed the capital Herat until the day they returned, they would record on the pages of their notebooks, without addition or deletion, all they witnessed—events, condition of roads, construction of towns, description of garrisons, situations of buildings, conditions of kings, etc. When the emissaries returned, Khwaja Ghiyathuddin, in com-

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<sup>1</sup>See Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches*, II, 256–61.

<sup>2</sup>Such a picture is preserved in one of the Istanbul albums (Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, H.2154, folio 33b) and reproduced in *Islamic Art I* (1981): fig. 83B.

<sup>3</sup>See Faṣihī Khwāfī, *Mujmal*, p. 230f. and 'Abdul-Razzāq, *Majma'-i sa'dayn*, II, 201–2.

<sup>4</sup>'Abdul-Razzāq, *Majma'-i sa'dayn*, II, 216.

<sup>5</sup>Notice of their arrival in Peking is given in Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches*, II, 284–85.

pliance with the order, presented written down in the form of a journal all he had seen, the choicest marvelous tales and rare stories of which will be quoted from his report, for [the verity of] which he is responsible.<sup>6</sup>

#### GHIYATHUDDIN NAQQASH'S ACCOUNT

On the 16th of Dhu'l-Qa'da [December 4, 1419] the emissaries<sup>7</sup> left Herat for

<sup>6</sup>Following report taken from *Rawdat al-ṣafā* (RS), VII, 479–98, and compared with the corresponding section in *Habīb al-siyar* (HS), IV, 634–49, where it is said to have been taken from 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī's *Maṭla'-i sa'dayn* (MS; see Persian text and French translation by Etienne Quatremère, *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi et autres bibliothèques*, XIV [Paris, 1843], pp. 308–41, 387–426; Shafi' edition, II, 267–88, significant variants in which are noted); an abstract in English of Quatremère's translation is given in Sir Henry Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*, ed. Henri Cordier (Taipei: Ch'eng-Wen Publishing Co., 1966), I, 271–89.

Half brackets [...] indicate matter given in RS but missing from HS; square brackets [...] indicate matter given in HS but missing from RS. There also exists an Ottoman translation, entitled 'Ajāyib al-laṭāyif (AL), made by one Chelebizade during the reign of Ahmed III, dedicated to the Grand Vizier Ibrāhīm Pasha and copied into a miscellany in the possession of Mr. Muḥammad-'Alī Karīmzāda Tabrīzī, who has made a Persian translation from the Ottoman and included it in his *Aḥwāl u āthār-i naqqāshān-i qadīm-i Irān* (London: Interlink Longraph, 1363/1985), pp. 418–33. In view of the fact that this version has been translated from Persian into Turkish and back into Persian, it is remarkably faithful to the versions incorporated into Mirkhwānd and Khwāndamīr's histories; however, in several places it fills in gaps in one version or another, and these are marked by brackets [...]. Significant variants given in Ḥāfiz-i Abrū's version in the *Zubdat al-tawārikh* (ZT) are signaled by angled brackets <...>; for the Persian text with English translation see K. M. Maitra, *A Persian Embassy to China* (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1970).

<sup>7</sup>*Ilchi* (< Tk. *elči*) will be translated throughout as "emissary."

Cathay.<sup>8</sup> 'Having traversed a distance, they reached Balkh on the 9th of Dhu'l-Hijja [December 27, 1419]. On account of heavy rain and severe cold they remained there until the beginning of Muharram 823 [mid-January 1420].<sup>1</sup> On the 22nd of that month they stopped in Samarqand. {Two months} 'previously Mirza Ulugh-Beg had dispatched his own emissaries, Sultan-Shah and Muhammad Bakhshī, with a number of Cathaian people. The messengers from Khurasan stopped in Samarqand' until Mirza Soyurghatmīsh's emissary 'Arghudaq', Amir Shah-Malik's emissary 'Ardawan', [and] the shahs of Badakhshan's emissary 'Tajuddin' joined them. Then, on the 10th of Safar [February 25], 'together with the emissaries of Cathay' they left Samarqand 'and, passing through Tashkent {on the 4th of Rabi' I} and Sayram<sup>9</sup> {on the 13th}, came {at the beginning of Rabi' II to Ashpara and on the 21st [May 5]} among the Mughul people. {At this time the spring season had begun, and the views afforded by the roads, mountains and meadows were pleasant beyond description.}

At the same time [RS VII, 479] they arrived, news came that Uways Khan had attacked Sher-Muhammad Oghlan, for which reason there was a disturbance in the nation (*ulus*).<sup>10</sup> After that there came

<sup>8</sup>"Cathay" will be used throughout for the Persian *Khaṭāy*, the name by which the Timurids referred to China. "China" (*Chīn*) occurs only once in the narrative. According to Faṣīhī (*Mujmal*, 251) the group left on 6 Dhū'l-Qa'da 822 (November 14, 1419).

<sup>9</sup>RS has Bayrām, an obvious mistake for the Sayrām of AL. This is the Sayrām north of Tashkent and near Chimkand, which could be easily reached in nine days.

<sup>10</sup>In AL this sentence reads: "Because of a desire on the part of Uways Khān to kill Sher-Muhammad Oghlan, Qul-Muhammad Beg and some Moghul *amirs* had rebelled against Uways Khān and thrown the nation into an uproar." Uways (or Ways) Khān was the son of Sher-'Alī Oghlan, brother of Sher-Muhammad Khān, and the hostility between Uways and his uncle con-

news of a truce {negotiated by} Amir Khudadad, who held the stewardship of that region and who came to the emissaries and gave them a document of safe pass. On the 18th of Jumada I [May 31] the emissaries reached a place [called] Sa'lubu {Bilghutu},<sup>11</sup> which belonged to Muhammad Beg. They stopped there for a while so that some of the stragglers, who were the king of Badakhshan's *nökärs*, could catch up. On the 22nd they departed there and crossed the Küngäz River.<sup>12</sup> The next day <they saw> the ruler of the *ulus*, Muhammad Beg <and> Sultan Shadi Kürägän, <Muhammad Beg's son> who was the son-in-law of Sham'-i<sup>13</sup> Jahan, whose other daughter had been given in marriage to Mirza Muhammad-Juki.<sup>14</sup>

On the 28th [of Jumada I] [June 10] they entered the Yulduz Prairie<sup>15</sup> 'and' the *el* (tribe) of Sher-Bahram. In that wilderness, although the Sun was in Cancer, water was frozen to a depth of two fingers. 'On the 8th of Jumada II [June 20] they heard news of the plunder of Uways Khan's *daji* and emissary by the sons of Muhammad Beg.<sup>16</sup> {After

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tinued until Sher-Muhammad's death and the succession of Uways to the khanate of Mughulistan (see Mirzā Muhammad Haydar Dughlāt, *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia*, ed. by N. Elias, trs. by E. Denison Ross [New York: Praeger, 1970], p. 64).

<sup>11</sup>Not verified, not located.

<sup>12</sup>RS: LNKR; AL: KNKR.

<sup>13</sup>For the Shāh of the text.

<sup>14</sup>Sentence incomplete in RS. AL has: "The wife of Muhammad Bēg's son, who was the son-in-law of Sultān Shādi Kürägän Sham'-i Jahān, was the sister of Prince's Jūki Bahādur's wife." Sham'-i Jahān and Muhammad Khān were sons of Khidr Khwāja Khān of Mughulistan (Mirzā Muhammad Haydar Dughlāt, *History*, intro., p. 46). Sham'-i Jahān's daughter, Mihrnigār Khānikā, was married to Muhammad-Jūki (RS, VI, 600, 668).

<sup>15</sup>The Yulduz is the principal *yaylaq* (summer pasture) of Mughulistan.

<sup>16</sup>This sentence taken from AL. The version given in RS is hopelessly garbled and reads: "On

this news} the emissaries were concerned<sup>17</sup> {that henceforth, during the trip through mountainous terrain, they would have to be very careful.} Most of the time rain and sleet fell from the clouds, [and with much difficulty] they forded rivers and traversed the mountains.

At the end of the month [of Jumada II] they reached the city of Turfan.<sup>17</sup> In this town most of the people [HS IV, 635] were idolators and had huge idol temples. On a dais<sup>18</sup> in one temple they had placed a huge idol [which was a representation of Shakamuni<sup>19</sup>].

