

# The Qazaq Khanate as Documented in Ming Dynasty Sources

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## Introduction

Little is known about diplomatic relations between the Qazaq Khanate and Ming China, even though some evidence of early tribute trade relations exists. The first extant Chinese account about the country of Asibie 阿思比 dates to around 1452, when accounts of diplomatic exchange between the Ming court and the Qazaq Khanate began to appear in *Ming shilu* 明實錄. This date also corresponds with the establishment of the Qazaq Khanate in Eastern Dasht-i Qipchaq.<sup>1</sup> Envoys sent from places in Central Asia to the Ming dynasty include Asibie, and are recorded as follows:

The rulers (in Central Asia) all sent envoys to pay horses as tribute to (the Ming) court. They were Zhongshun wang 忠順王 (Loyal and Submissive King) Daowadashili 倒瓦答失里 (Dawadashir) and headman Tuotuo buhua 脫脫不花 (Toqto Bugha) from Hami (Qumul); King Yexian Buhua 也先卜花 (Esen Bugha) and his wife Hudusudan 虎都速旦 (Qutluq sultan), and headman Shela 捨剌 from the Ilibali *dimian* 亦力把里地面 (the territory of Moghulistan);<sup>2</sup> King Emili Huzhe 也密力虎者 (Emil Khoja) and his wife Guwa'er Sutan 古瓦兒速壇 (Gawhar sultan?), and headman Mama mi'erza 馬麻米兒咱 et al., from Tulufan *dimian* 土魯番地面 (the territory of Turfan); princess Dalamen 打刺悶 et al., who is the elder sister of Emili Huzhe 也密力虎者 (Emil Khoja), and headman Dalabie'erde 打刺兒兒的 from the Chalishi *dimian* 察力失地面 (the territory of Chalish); King Bulahai 卜刺孩 (Bureke) from Tuohuma *dimian* 脫忽麻地面 (the territory of Togmak);<sup>3</sup> headman Caolaitan 草來壇 from Sailan *dimian* 賽蘭地面 (the territory of Sayram);<sup>4</sup>

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1 The name Dasht-i Qipchaq (Qipchaq steppe) appears in Arabic-Persian sources of the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, in reference to the steppes and deserts that extend from the lower reaches of the Syr Darya and Balqash Lake to the mouth of Danube. It was usually divided into Western and Eastern Dasht-i Qipchaq.

2 Esen Bugha (d. 1462) is the khan of Moghulistan.

3 *Ming shilu* ("Yingzong shilu", j. 24) also mentions Tuohuoma 脫火麻. For a concise explanation of the name Togmak, see Bretschneider 1910, II, 161.

4 Today Sayram in Southern Kazakhstan, see Bretschneider 1910, II, 94f.

headman Sulutan Maheimu 速魯壇馬黑木 (Sultan Mahmud) from Badansha 把丹沙地面 (the territory of Badakhshan); headman Su'er Busawen 速兒卜撒溫 (Sultan Busain?) from Sulutanya dimian 速魯壇牙地面 (the territory of Sultaniya); King Zhanibie 札尼兒 from Asibie dimian 阿思兒地面 (the territory of Özbek); King Sutan Ali 速壇阿力 from Sheliwan naiding dimian 捨力灣乃丁地面 (the territory of Shirwan-i Ajam?)<sup>5</sup>; Prince Adehansha 阿的罕沙, the son of King Saini Abuding 賽你阿卜丁, from Alamula dimian 阿刺母刺地面 (the territory of Varahamula );<sup>6</sup> and headmen from 121 territories such as Keshimi'er 克失迷兒 (Kashmir), Hala Huozhou 哈刺火州 (Qara Qoja), Tieliman 帖力蠻 (Termez?), Saolan 掃蘭 (Sawran); and so on.<sup>7</sup>

Once diplomatic relations were established, the Ming court began to keep a record of its relationship with the Qazaqs that lasted until 1537, and which later became part of *Ming shilu*.<sup>8</sup> Researchers have not yet studied *Ming shilu* for the information about the Qazaq-Ming relationship that it yields, which could shed light on the most important interactions that took place between the Qazaq Khanate and the Ming.

This article analyzes *Ming shilu* in order to understand the character of Chinese knowledge about the Qazaq Khanate during their years of contact between 1452 and 1537. Additional sources like geographic accounts and maps will help define the extent of Chinese knowledge about the khanate, clarify the kinds of information that the Chinese sought and why, and measure the influence of cross-cultural contact on Ming Chinese understanding of the Qazaq Khanate.