On the 2nd of the month [of Rajab] they left there and reached Qara Khwaja on the 5th. On the 10th [of Rajab] a group of Cathaian scribes came and wrote down the emissaries' names and the number of their people. 'On the 19th of the month [Rajab] they stopped in the entrepôt of Ata Sufi, where {someone named Khandzada Tajuddin} Alawi, a sayyid of Tirmidh, had built a dervish convent (*zāwiya*) and founded a hospice (*langar*).<sup>7</sup> {His son-in-law,<sup>20</sup> Mir Fakhruddin, was the ruler of the Muslims of Qamul.}

On the 21st [of that same month Shadi Khwaja and his companions stopped in] the city of Qamul,<sup>21</sup> where 'Amir'<sup>7</sup> [Sayyid] Fakhruddin had constructed a lofty and highly ornamented and decorated mosque, {opposite which a large temple was located. In this temple were various idols, among which was a golden statue the size of a ten-year-old boy that was executed with consummate mastery.} On the sides of {this temple} the idolators

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the 8th of Jum. II they heard the news that the sons of Muhammad Bēg Wākhī, who were Uways Khān's emissaries, had been plundered."

<sup>17</sup>HS: Tūqān; MS: Tūfān.

<sup>18</sup>Reading *ṣuffa* with ZT for the *ṣafha* of RS and HS.

<sup>19</sup>Gautama Shakyamuni, the Buddha.

<sup>20</sup>MS: "his father-in-law."

<sup>21</sup>The older Chinese Hamil, now Ha-mi (Qomul). RS has Qā'il.

had made large and small paintings of fantastic forms. On the door to the temple was painted a depiction of two demons attacking each other. A very handsome youth, Mengli Temür Bayirī<sup>22</sup> by name, was the ruler of Qamul. They left there and crossed twenty-five stages, finding water once every other day. On the 25th {12th} of Sha‘ban, in the midst of that vast wilderness, [RS 480] they came across a yak, [which is so large and strong that once one seized a rider from his saddle and kept him on its horns for some time]. ‘This is a novel report if it is true.’

To return to the narrative, on the 14th of Sha‘ban [August 24, 1420] they came to a place [from which to Sukju, the first city inside Cathay, is ten days, the whole way desert wilderness.] There they encountered a group of Cathaians who had come to meet [Shadi Khwaja and his companions]. In one day, in a meadow that would have been the envy of the Garden of Iram, they made platforms, set up canopies, placed seats and chairs and arranged foodstuffs, goose, roast fowl, cooked viands and all types of fruit, both dried and fresh, on china platters; and there they gave a banquet (*toy*) that would have been difficult to hold in a great city. When they were finished eating they brought all sorts of intoxicants and gave each person the sheep, flour and barley he needed. They also took receipts (*nuskha*) of how many servants each of the emissaries had, and they emphasized that they should represent this in accordance with the truth and not inflate the number, for whoever told a lie would lose credibility [with the emperor]. The merchants were listed among the ranks of the servants.

‘The receipts were as follows:

Amir Shadi & Kōkchā.....	200 persons
Sultan-Ahmad & Ghiyathuddin Naqqash .....	150 persons
Arghūdaq.....	60 persons

<sup>22</sup>Reading with ZT for the *Bāburi* of RS.

Ardaw[a]n.....	50 persons
Tajuddin.....	50 persons

Mirza Ulugh-Beg’s emissaries had gone ahead, and Mirza Ibrahim-Sultan’s messengers had not yet arrived.<sup>1</sup>

On the 16th {18th} of Sha‘ban, Wang Daji,<sup>23</sup> the ruler of the march, gave a huge banquet and summoned the emissaries, who entered his *yurt*. The Cathaians, as was their wont, had camped in a square, tent rope hard by tent rope, such that no creature could come among them except by the four gates they had left on the four sides of the square. In the middle was a large open area, in the midst of which a high platform (*dukkān*) one *jarib* [in area] had been constructed. Therein was pitched a large tent, with two Cathaian spears<sup>24</sup> placed in front, with the flaps opened out ‘like a *shāhnishīn*’, and a vestibule (*tālār*) of wood and canopies unfurled such that in that one-*jarib* area the sun did not shine. Beneath the two spears [the two-poled tent] they had placed the Daji’s seat, to the right and left of which were chairs. The emissaries sat on the left, and the Chinese amirs took their places on the right. [RS 481] Among them the left is more the place of honor than the right ‘since the heart, the ruler of the city of the body, has its abode on the left side’. One tray was placed before the emissaries and another before the amirs. On one tray were goose, fowl and cooked viands and both dried [and fresh] Chinese fruit, and on the other [HS 636] were little cakes and delicious bread. Dates of paper and silk were placed before every one. Opposite, on an elevated

<sup>23</sup>*Wāng* here is probably the Chinese *wang* (duke). *Dāji*, variants of which occur throughout, is taken to be a rendering of the Mongolian *taiji* (> Chinese *t’ai chī*), originally a designation of Jenghizids and later a title of nobility. RS has W’MK W’JY; HS and MS have *Dāng Dāji*.

<sup>24</sup>RS: *khayma-i buzurg...u du nayza-i khatā’i*; HS: *khayma-i buzurg-i du-tira-i khatā’i* (“a large, two-poled Cathaian tent”).

place, the imperial *kävürgä*<sup>25</sup> was situated, and [large and small] china vases and [large and small] 'crystal and' silver vessels [some of silver and others of china] were placed about. To the right and left of the *kävürgä* were standing singers and musicians, who played on psalteries, viols, flutes,<sup>26</sup> cymbals, tambours, castanets and drums.<sup>27</sup> Beautiful boys made up like girls with rouge and powder rubbed on their faces and pearls in their ears performed. In this open area, all the way to the four gates, soldiers clad in armor stood, so still and grave that they never moved a foot from their positions. In their hands they held spears 'and had no need of an officer. People were seated according to their various ranks, and the master of ceremonies handed the amirs and emissaries goblets.' [After eating, when wine drinking had begun, the governor held a goblet, along with which was passed around a figured chest (*nakhl-bandī*), and a little branch {of artificial dates} was taken from the chest and put in the turban of every person to whom the goblet was given, so that in the end the gathering resembled a garden.] The players had made animal masks of papier maché and fastened them over their heads in such a manner that their faces, ears and necks could not be seen at all [and they danced in the Chinese fashion]. 'The silvery cupbearers began to pass wine around and acted in accordance with this verse:

Cast Bahram's lasso of prey, clasp  
Jamshid's cup, for I have crossed this desert,  
and there is neither Bahram nor onager.<sup>1</sup>

Moon-faced, tulip-cheeked boys, holding vessels of delicious wine, stood by, while others held platters full of hazelnuts, jujubes, walnuts, peeled chestnuts, citrons, pickled garlic and onions, and slices of melon and watermelon. When the amir handed someone a goblet, one of the [servants] offered the platters for [the guests] to choose whatever appetizers they wished.

They had also fashioned a mask like a stork (*laklak*), so enormous that a boy could get inside it. The stork danced rhythmically 'and shook [RS 482] its head in every direction so that the on-lookers were astonished.' That day, from morning till evening, was spent in enjoyment and pleasure.

On the 17th of Sha'ban [August 27, 1420] they set out [across the desert,] and traversing several stages, reached Qarawul in a few days.<sup>28</sup> Qarawul is a very strong fortress surrounded by mountains. [There is only one road.] 'It has one gate leading in and another leading out.' As the emissaries entered the fortress, the people there counted each person and wrote down the names. Leaving Qarawul, they came to the city of Sukju,<sup>29</sup> stopping in a large post station (*yāmkhāna*) at the city gate. The [Chinese] took everyone's [pack animals and] belongings to the office. Among their stores they had very good quality foodstuffs, beverages, mounts and textiles, and they assigned

<sup>25</sup>A large kettle drum of regal significance, like the *naqāra*. The words seems to have originated with the Uighur *kövrüg* (Sir Gerald Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary*, p. 690–91) > Mongolian *kō'ürgä*, *kä'ürgä* > Chaghatay *kävürgä*. Radloff gives *kürägä* (VWTD, II, 1450) and *käürgä* (II, 1057); Doerfer (*TMEN*, §339) reads *körgä*.

<sup>26</sup>MS adds: of two sorts, end-blown and transverse.

<sup>27</sup>Urghanün, kamāncha, nay, sinj, daff, chahār[pāra], duhul.

<sup>28</sup>*Qarāwul* means sentry or sentry post, but it seems to be used as a proper name here. Yule (*Cathay*, I, 274) identifies it as Kia-yü Kwan, the fortified entrance of the Great Wall.

<sup>29</sup>RS Bikjū, a misreading; HS Sukjū, alternating with Sujkū. The proper form is Sukjū or Sawkjū, for Su-chou (older Suk-chou) in Kansu Province. Abū'l-Fidā (*Taqwīm al-buldān*, ed. M. Reinaud [Paris: L'Imprimerie Royale, 1840], p. 366) spells and vocalizes it as Sawkjū.

each person a bed,<sup>30</sup> a pair of silk pyjamas and an obedient servant. They performed such services in all the post-houses all the way to the capital of Cathay.

Sukju is a large city with strong, high walls encircling it. In shape it is square and comprises bazaars fifty cubits wide, all watered down and swept. In most houses domestic pigs are kept, and in the butcher shops they sell mutton and pork hung next to each other. There are many bazaars and marketplaces (*chaharsu*) in that city, and at every marketplace there is a highly ornamented [wooden] archway<sup>31</sup> with crenellations [also of wood] fitted on top and Chinese stalactites (*muqarnas*). Every twenty paces [HS 637] along the city ramparts is a covered tower. The four gates in the four walls of the city are directly opposite each other, and although it is some distance from the middle of the city to the gates, the [streets] are so straight [and the people so numerous] it did not seem so far. Atop each gateway is a two-story pavilion. {The walls and gates were decorated with colored tiles, as the people of Mazanderan do, although in Mazanderan they build with tile that is not colored, while the Chinese execute them in their own particular colored tile.} There were numerous temples in this city, each one nearly ten *jaribs*, [the courtyards] all paved with cut baked brick and very clean and neat. At the temple doors beautiful boys stand and call out for people to enter.

From there to Khan Baligh (Peking), which is the emperor of Cathay's capital, there were ninety-nine stage posts, all of which were flourishing. Every post station [is nearly as large as a town] [comprises a town and an entrepôt<sup>1</sup>], and between each two posts are several *qar-*

*ghus*.<sup>32</sup> A *qarghu* consists of a structure about sixty cubits tall, and there are always two [ten] people in these structures, which [RS 483] are so situated that the next *qarghu* is visible. When any event occurs—for example, if they catch sight of a foreign army—they immediately light a fire on the *qarghu* and, as the people in the next *qarghu* see it, they do the same so that the watchmen at the capital in Khan Baligh learn of an event within a day and night, whereas it may be a three-month journey to the place where it occurred. Generally, immediately afterward, the relay station (*kidi qu*)<sup>33</sup> relays a letter explaining the event. *Kidi qu* is an expression for several householders who have been domiciled in a particular locality. They are responsible for passing on to the next relay station any letter or piece of news they receive so that, within a short period of time, a detailed [account] reaches the ears of the emperor. From one relay station to the next is ten *qaras* [*marra*],<sup>34</sup> sixteen *qaras* being one stage. Every day<sup>35</sup> ten people in turn serve the *qarghu*, while those who serve the relay

<sup>32</sup>RS has the misdotted *qar'ū*. The beacon towers described are well known (*fêng sui*, see Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization*, IV, iii, 661).

<sup>33</sup>*Kidi qu* [*ki diqu*]. The Chinese equivalent has not been established with certainty: perhaps *ch'i di fu*, which signifies a message relayer. The institution, however, is well attested: under the Sung the post-station service was known as the "hot-foot relay" (*chi chiao ti*), while in the Yuan dynasty the relays appear as *phu ping* serving in post-stations *chan-ch'ih* (= the *yāmkhāna* of the text, both the Chinese *chan* and the Turko-Persian *yām* deriving from the Mongolian *jam* "road, way"). See Needham, *Science and Civilization*, IV, iii, 36.

<sup>34</sup>"Broadly speaking the main roads were equipped from Han to Sung times with a post-office (*yu*) every five *li*, a cantonal office (*thing*) every ten *li*, and a post-station (*ch'ih*) every thirty *li*" (Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, IV, iii, p. 35).

<sup>35</sup>MS: every ten days.

<sup>30</sup>*Kat*, a wooden platform or frame.

<sup>31</sup>RS has *chahārīāq*, a four-arched pavilion; HS has simply *īāq*, arch.

station reside there and have built houses and till the soil.

From Sukju to Qamju,<sup>36</sup> which is the next town and larger than Sukju, was one [nine] stages. Wang Daji,<sup>37</sup> who is the great ward of the march, rules in this town. Every posthouse has 450 dray horses [and donkeys. They brought nearly sixty wagons for the emissaries.] The boys who take care of the horses [are called *ma fu*,<sup>38</sup> the custodians of the donkeys are called *lū fu*,<sup>39</sup> and the wagon pullers are called *ch'e fu*<sup>40</sup>]. There are many of this class who draw wagons with ropes on their shoulders. In charge of every wagon are twelve men, and no matter how rainy or cold it is they do not slack from pulling the wagon, and all the boys are well spoken and hale physically [with fake Chinese pearls in their ears and their hair plaited]. The horses they keep ready for emissaries have saddles, bridles and whips, [and the *ma fus*, vying with each other, run in front of the horses from post to post]. At every stage post there were sheep, geese, fowl, rice, honey, flour, [liquor, pickled garlic and onions] and various legumes kept ready for the emissaries. They gave a banquet for the emissaries in every town. In every *dusun*<sup>41</sup> where they hold banquets (they call the government house *dusun*), they first place a dais (*takht*) [facing the imperial capital] in front of the imperial *kāvürgā* and hang a curtain. Someone stands in front of [beside] the dais and spreads a large and very clean piece of felt [HS 638] on the ground, and the emissaries take their place on it. The rest of the peo-

ple stand in rows, like Muslims at prayer. The person who stands to the left [RS 484] cries out in Chinese. [After that he puts his head to the ground three times, and they compel the emissaries to do the same three times], after which everyone takes his seat and begins to eat. 'The day the [duke] gave the emissaries a banquet was the 12th of Ramadan.<sup>42</sup>

In Qamju was a temple 500 cubits square, in the middle of which was a [reclining] idol 50 cubits tall, 9 cubits wide at the feet and 21 cubits the circumference of the head. Over and behind it were other idols [each one cubit long more or less], and in that temple were representations [of *bakhshīs*] that moved in such a way that the viewer imagined they were alive. [On the walls were beautiful, intricate paintings.] {The above-mentioned statue had one arm under its head and the other over its face,<sup>43</sup> and the whole thing was gilded and clothed with various garments. It was called Shakamuni. The infidels bowed down in droves before it.} All around the temple were buildings like cells in a caravanserai, all adorned with gold-spun curtains, gilded platforms (*kursī*), chairs, candlesticks and banqueting vessels. In this city was another building which the Muslims called "Celestial Sphere":<sup>44</sup> it was like an octagonal pavilion, fifteen stories from bottom to top, and on every

<sup>42</sup>MS adds: He entreated the emissaries to eat since it was a royal feast. The emissaries begged to be excused, saying, "It is not permitted in our religion." The duke excused them and sent to their quarters all that had been prepared.

<sup>43</sup>MS: over its thigh.

<sup>44</sup>The names given in the texts, *falak-i gardān* ("turning sphere") and *charkh-i falak* ("celestial wheel"), would seem to indicate one of the Chinese astrological clocks (see Joseph Needham *et al.*, *Heavenly Clockwork* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986]); the description, in which no moving or mechanical parts are mentioned, is at some variance with this conclusion, however, and may be a translation from a Chinese name such as Heavenly Pagoda.

<sup>36</sup>Kan-chou in Kansu Province.

<sup>37</sup>RS has a garbled 'NGJY.

<sup>38</sup>Text has *pāqū*, a scribal error for the intended *māfū*, for Chinese *ma fu* "horse caretaker."

<sup>39</sup>Text has *lūqū*, again a scribal error for *lūfū* for the Chinese *lū fu* "donkey caretaker."