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- 5 Perhaps Shirwan is a historical region in the eastern Caucasus. Barthold (2003, 273) believes that the region stretches between the western shores of the Caspian Sea and the Kura River. The name *Sheliwan'aiding* sounds like *Shirwan-i Ajam* (which means Persian Shirwan). In *Ming shilu* ("Taizong shilu", j. 162.3) it is mentioned as *Shiliwan* 失里灣. In *Ming shilu* ("Taizong shilu", j. 103) and *Mingshi* (j. 326) the country of *Shaliwami* 沙里灣泥 is also mentioned, but situated on the coast of the Indian Ocean.
- 6 Alamula refers to Varahamula or Baramula, a city in Baramula district of Kashmir state in northern India. This ruler there is Zainu Abuding 宰奴阿卜丁 or Saini Abuding 賽你阿卜丁; cf. *Ming shilu*, "Xuanzong shilu", j. 94, 95; "Yingzong shilu", j. 224. The full name of Zain-ul-Abidin (1423–1474) is Ghiyas-ud-Din Zain-ul-Abidin, the sultan of Kashmir. Prince Adehansha is Haji Khan shah, son of Zain-ul-Abidin, who took the title of Haidar Khan Shah; cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 428, 433.
- 7 Cf. *Ming shilu*, "Yingzong shilu", j. 224.
- 8 After 1537, Ejlbie-Haxin disappeared from *Ming shilu*. However, the Qazaq Khanate lasted until 1847; cf. Adle and Habib 2003, 90-100.

## 1 The *Özbek-Qazaq* in Turko-Persian Sources and *Ejibie-Haxin* in Ming Sources

In Turko-Persian sources, the term *Özbek-Qazaq* first appeared during the middle of the sixteenth century, in the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* by Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlát. In this text, the author mentions the Shaybanid dynasty of Transoxiana, more commonly known as *Uzbek-Shaibán/Özbek-Shayban* (or *Özbek-Shayban Uzbek-Shayban*), which he also describes as the Qazaq Khanate (also known as *Uzbek-Kazák [Özbek-Qazaq/Uzbek-Kazakh]*), and locates it in the eastern part of Dasht-i Qipchaq. According to *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, the first indigenous Qazaq union was born in 807 by the Hijri calendar (i. e. 1465 or 1466 A. D.), and came to be known as the Qazaq Khanate. The state was formed by nomads who settled along the border of Moghulistan, and was called the *Uzbek-Kazák*.<sup>9</sup> Their influence grew rapidly and flourished under Qasym (Kasim) Khan (1445–1524?), an accomplished military leader and wise politician.<sup>10</sup>

The *Özbek-Shayban* and *Özbek-Qazaq* were related Turkic clans that descended from the Qipchaq, and played an important role in the formation of the nomadic *Özbek* people of Dasht-i Qipchaq. After they separated from the

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9 Elias and Ross 1895, 82, 146; Moghulistan is the Persian name for the Eastern Chagatay Khanate. The term *Moghulistan* is mostly used in Persian historiography, while Chinese historiography mostly uses the term *Yilibali* [mostly used 亦力把里, 亦力巴里 or 亦力八里, sometimes used 亦力八力 or 亦力巴力]. Moghulistan includes southeastern Kazakhstan, all of Kyrgyzstan, and Xinjiang. Aqsu, the capital of Moghulistan, was known in the fifteenth century as Ardawil. Molla Shakir 1980, 322; Yudin 2001, 90-91. The “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” mentions the city of Ayidili 阿亦地里. Another map, the “Xiyu tudi renwu tu”, places Ayidili near Aqsu, and marks the city with a special form. Meanwhile, the map “Menggu shanshui ditu” refers to Ayidili as Yideyueli 亦的約力. Therefore, Ayidili and Yideyueli both mean Ardawil. According to *Ming shilu* (“Taizong shilu”, j. 197), in 1418 Waisi 歪思 (Vais Khan), ruler of Beshbaliq, moved his seat to Ilibali. Some orientalists, have tried to derive the name of the Ilibali from that of the Ilibalyq, the city Ilan balekh on the journey of Haithon or Ilibali of the Chinese Medieval map, meaning city of Ili; cf. Bretschneider 1910, II: 44, 225. *Ming shilu* (“Shizong shilu”, j. 62) also uses the terms Chatai 察台 to refer to Ilibali. In Ming history, Ilibali or Chatai is the same as the empire of Moghulistan or Chata (Jatah) referred to by Muslim chroniclers writing of the same period. On Jatah, cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 148. *Xianbin lu*, “Xiyi zhi” 西夷志 3.80, 4.104) also mentions Hashihali 哈失哈力 (Kashgar), also called Alimali 阿力馬力. The name Alimali is a variant of Yilibali, which probably derived from Arbal or Irbal, one of the variants of the name Ardawil.