<sup>40</sup>Text has *chaqū*, again a scribal error for *chafū* for the Chinese *ch'e fu* "wagonpuller."

<sup>41</sup>AL: *rūsūn*.

story were belvederes (*manzara*) consisting of Chinese stalactites, chambers and porticos (*aywān*). All around the belvederes were placed [strange] pictures, among which was the picture of a throne on which was seated an emperor with servants, slaveboys and girls standing to his left and right. At the bottom of the pavilion were representations (*ṣuwar*) [of demons] holding the pavilion aloft. The circumference of the pavilion was 20 cubits and the height 12 cubits, all of carved wood but so gilded that one would think it was of red gold. Beneath it was a cellar (*sardāba*) with a pillar reaching from the cellar to the top, with one end resting on an iron base and the other attached to the roof of the pavilion, so that with the slightest motion of the pillar the huge pavilion would shake.<sup>45</sup> In this city the gifts the emissaries had brought for the emperor were taken, except for a lion, which Pahlawan Salah[uddin] the lion keeper himself took to the emperor's court.

To return to the narrative, the closer the emissaries got to Khan Baligh, the more elaborate the banquets and entertainments given by the rulers and magistrates of the post stations became. Every day they came to another post, and every week another town until the {1}4th of Shawwal [12 {22} October], when the Qara Mörän River<sup>46</sup> was reached. This river is as large as the Oxus. Across it is stretched a bridge with a chain of twenty-two boats tied together. At each end ten cubits of the chains, which were as thick as a man's thigh, were placed [RS 485] onto dry land, and on both sides of the river iron stakes, as thick as a man's waist, were securely planted in the ground, and to these the chains were firmly attached. The boats were secured by large hooks and

<sup>45</sup>MS adds: All the carpenters, smiths and painters in the world should learn their crafts there.

<sup>46</sup>The Mongolian *Qara Mörän* (black river) is the Yellow River.

chains. Atop the boats are laid planks, all fastened and secured. The emissaries crossed without difficulty.

On the other side of the Qara Mörän is an enormous town full of people and buildings.<sup>47</sup> There they gave the emissaries a banquet greater than they had had in any of the other towns. There was a temple so huge that from the borders of Cathay to there its like had not been seen. [HS 639] The town had three taverns in which beautiful girls sat. Although most of the girls of Cathay are beautiful, that town could be known as Husnabad<sup>48</sup> because of the extraordinary beauty of its women.

Setting out from there and passing through a few other towns, on the 12th of Dhu'l-Qa'da [November 18, 1420] they reached a river twice the breadth of the Oxus.<sup>49</sup> They crossed it safely by boat.<sup>1</sup> Crossing several other rivers by boat and bridge, on the 27th of that month [in the year 823] they reached the city of Chia-ting Fu,<sup>50</sup> which is immense and contains innumerable people. It had a large temple and an enormous idol made of [cast] bronze and gilded, 50 cubits in height and with many arms, [in the palm of each hand an eye<sup>51</sup>], hence they call it the "Thousand-Armed." "It is very famous throughout Cathay." This idol and the building all rest on a curiously carved stone platform that has arches and belvederes of several stories all around, the first reaching to above the idol's heel and the second not reaching its knee. The next reaches to above its knee, and the next does not quite reach the waist. The next reaches the breast, and so on until at the

<sup>47</sup>An identification of this town as Lan Chou is offered by Yule (*Cathay*, I, 278).

<sup>48</sup>Husnābād, "abode of beauty."

<sup>49</sup>This must be the second crossing of the Yellow River.

<sup>50</sup>AL has *SDYN FW*; RS and HS have *SDYN QWR*. In all of these the *Ṣ* must be a misreading of *JY*.

<sup>51</sup>Reading *chashm* with MS.

very top of that marvelous building are stalactites and so covered that the viewer is astonished. It is in all eight stories, and on each of them one can walk around the [inside and] outside. [From what was told it was understood that] this idol was made standing, and its two feet, the length of each of which is [about] ten cubits, rest on [two cast pillars, but they are not apparent, and it looks as though it stands in the air.]<sup>52</sup> They said that approximately 100,000 *kharwars* of bronze were used in making it. There are also smaller idols made of plaster and painted, [and there are mountains, slopes and caves drawn,] 'and next to each of them are temples (*ma'bad*)<sup>1</sup> with pictures of monks, [*bakhshīs*] and yogis seated in retreat and performing exercises.<sup>53</sup> [RS 486] With brushes of magic they have painted [rams,] tigers, leopards, dragons and trees, and on the walls of the temples are paintings done with consummate expertise and mastery. That temple comprises other magnificent, strange buildings. In this city too there was a celestial wheel, even larger and more elaborate than the celestial wheel in Qamju. [Here too the emissaries were banqueted before leaving.]

'Every day the emissaries traveled four leagues until,<sup>1</sup> on the [morning of the] 8th of Dhu'l-Hijja [December 14, 1420], they reached the gates of Khan Balīgh (Peking). They beheld a city of inordinate magnitude, 'made all of stone'<sup>1</sup> [with walls a league in length]. Because they were still in the process of building, '100,000'<sup>1</sup> scaffolds (*khuwāra*<sup>54</sup>) were fastened to the city walls. [When the emissaries reached the moat the gateway into Khan Balīgh was not open, so] the emissaries were taken into the city through a tower that was being worked

on and brought to the gate of the Emperor [Dayming<sup>55</sup> Khan]'s sublime palace. At the palace gate a distance of 700 feet was paved with cut stone, across which the [Khurasanis] passed on foot. On each side of the way were standing five elephants with their trunks held across the path along which the emissaries passed until they reached the gate of the emperor's palace. [Although it was still dark,] they saw nearly five hundred [a hundred thousand] people gathered at the gate to the emperor's palace. When the emissaries reached there, they saw a vast, pleasant and captivating open area, and in front of Dayming Khan's pavilion they saw a platform (*kursi*) thirty cubits in height, and atop the platform were columns [50 cubits high and on top of that a hall (? *ṭunūb*) 60 cubits by 40 cubits. In front of the columns were] three gateways. The middle gateway was the largest and was the emperor's passageway, the people passing through the other two. Over the pavilion [HS 640] behind the gateway were a *kāvürgā*, a bell hung and two people waiting for the emperor to step upon the dais. Nearly three hundred thousand people gathered at the court at dawn, and two thousand singers stood by, 'singing in Chinese in praise of the emperor in harmony, treble and bass, according to the principles of their music'. Another two thousand soldiers held halberds, clubs, steel javelins, battle axes, spears, swords and maces. 'Some held Chinese fans.'<sup>1</sup> All along the perimeter of the courtyard were chambers, balconies and columns of great magnitude. The walls of the buildings were all of jet, and the pavement was of cut stone.

In short, when the sun rose, those who were waiting for the emperor atop the pavilion sounded the *kāvürgā*, drums,

<sup>52</sup>Text is garbled in *HS*; reading taken from *MS*.

<sup>53</sup>Undoubtedly portraits of bodhisattvas seated in meditation are referred to.

<sup>54</sup>For the scribal error *ḥuwāza* in *RS*.

<sup>55</sup>*HS* has here "Dänmīg," elsewhere "Däy-ming," a good rendition not of the Ming emperor's name but of his title, *Ta(i) Ming han* ("great Ming emperor"), then Ch'eng Tsu, third emperor of the Ming dynasty.

cornets, cymbals and bells. As the [three] main gateways [RS 487] were opened, the people went inside in all haste, for it is the Chinese custom to run to see the emperor. After [the emissaries] had crossed the first space, they came to another open area, which was also vast and even more pleasing to the onlooker from afar than the first had been. 'There they saw a pavilion larger than the first palace.'<sup>1</sup> [Just then a dais was being set up.] It was a triangular platform, 'four cubits a side,' with a covering of 'gold-flecked' yellow China silk over it. In it were represented the phœnix, [dragons] and other birds [forms]. On top of the dais was placed a golden chair (*kursī*). To the right and left the Chinese stood in rows, first the officers of 10,000, then of 1,000, then of 100. 'There were very many of them, and<sup>1</sup> each held in his hand a tablet one cubit long and a quarter cubit wide, and their gaze was fixed on those tablets. Behind them were too many mail-clad soldiers and spearholders even to approximate. Some stood at attention holding naked swords, and they were all so silent that one would think they were not even breathing. After a time, when the emperor came out of his private quarters, a silver gangway with five steps was placed against the dais, on top of which was a chair of red gold.

First the emperor went up and sat on the chair. He was of medium height with neither large nor small features, with two or three hundred facial hairs so long that they had been knotted into three or four plaits. On either side of the emperor's dais were seated two girls with faces like the moon and countenances like the sun, hair of ambergris knotted on top of their heads, their faces and necks exposed, and lustrous pearls in their ears. They held paper and pens in their hands and waited to write down what the emperor said in order to report when he went into the private quarters. If a correction or change

was to be made, they sent the writing out to the clerks to implement the order.

In short, when the emperor sat on the dais, they brought forward the emissaries along with prisoners who were shoulder to shoulder in chains.<sup>56</sup> First the emperor asked concerning the prisoners and criminals, who were seven [hundred] in number. Some had forked sticks around their necks, and others were tied to long boards with their heads sticking out [of holes in the boards]. Each one had a warden who held the criminal by the hair and waited for the emperor's command. The emperor [Dayming Khan] sent some of them to prison, and others he condemned to execution. In all the realm of Cathay no governor or magistrate [RS 488] is permitted to pronounce a death sentence, and whenever anyone commits a crime, the offense is written on a board and hung around his neck. They also write what the punishment for his crime is in accordance with the infidel code, fetter him with a forked stick and send him to Khan Baligh. [Even should it take a year to reach the capital from where the criminal is,] he cannot stop in any [HS 641] place 'until he reaches the capital.'

When the matter of the criminals was settled [for that day], the emissaries were taken to a distance of fifteen cubits from the dais. Then an officer genuflected<sup>57</sup> and read out the particulars of the emissaries, which were recorded on a tablet in Chinese writing. The contents of the writing was that they had traveled far and had come from Shahrukh and his sons, they had brought gifts and tribute for the emperor in order to place their foreheads in obedience upon the ground of servitude and be encompassed by the gaze of

<sup>56</sup>Yule comments (*Cathay*, I, 280) that the intentional slight of ambassadors by presenting them along with condemned criminals was characteristic.

<sup>57</sup>RS: *zānū zādā* (genuflected) has been transformed in HS to *nūzdah* ("nineteen"), to which "pages" has been added.

favor and grace. Mawlana [Hajji] Yusuf Qazi, who was one of the officers privy to [Dayming Khan] and held one of the twelve posts of imperial minister (and who knew Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Mongolian and Chinese), came before the emissaries with several other Muslims who spoke our language and said to them, "First bend down and then touch your foreheads to the ground three times." The emissaries bowed and lowered their heads but did not touch their foreheads to the ground. Then they took the letters from His Majesty Shahrukh and His Highness Baysunqur and the other princes and amirs [of Iran], which had been wrapped in yellow silk, as had been indicated by the Emperor [Dayming Khan]'s servants—it is the custom of the Chinese to wrap anything that pertains to the emperor in yellow silk [something yellow]. Then the aforementioned Mawlana Yusuf took the letters from them and handed them to a chamberlain [who was standing in front of the emperor's throne. The chamberlain then handed them to the emperor. The emperor opened the letters, looked at them and handed them back to the chamberlain.] Then [Dayming Khan] came down from his chair and took the letters and sat on the throne.

Three thousand robes were brought, one thousand *dägäläs* and two thousand tunics (*qabā*). The emperor divided them among his children and relatives and had robes of honor placed on the embassy.] Then seven of the emissaries, Shadi Khwaja and Kōkchä [the *nökärs* of Mirza Shahrukh], Sultan-Ahmad and Ghiyathuddin [of Mirza Baysunqur's retinue], Arghudaq<sup>58</sup> [the emissary of Mirza Soyurghatmish], Ardawan [the emissary of Amir Shah-Malik] and Tajuddin [the representative of the shah of Badakhshan], were taken near the dais. They went down on their knees, and the em-

peror [Dayming Khan] asked them about 'Mu'in al-Saltana wa'l-Din' Mirza Shahrukh. After that, he inquired if Qara Yusuf<sup>59</sup> would send an emissary and tribute (*māl*).

"Yes," they said, "your *dajis* saw that his emissary came bringing gifts and tribute."

Then he asked, "In your country is grain expensive or cheap? Is welfare for the privileged few or widespread?"

"Grain is beyond the boundaries of perfection," they replied. "And welfare is more inexpensive and more widespread than can be imagined."

"Yes," he said, "when the ruler's heart is with the Lord, the Creator bestows bountiful welfare." Then [RS 489] he said, "I have in mind to send an emissary to Qara Yusuf and request from him some good-tempered horses, for I have heard that in his realm there are excellent horses." Then he asked, "Are the roads safe?"

The emissaries answered, "Within the realm under Shahrukh Sultan's command people come and go with utter peace of mind."

"So I understand," he said. "Now you have come a long way. Arise and have some food."

They were taken to the first courtyard, where a tray was set before each one. When they had finished eating, they went as ordered to the posthouse. There, in [HS 642] every chamber, were laid out a beautiful bed with bedding and a silken pillow, *kamkha*,<sup>60</sup> extremely delicate silken slippers, a chair, a brazier, a bowl (*āshdān*)<sup>1</sup> and fine rugs (*zilūcha*) and straw mats. To the left and right of those they saw other beds laid out. Each person was assigned a chamber, as well as a kettle (*deg*), a bowl, a knife, a spoon and a

<sup>58</sup>The name is written 'RGhD'Q and is taken to be Arqudaq, or Arqīdaq ("Gemini"). See Radloff, *VWTD*, I, 293.

<sup>59</sup>Qarā Yūsuf of the Qaraqoyunlu dynasty in Eastern Anatolia, Azerbaijan and Iraq, ruled (with interruption) from 791/1389 to 823/1420.

<sup>60</sup>< *kamkh'āb*, a woven textile with a short nap (Mu'in, *Farhang-i fārsi*, III, 3065).

tray.<sup>61</sup> A daily ration was given to every [ten] person[s] of ten [one] sheep, one goose, two chickens, two maunds of flour, a large bowl of rice, two large lumps of halva, a jar of honey and vinegar, onions, salt, various legumes, a platter of sweets and several beautiful servants.

The next day, the 9th of Dhu'l-Hijja [December 15, 1420], the *shiqawul*<sup>62</sup>— {the individuals who took us to see interesting places and even to the emperor's banquets are called *ssū jen*,<sup>63</sup> which in Khurasan are known as *shiqawul*}— came at dawn with saddled horses and said to the emissaries, "Rise and mount, for the emperor is giving [you] a banquet." He took them and seated them in the first palace. At that time nearly 300,000 people had gathered at the palace gate. When the sun rose, the three gates were opened and the emissaries were taken to the dais and ordered to bow to the emperor five times. Then they were told to go out and relieve themselves because they would not be able to leave the banquet for a call of nature. The emissaries dispersed and returned.<sup>7</sup> Passing through the first palace and then the second palace, which contained the dais, they came to a third palace. They saw that it was a very pleasant courtyard paved with cut stone. In front was a hall [sixty cubits long], and inside it was a large dais [taller than a man], on three sides of which were steps of silver, one in front and one on either side. Two chamberlains were standing, with papier maché over their mouths and fastened behind their

ears. [RS 490] On top of the large dais was a small dais, like a chair but with many legs [and corners]. [To the right and left of the dais were things like incense burners,] all of gilded wood, and the columns, posts and steps of the structure were painted and lacquered in a turmeric color in such a way that the most accomplished craftsmen {of Khurasan and Iraq} would have been unequal to it.<sup>7</sup> [Mawlana Yusuf said that it had been eight years since the dais had been made, but it showed no sign of wear.] Trays of food and sweets and figurines (*nakhlbandi*) were placed before the emperor.<sup>7</sup> To the left and right stood *dovachis*,<sup>64</sup> bodyguards with quivers and swords and shields. Behind them were soldiers holding halberts and a group of soldiers with naked swords. A place on the left was assigned to the emissaries.<sup>7</sup> Before the emperor, near an opening in the hall was placed a large *kāvürgä*. Near it someone was standing on a platform, and to his side musicians stood in rows. In front of the dais were placed seven parasols<sup>7</sup> in seven colors, and outside the hall, to the right and left, were standing 200,000 arms bearers. At the distance of an arrowshot was a place, ten cubits by ten cubits, the walls of which were yellow silk, wherein the emperor's food was prepared. There was also *darasun*<sup>65</sup> there, and every time food and *darasun* are brought in for the emperor, the singers and musicians begin to play, and, spinning the seven parasols, they bring them up to the dais. The *ash* and *darasun* are placed in large shells, the covers of which are also of shell.<sup>7</sup> In front of the harem was a door, at which was hung a large curtain. At the two sides the curtain was fastened by a silken cord. The ends were held by two chamberlains. The

<sup>61</sup>HS: *shira*; RS: *shīra-i zabīb*, raisin molasses (!).