10 There is some doubt about the year of Qasym Khan’s death. According to *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Qasym khan died in the year 924 H. (A. D. 1518); cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 273. Another Persian author reports that he died in the year 930 H. (A. D. 1523–1524); cf. *Qazaqstan Tarihi*, II, 376.

Abulkhair Khanate, they called themselves *Özbek-Shayban* and *Özbek-Qazaq* respectively. Regarding the Özbek ethnic group, Fazlallah ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani (1457–1530), the author of a historical work entitled *Mikhman-name-ii-Bukhara*, reported that the Özbeks were composed of three groups of people. The first group, the Shaybanids, were a part of the Qipchaq tribes or a lesser division of them under Muhammad Shaybānī (fl. 1452–1509). The second group, the Qazaqs, which Fazlullah referred to as the subjects of the first Qazaq khans, wandered over the vast expanse that lay between the Itil (Volga) and the Syr Darya. The third group, the Manghits, included a portion of the population of the Noghay Horde (in Astrakhan).<sup>11</sup>

During the last quarter of the fifteenth century, two rulers competed for control of the cities of the Syr Darya basin: Abul Khayr's grandson Muhammad Shaybānī, who gave his name to the Shaybanid dynasty, and Burunduk Khan (r. 1488–1509), the third khan of the Qazaq Khanate. Their rivalry ended temporarily when the two leaders signed a peace treaty in 1500. Soon after, the Shaybanids subjugated the land of Transoxiana.

Some scholars suggest that the name *Özbek* or *Uzbek* derived from the name Uzbek Khan (1282–1341, r. 1313–1341), the khan of the Aq Orda.<sup>12</sup> This name can be found on a Chinese map entitled *Yuan Jingshi dadian xibei dili tu* 元經世大典西北地理圖 (Map from the *Jingshi dadian* of the Yuan, representing countries to the northwest) as *Yuezubo* 月祖伯, also called *Yuejibie* 月即別 or *Yuezubo* in the *Yuanshi* 元史 (*History of the Yuan*).<sup>13</sup> According to the Yuan chronicle, *Yuezubo* is the name of the horde or *ulus* of the Dasht-i Qipchaq. In *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* this country is mentioned as *Uzbek ulus* or *Uzbekistan*.<sup>14</sup>

The Chinese name for modern Qazaqs is *Hasake* 哈薩克, which has been in use since at least the eighteenth century, according to Qing dynastic sources. Among previous researchers, Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) has already analyzed the name in detail using these Qing court sources.<sup>15</sup> Strangely, historians of the Ming dynasty, who collected historical information about Central Asia and

11 Cf. Dzhalilova 1976, 35; Adle and Habib 2003, 91; Yudin 2001, 264.

12 Cf. Akhmedov 1965, 12.

13 Cf. *Yuanshi*, j. 114: *Shuchi*.

14 Cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 272, 366, 374.

15 For a detailed analysis of *Hasake* 哈薩克 (Kazakh) in the Qing period, during the eighteenth century, cf. Pelliot 1960.

used it to compile official documents relating to the Western Regions (*Xiyu* 西域), did not mention the Qazaq Khanate at all.