<sup>62</sup>RS has *šQWL* throughout; HS has *TθQWL*. The *shiqāwul* was the court master of ceremonies and escort to ambassadors. See Ḥasan Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-tawārikh*, p. 837; Doerfer, *TMEN*, §232.

<sup>63</sup>Reading *sajin* with ZT for the *SHNYN* of AL for the Chinese *ssū jen* (palace-man or eunuch), see Yule, *Cathay*, I, 280.

<sup>64</sup>Here RS's *dovachi* makes better sense than HS's *dājiān*.

<sup>65</sup>Mongolian *darasun*, ordinary yellow wine made from grain or rice, equivalent to the Chinese *huang chiu*.

middle of the cord was attached such that when they pulled the cord, the curtain was folded up and the door was opened.

After the paraphernalia was arranged, the gathering was inaugurated as mentioned before. The emperor came out [through that door], and the instruments were sounded. When the emperor sat, all fell silent. Over the emperor's head to a height of ten cubits was a bower [curtain], like a canopy, of yellow silk, with four intertwined dragons painted on it. When the emperor [Dayming Khan] took his place, the emissaries were taken forward and, as ordered, bowed five times. After that they returned and sat down at [trays of food that had been prepared. When the Chinese honor someone they set before him three trays; less honor is two trays; and less than that is one tray. [HS 643] That day a thousand trays or more were set before the people. The emperor's food had been prepared near the seven colored parasols in a place enclosed by yellow silk.] Aside from the food and beverages that were on the trays, every so often [the waiters] brought *ashes* and viands, lamb, goose and chicken, and placed them before the people, [RS 491] 'and *darasun* was offered'.

[That day there were many beautiful boys and girls in the assembly, some to sing and others to perform.] 'The players began to perform: first a troop of beardless youths, like shining suns, with red and white rubbed on their faces like girls and pearls in their ears, wearing goldspun clothing, holding multicolored dates, roses and tulips made of paper and silk, began to dance rhythmically. After that two ten-year-old boys turned flips over two sticks. Someone lay down on the threshold and raised his feet. Some large reeds were placed on the soles of his feet, and another person took the bundle of reeds (?) and a ten- or twelve-year-old boy did all sorts of tricks on top of the reeds. In the end he threw the reeds away one by one until only one long reed was

left. He turned a flip on top of that reed and did tricks. Suddenly, after these strange movements, he separated himself from the end of the reed in such a way that anyone would imagine he had fallen. The person who had been lying down leapt to his feet and caught him in the air. Then the instruments were played. {The musicians mostly played by themselves, though sometimes they coöperated with each other, for example one of them would be playing his own instrument with one hand while putting the fingers of his other hand over the holes of the instrument next to him.} This assembly lasted from morning until noon.<sup>1</sup>

In the open courtyard were several thousand birds, such as doves, pigeons, ravens, crows, etc., which stole pieces of fruit and crumbs of food and were unafraid of people. No one bothered them at all. When the banquet was finished, the emperor made the singers happy with gifts of cash. Then, with the emperor's permission, the people dispersed.

To return to the narrative, the emissaries remained in [Khan Balīq] for five months,<sup>66</sup> and every day the allotments that were established for them the very first day came without decrease. Several times banquets were held, 'and every time the entertainers did new tricks. Finally, when the Feast of the Sacrifice came around, the emissaries went with a group of Muslims to a mosque the emperor had built for them in this city to perform the rites of that happy day.

On the 17th of Dhu'l-Hijja a group of criminals was taken to the place of execution, according to the emperor's command, and the Chinese infidels wrote in the ministerial registry the crime of each one and the punishment.<sup>67</sup> {According to Chinese law, every crime has a particular punishment: some are decapitated, some

<sup>66</sup>MS adds: from the 8th of Dhū'l-Hijja 822 until the beginning of Jumādā I 823.

<sup>67</sup>RS and MS add here: "the elaboration of which is not deemed necessary." AL elaborates.

are hanged, and some are chopped to pieces. Every executioner is responsible for killing one person, and if there are a hundred convicts, there are a hundred executioners. However, for the capital punishment} of criminals the people there, as is their custom, take great precaution. The emperor has twelve ministries. If anyone is accused of a crime and the crime [RS 492] is proven to eleven ministries but is not clear to the twelfth, the criminal may obtain release. {In extreme cases the instrument of crime and a reliable witness must be produced, and without proof no sentence of death is given.} 'If there is a witness living at a journey of six months or more, the criminal is not punished but is imprisoned until the witness is produced and the matter is investigated.' {If a criminal dies in prison, he cannot be buried without the emperor's permission. On the 23rd of Muharram the weather was so cold that several of the criminals died beside the emperor's palace. Someone said that in the past on cold days more than ten thousand persons had perished.}

On the 22nd [27th] of Muharram [January 27, 1421] Mawlana Yusuf Qazi sent a messenger to the emissaries to say, "Tomorrow is the New Year, and the emperor is coming to the new *ordu*. It is forbidden for anyone to wear white." They wear white for funerals. The eve of the 28th at midnight the emperor sent a eunuch to take the emissaries to the new *ordu*, which was a magnificent structure [that was finally completed after nineteen years of work]. That night the people so lighted their shops, houses and camps with lanterns, candles and torches that you would think the sun had risen. There were about 100,000 people from China, Cathay, Machin, Qalmaq,<sup>68</sup> Tibet, etc., gathered in that encampment. 'The emperor gave his amirs a banquet, and the emissaries were seated outside the throne

room. Nearly 200,000 people were present bearing arms, and the boys began to dance and do acrobatics in an inimitable manner.' From the door of the audience hall to the end of the building was 1,925 feet, and all the structures were of cut stone and baked brick. The bricks were of baked china clay, 'and for about 300 cubits were so laid that there was not a hair's breadth of crookedness. The masters of stonecutting, carpentry, painting and tilemaking of that region have no peers.' [That day Dayming Khan gave the amirs from the surrounding areas a banquet that lasted until noon.] Finally, about noon, the banquet was finished, and the people went home.

'At dawn on the 9th of Safar [February 13, 1421] horses were brought and the emissaries were taken out. Every year the emperor abstained from eating animals for a few days and remained in solitude, not allowing any of his wives or men in his presence. He stayed in a room that had no pictures or statues and said, "I worship the God of heaven." The day the emissaries were taken was the day the emperor came out of seclusion and went to the private quarters. Elephants had been elaborately caparisoned and were driven in front of a round, gilded litter in which he sat. Banners of seven colors were carried along, and 50,000 men went before and behind. They carried another litter on their shoulders, and played instruments in such a way that it could not be described. In spite of all the crowd and throng, [RS 493] no sound, save that of the instruments, could be heard. In that pomp and circumstance the emperor was carried to his quarters, and the people went home.'

During that season is the Festival of Lanterns. For seven days and nights outside the emperor's palace an edifice is constructed of wood and covered with branches of cypress so that it looks like a mountain of emerald. Tens of thousands of lanterns are attached to it with string,

<sup>68</sup>I.e., the Qalmuq (Kalmyk), or Oyrat, Eastern Mongols.

and rockets of naphtha are made so that when a lantern is lit the rocket races along the string and lights every lantern it touches. In an instant the lanterns are lit from the top of the mountain to the bottom, and the people of the city light many lanterns in their shops and houses. During those seven days [HS 644] no one is condemned, the emperor proclaims amnesty and prisoners are set free. That year the astrologers of Cathay had calculated that the emperor's house would be damaged by fire, and for this reason no command was given for the night of lanterns, but the amirs had gathered as they always had and the emperor gave them a banquet and ordered gifts distributed.<sup>7</sup>

On the 13th of Safar the emperor's *shiqawul* came again for the emissaries and seated them at the palace gate. More than 100,000 people from all regions had gathered, and a jewel-studded throne had been placed at the gate to the first pavilion and the gates had been opened. The emperor sat on the throne, and the people [knelt and] placed their heads on the ground. Another dais was brought and put next to the emperor's throne, and three people went up on this dais. Two of them held up the decree that the Emperor [Dayming] had issued and which had been recorded somewhere, while the third cried out in a loud voice so that all the people could hear. However, it was in Chinese and the emissaries did not understand. The contents, [which they learned from those who knew the language,] were: "[On the tenth of] this month three years have passed since the emperor's lantern night, and another lantern night season has come. [Prisoners,] criminals and others held by the ministry are to be released, for I have pardoned their offenses, except those who have shed blood. For three years no emissary is to go anywhere." After reading the edict, they put something on top of the decree and wrapped it well in gold

[sealed it in yellow paste, affixed] a ring, [tied it in] yellow silk cord and then lowered the decree. A parasol was carried over it, and the people and multitude of musicians followed it out of the pavilion. The decree was brought to the resthouse where [the emissaries] were, and from there copies of the decrees were sent to the provinces.

When the new moon of Rabi' I appeared [March 6, 1421], the Emperor [Dayming Khan] had [nine] falcons brought and once again summoned the emissaries. [RS 494] He said, "I will give a hawk to anyone who has brought me a good horse." Then he gave three falcons to Sultan-Shah, Mirza Ulughbeg's emissary, three to Sultan-Ahmad, Mirza Baysunqur's emissary, and three to Shadi Khwaja, His Majesty's emissary. After that he gave them back to his own falconers to keep until they should depart.

"The next day he summoned the emissaries and said, "The army is going to the borders of the country. You too get your arms to go along with them and go to your own country." To Arghudaq, the emissary of Mirza Soyurghatmish, he said, "There is no falcon for you. {If we were to give you one, <they> would take it from you, like Ardashir,<sup>69</sup> the servant of Prince Ibrahim-Sultan, from whom <they> took a falcon}<sup>70</sup>."

Arghudaq said, "If the emperor is gracious enough to give me a falcon, no one will take it from me."

"Wait here," he said, "until they bring two more falcons. I will give them to you."

On the 8th of Rabi' I Sultan-Shah and Bakhshī Malik were summoned and given 8 ingots of silver, 30 regal suits of

<sup>69</sup>Ardashir Tovachī was sent with the second Chinese embassy to Shāhrukh when they returned to Peking on 23 Rabi' I 820 (May 10, 1417) (Faṣīhī, *Mujmal*, 231).

<sup>70</sup>RS and AL are badly garbled here. ZT supplies the subject "they" for the "we" of RS and AL.

clothing <with lining, 24 ..., <sup>71</sup> 91 falcons, > 2 horses, one of which had a saddle, 100 reed arrows, and 25 Chinese three-pronged spears.<sup>72</sup> Bakhshī Malik was given the same, except that there was one ingot fewer. The emperor's wife also gave the emissaries gifts. On that day Uways Khan's emissary, with 250 men, saw the emperor and performed the rites of bowing. The ministerial clerks appointed for them regal clothing and food-stuffs.<sup>7</sup> {On that same day the envoy of Uways Khan, <who was named Abu Yatīmur Atākā,> along with his 250 servants and companions were given regal robes.}

On the 13th of Rabi' I the emperor 'summoned the emissaries and said, "I am going on a hunt and may not return for some time. You take your falcons lest you have nothing to do." {To taunt them he said, "The horses you brought me were short, but you have received select falcons."} In accordance with the command, their birds were given to them, and the emperor<sup>7</sup> went on the hunt. 'During his absence a prince came from the province of Tamna<i> (?). On the 18th of that month the emissaries went to see him. He was in the eastern part of the imperial palace, and all around him was decorated. By the emperor's order trays were set and food was eaten, and they came away.'<sup>7</sup>

At the beginning of Rabi' II [April 1421] the emissaries were told that the emperor was coming from the hunt and they must go out to meet him. They were mounting their horses when they saw Mawlana Yusuf Qazi at the gate of the posthouse, very sad and forlorn on his horse. When they inquired why he was downcast, he said in a very low voice, "The horse that His Majesty Shahrukh sent threw the emperor during the hunt. The emperor flew into a rage and com-

manded that the emissaries be taken in chains to the city of Khatay."

The emissaries [RS 495] were distressed to hear this [and set out for the emperor's camp. By midmorning they reached the station where the emperor had stopped for the night and there] saw that a wall had been constructed overnight around the imperial camp, 500 feet by 500 feet and four feet in breadth and ten cubits high. 'In Cathay they build walls of *terre pisé* very fast.'<sup>7</sup> In the wall were two gateways, and next to the wall, from where they had taken earth, there was a deep ditch. 'Upon the walls were men and soldiers, all armed, and<sup>7</sup> inside the enclosure were two square canopies, each 25 cubits, raised on four columns. Around it were tents and canopies of yellow silk and gold brocade. Since there was a distance of 500 feet between [the camp and] the emissaries, Mawlana Yusuf said to them, "Get down and remain here [HS 645] until the emperor comes." He himself went forward, and when he came near the imperial entourage, he dismounted and saw Wali Daji<sup>73</sup> and Jan Daji standing before the emperor. The emperor was discussing seizing the emissaries when Wali Daji, Jan Daji and Mawlana Yusuf Qazi placed their heads on the ground and interceded, saying, "These people are innocent. They have no power to command their emperor to send a good horse.<sup>7</sup> If you were to kill them, no harm would come to their emperors' dominions, but an emperor who is renowned for clemency would gain a reputation for cruelty and tyranny. 'People would say that he has inflicted harm upon emissaries, whose captivity or imprisonment is licit in no religion.'<sup>7</sup>" The Emperor [Dayming Khan] was soothed by the words of these benevolent men and changed his mind. Mawlana Yusuf came happy and joyful to the emissaries and said, "God has had mercy on you

<sup>71</sup>ZT has *q.lqi*; others have *qal'i* (tin), not likely in the context.

<sup>72</sup>Reading *kaybur* with ZT for the *kaniz* of RS.

<sup>73</sup>RS has *WLYL'JY*; HS has *WLY D'JY*; ZT and MS have *Li Dāji*.

foreigners. The emperor has been merciful and pardoned the crime you did not commit."<sup>74</sup>

Just then the emperor drew near riding the black horse with four white feet that Mirza Ulughbeg had sent. A gold brocade cloak was thrown [over it], and two equerries were walking 'slowly' on the left and right of the horse. The emperor was wearing a red [yellow] goldspun tunic and had covered his head with a black silk hood. Behind him were being carried on men's shoulders seven small covered litters in which were seated girls. There was also a large litter carried by seventy people, and for a distance of one arrowshot<sup>75</sup> to the right and left [RS 496] many horsemen were riding in such order that not one person was out of step. Between one row and the next was about twenty feet. When the emperor drew near the emissaries, they bowed 'at the prompting of Jan Daji, Wali Daji and Mawlana Yusuf'. The Emperor [Dayming Khan] said to them, "Mount!" They did as they were ordered and set out in the imperial retinue. The emperor said by way of complaint to Shadi Khwaja, "Presents, gifts, horses and animals [rulers] send [each other] should be good [so that mutual affection may increase]. 'As an act of favor I rode the horse you brought me during the hunt, but unfortunately' [it was so old] it threw me and hurt my arm."

Shadi Khwaja spoke in apology and said, "That horse is a memento of His Majesty Timur Kürägän, and His Majesty Shahrugh sent it to the emperor as a mark of great favor." Shadi Khwaja's excuse was accepted by the emperor, who [praised Shadi Khwaja. Then he sent for a falcon and had a crane (? *kulang*) sent

aloft. He threw the falcon into the air. It struck with its claw thrice and caught the crane. A platform was placed beneath the emperor to dismount, and he sat down on another dais and gave Sultan-Ahmad and Sultan-Shah each a falcon, but he did not give Shadi Khwaja anything. Once again] he mounted and set off toward the capital. Near the city [of Khan Baliq] many people had come out and were cheering the emperor in Chinese. 'In that pomp and circumstance' the emperor [rode his horse in haste until he] entered his palace, 'and the people went to their own houses'.