In fact, references to the Qazaq did exist in Ming sources, albeit under alternative names. For example, *Ming shilu* describes a country it calls 額即訖哈辛. Before giving the transcription and translation of this name, it is important to mention here briefly the character 訖. Interpreting this character is difficult. The *Kangxi Dictionary* (*Kangxi zidian* 康熙字典), first published 1716, gives the pronunciation *jia* 伽 for this character.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, the online *Dictionary of Chinese Characters* (*Handian* 漢典) gives the Mandarin romanization for 訖 as *qie*.<sup>17</sup> Two other sources, the chapters on foreign countries of *Mingshi* and the “*Xiyu tudi renwu lue*” 西域土地人物略 of *Shaanxi tongzhi* 陝西通志 (*Shaanxi gazetteer*) – compiled in 1542 (the twenty-second year of Jiajing 嘉靖 reign) by Zhao Tingrui 趙廷瑞 (1492–1551), Ma Li 馬理 (1474–1555), and Lü Ran 呂柟 (1479–1542) – provide some particulars about the city and country of *Xiyu* 西域, which include the character 訖. Emil Bretschneider, having analyzed a number of Central Asian places names that use this word, pronounced the character as *kia*: these names include *K'o-kia-shi* 克訖計; *K'o-t'o-kia* 可脫訖, *Kia-shi-hu-du* 訖失虎都, *Ha-la-t'ie-kia* 哈刺帖訖, *T'ie kia lie sze* 帖訖列思, and *Mi-kia-le* 迷訖力.<sup>18</sup> Ding Qian 丁謙 (1843–1919), a scholar of the late Qing period, claimed that 克訖 was the city of *Hazha-er* 哈札爾, which belonged to Turkey.<sup>19</sup> It seems that Ding Qian pronounced 訖 as *jia* or *qie*, which is closer to the standard pronunciation of the character than the ones given by Paul Pelliot and Cen Zhongmian 岑仲勉 (1885–1961). Pelliot reads this character as *pai* (*bai*) in his transliteration of the name 添哥訖兒的 (*T'ien-ko-pai-eul-ti*).<sup>20</sup> Cen Zhongmian declared that 訖 is a popular version of the character 魄, and from this interpretation concluded that the name 訖失虎都 in the *Renwu lue* referred to Bašquduq.<sup>21</sup>

In fact, the character 訖, although frequently given as *qie*, should be read *bie* when used as the name of a country, place, or ethnic group. Few dictionaries record this alternative reading. However, in the Middle Ages this character appears in many non-Chinese personal names, toponyms, and ethnonyms of

16 *Kangxi zidian*, 785.

17 [www.zdic.net/zd/zi/ZdicE7Zdic99ZdicBF.htm](http://www.zdic.net/zd/zi/ZdicE7Zdic99ZdicBF.htm).

18 Cf. Bretschneider 1910, II: 315; (1877), 230, 231, 239, 240.

19 Cf. Ding Qian 2008, II: 772.

20 Cf. Pelliot 1948, 146.

21 Cf. Cen Zhongmian 2004, II: 649. Baš in Turkish means “head.”

the Ming period, and could be pronounced either *qie* or *bie*. When read as *bie*, the character commonly indicated the Turkic morpheme *bek* and the Persian-Arabic morpheme *be*. For example, the *Wuzong shilu* (*Veritable records of the Wuzong [Emperor] of the Ming*) transliterated the name of the first Qazaq khan, Janibek, as *Zhanibie* 札尼兒, and the name of Muhammad Shaybak (or Shaybānī), the first ruler of the Shaybanid Khanate, as *Shayibie* 沙亦兒. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* refers to Muhammad Shaybak as Shāhi Beg Khān.<sup>22</sup> *Ming shilu* refers to Shaybānī as *fanwang Shayibie* 番王沙亦兒, the “barbarian king Shaybak” of Samarqand:

In the third year of the reign of Zhengde (1508), King Shayibie of Samaerhan (Samarqand) sent the envoy Maheima Huozhe 馬黑麻火者 (Mahmud Khoja) and presented camels and horses as tribute.<sup>23</sup>

Even today, the character 兒 occurs in many place names like Gansu, where it is pronounced *bie*. This includes the present-day town of Bieyang zhen 兒藏鎮; the Bieyang 兒藏 River in the province’s Jishishan 積石山 Autonomous Prefecture; the town of Bieyangkou 兒羊口 of Longxi 隴西; and Biejiali 兒家里 of Zhangxian 漳縣. Thus, the correct reading for 兒 should be *bie*.

Based on the above argument, the name 額即兒 in *Ming shilu* must be pronounced *Ejibie*, a Chinese transcription of “Özbek.” Meanwhile, the name *Haxin* refers to Qazaq (Kazakh). Therefore, the term “Ejibie-Haxin” refers to Özbek-Qazaq.

Regarding Ejibie-Haxin, *Ming shilu* reports that:

As for Ejibie-Haxin, according to a report by the Libu 禮部 (Ministry of Rites), [his state] is a Dada huiyi 韃回夷 (a foreign state of Tatar Muslims).<sup>24</sup>

Yan Song 嚴嵩 (1480–1567), a prime minister of the Ming dynasty, in his *Nangong zouyi* 南宮奏議 (*The South Palace memorials*) reported:

[In the twelfth year of the reign of Jiajing (1533),] Ejibie-Haxin, which had never come to pay tribute before, now also sent fifty-eight envoys [to China].<sup>25</sup>

22 Janibek was the first Qazaq khan and upon Janibek’s death in 1480, Kirai’s son Burunduk (as in *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 56, 82) was elected his successor. Muhammed Shaybak’s native Turkish name was Shabaq, Shebaq, or Shah Baht, from which Shaibak derived, followed by Shaybānī, a pseudo-authentication of a common Turkish name into the more prestigious Arabic tribal name of Shayban. Cf. Ibragimov 1969, 98.