On the 4th of Rabi' II [April 8, 1421] the emperor's *shiqawul* came again and led the emissaries away, saying, "Today the emperor will present you with [his *sang*,<sup>76</sup> which is to say special] gifts." When they reached the foot of the throne they saw the emperor seated with trays placed before him. [When Dayming Khan saw the emissaries he indicated that the trays should be taken to one side. He sent the amirs to the trays, [HS 646] and they placed the trays before the emissaries.] Then he gave the emissaries the following: to Shadi Khwaja 10 ingots of silver, 30 suits of silk clothing, 70 ...,<sup>77</sup> [silks, brocades and velvets,<sup>78</sup> 5,000 ch'ao,<sup>79</sup> and for his wife a third of the above-mentioned cloth]; to Sultan-Ahmad,

<sup>76</sup>SNK: perhaps the Mongolian *šang*, a gift made to an inferior.

<sup>77</sup>See note 71 above.

<sup>78</sup>Reading, with ZT, *torqū-u lo-u shā-u kapaki* for the meaningless *TWQWWLWWS'W KPKY* repeated for each of the emissaries in HS; it is omitted altogether from the other texts. *Torqu* is a well attested word for silk (see Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary*, p. 539). *Lo* and *sha* both mean sheer, gauzy silk in Chinese; nonetheless, all readings are highly problematic, and translations are mere guesses.

<sup>79</sup>*Chāw*, Chinese paper money (*ch'ao*). The fiasco that ensued when Geikhatu Khan attempted to introduce paper money into Iran in 1294 is well known (see J. A. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khāns," *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5 [Cambridge, 1968], p. 375).

<sup>74</sup>MS adds: Trays sent by the emperor were brought—pork and lamb mixed. The Muslims among us did not partake.

<sup>75</sup>LQM'R in RS; based on the Persian equivalent (*yak tir-partāb*) given in HS, it should be *tuqmar* (see Radloff, *VWTD*, III, 1157).

Kökchä and Arghudaq each 8 ingots of silver, 16 silk suits, [silks, brocades and velvets, and for each of their wives 94 textile pieces (*wasla*) and for each one 2,000 ch'ao]; to Khwaja Ghiyathuddin, Ardawan and Tajuddin each 7 ingots of silver, 16 silk suits, [silks, brocades and velvets, woolens, and 2,000 ch'ao]. [For each of Ulughbeg's emissaries, who were Sultan-Shah and Bakhshī Malik, 8 ingots of silver, 30 regal suits with lining, 24 woolens, silks, brocades and velvets, 2 horses, one of which had a saddle, 100 reed arrows, 25 Chinese three-pronged spears<sup>80</sup>, 5,000 ch'ao, and cloth for their wives.] The emissaries gathered their gifts and went back to their rooms. 'Mirza Ulughbeg's emissaries had already received their gifts, as has been mentioned.<sup>7</sup>

Just at this time one of the emperor's beloved wives died, but it was not revealed until arrangements for the mourning were completed. On the 8th of Jumada I [May 11, 1421] news of her demise was announced. During the night before the burial day, by divine fate [RS 497] fire caused by lightning broke out in the emperor's newly built palace, so it came to pass that the astrologers' prediction came true, and the court that was 80 cubits long and 30 cubits wide and built upon colored columns 'wider than a man's girth' burnt to the ground. From there it spread to the pavilion that was 60 cubits in circumference,<sup>81</sup> and the emperor's harem also burnt. Around the perimeter some 250 outbuildings also were 'burned, and many men and women were' charred to ashes. It lasted from the night until noon the next day, and try as they might, the fire could not be extinguished. The emperor and his officers, however, paid no attention at all, that day being a holy day in their religion during which they paid no attention to

[worldly] affairs. [Afterwards] the emperor went to the temple in supplication, crying, "The God of heaven is angry with me and has burned my throne room, although I have done nothing, [I have not vexed my mother or father] or done injustice to anyone." Of this sorrow he fell ill, and for this reason it was never known in what manner the emperor's wife who had died was buried. It was said that there is a special mountain in Cathay where great ladies are buried, and when one of them passes away she is taken to that mountain and put in a tomb tower (*dakhma*) [underground tomb (*sardāba*)]. Her own private horses are turned loose on that mountain to graze freely, and no one harms them. Many slavegirls and chamberlains are given [at least] five years' worth of supplies and sent to live in the tomb, which is vast. When their strength fails they die there. 'However, despite all this information concerning their customs attendant upon the death of ladies, because of the confusion and damage done by the fire, no one was able to ascertain in what manner they buried the departed lady.<sup>7</sup>

To return to the narrative, the emperor's illness grew worse day by day, 'and his son took his place in affairs of state.<sup>7</sup> During this period the emissaries were given permission to depart. In the middle of Jumada I [mid-May 1421] they left Khan Baligh, accompanied by *dovachis*. During the return they were served by the Chinese as they had been in coming, and they were given pack animals and wagons. 'At the beginning of Rajab [July 1421] they reached the city of Pingan<sup>82</sup> and were received by the governors and grandees. In accordance with the emperor's command the emissaries' baggage was not opened, although generally they open baggage and make inspections to prevent people from taking out things that are not allowed to be taken. The next day

<sup>80</sup>Translation taken from list given previously. See note 72.

<sup>81</sup>MS has: that was 20 cubits away.

<sup>82</sup>Identified by Yule (*Cathay*, I, 285) as the ancient capital Ping Yang Fu in Shansi.

a most elaborate banquet was given. [RS 498]

Setting out from there, they traveled until they reached the Qara Mörän on the 5th of Sha‘ban [August 5, 1421]. Setting out, they came to a post station every day and to a town every week and, after being banqueted, continued on. On the 24th of Sha‘ban [August 24, 1421] they came to the city of Qamju, and the Chinese returned to the emissaries everything they had taken from them when they arrived, and nothing was missing. They stayed in that town for two and a half months and then departed Qamju on the 7th of Dhu‘l-Qa‘da.<sup>83</sup> On the 17th of Dhu‘l-Hijja [December 13, 1421] they reached Sukju, [HS 647] where they met Mirza Ibrahim-Sultan’s emissary {Amir Hasan}, who was coming from Shiraz, and Mirza Rustam’s emissary {Pahlawan Jamal}, who had set out from Isfahan. ‘They asked His Majesty Shahrukh’s emissaries how to act in Cathay and received instruction.’ [As it was indicated that the roads were quite unsafe, they remained in Sukju for a while.]

In Muharram 825 [January 1422] they left Sukju and, [passing through settlements and wilderness,] came to ‘Qamul,<sup>84</sup> the governors of which said that it was the Chinese custom, upon departure, to check the register of the number of people they had written upon arrival. So, after inspection and checking, they left Qamul, taking the desert route because they feared the insecurity and unsafety of the roads. With much difficulty they {emerged from the desert on the 8th of Rabi‘ I [March 2, 1422] and, after stopping for a while} arrived in Khotan on the 9th of Jumada I [May 1, 1422]. From there they traveled in stages and stopped in Kashghar on the 6th of Rajab [June 26, 1422]. Passing through<sup>1</sup>

Andigan on the 21st, [Mirza Ulughbeg’s] emissaries took the road to Samarqand while the others chose the Khurasan road.<sup>85</sup> [Crossing the Oxus,] they stopped in Balkh the first of Ramadan, and on the 10th [August 28, 1422] [15th] reached Herat and attained the felicity of kissing the throne of His Imperial Majesty Shahrukh.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>83</sup>RS has: “They stayed in that town for twenty-five days and then departed Qamju at the beginning of Dhu‘l-Hijja.”

<sup>84</sup>MS: Qarawul.

<sup>85</sup>MS adds: On the 21st of Sha‘ban they reached Hisar Shadman.

<sup>86</sup>According to Faṣiḥi (*Mujmal*, 251) they reached Herat on 11 Ramaḍān 825, having been away for two years, two months and five days.