23 Cf. *Ming shilu*, “Wuzong shilu”, j. 44.

24 *Ming shilu*, “Shizong shilu”, j. 134.

25 *Nangong zouyi*, 29: *Yichu Gansu yigong* 議處甘肅夷貢.

Another Ming source, *Shuyu zhoubi lu* 殊域周咨錄 (*Informative records on countries far away*), completed by Yan Congjian 嚴從簡 in 1574, contains an account of Ejibie-Haxin that includes the following:

The king of Haxin, formerly living in the Northern Mountains of Samarqand in Ejibie territory, was also known as being half Dazi (half Tatar).<sup>26</sup> Earlier, he had sent an envoy, Tursun, to present tribute and check [information] with the archives. So, Haxin of today is the Haxin of before, which was at that time known as a niche of the Northern Mountains which now has the place name of Ejibie.<sup>27</sup>

Based on the above, it seems reasonable to guess that the ethnonym *Özbeks* found among Central Asian writers was the name of the nomads of the Aq Orda (White Horde).

The Ming court began to recognize the Qazaqs only when they began sending tribute delegations to the court. Thereafter, the group appears in *Ming shilu*, in five references to a country known alternately as Asibie, Ejibie-Haxin, Ejibie, or Haxin. The Ming chronicle's first reference to Asibie appears to be located in *juan* 224 of the section about the Yingzong reign in *Ming shilu* ("Yingzong shilu" 英宗實錄). *Özbek*, the ethnonym by which the historical polity is best known, appears in *Ming shilu* only in the middle of the fifteenth century, where a reference dated about 1452 first uses the term *Asibie* as the name of the *Özbek-Qazaq Khanate*. Subsequent references to *Özbek-Qazaq* between 1532 to 1537 use Ejibie-Haxin, or simply either Ejibie or Haxin. *Ming shilu* thus suggests that at least by the early years of the sixteenth century Ejibie-Haxin had become an integral (and possibly the most important) element in the name that the Ming court used for the country of the Qazaq Khanate.

The *Da Ming huidian* 大明會典 (*Collected statutes of the Ming Dynasty*), in 1587 edition, also mentions Ejibie-Haxin together with the names of other countries in a passage reporting that, in the reign of Jiajing era (1522–1566), Ejibie-Haxin began to presented tribute.<sup>28</sup> *Mingshi* lists twenty-nine names of *dimian* 地面 (territories) including Western Region (Xiyu), as well as eleven countries, including Haxin, that used to present tribute but did not send it through Qumul (see Table 1).<sup>29</sup>

26 Dazi 達子, the other name for Tatars (Mongols), partly survived in the popular language as Dazi.

27 *Shuyu zhoubi lu* 15.492f.

28 Cf. *Da Ming huidian*, j. 107, "Chaogong san" 朝貢三 (Tribute, j. 3).

29 Cf. *Mingshi*, j. 332, "Xiyu", j. 4. The twenty-nine names of these *dimian* given in *Mingshi* was translated by Bretschneider 1910, II, 314f.

Table 1: The Eleven Countries within Xiyu that did not send tribute through Qumul

1. Qi'erma 乞兒麻 <sup>30</sup>	2. Mi'erhalan 米兒哈蘭 <sup>31</sup>	3. Ketuobie 可脫亂 <sup>32</sup>
4. Lazhu 蠟燭 <sup>33</sup>	5. Yedegan 也的干 <sup>34</sup>	6. Lazhu 刺竹 <sup>35</sup>
7. Yibulayin 亦不剌因 <sup>36</sup>	8. Geshimi 格失迷 <sup>37</sup>	9. Qi'erjisi 乞兒吉思 <sup>38</sup>
10. Yunusi 羽奴思 <sup>39</sup>	11. Sihaxin 思哈辛	

While this is how the Chinese state referred to this polity, the name by which residents themselves knew their state is not so obvious.

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- 30 In *Ming shilu* ("Taizong shilu", j. 99; "Xuanzong shilu", j. 27, 28, 29) this country is mentioned either as Qi'erma, or as Qilima 乞力麻, and its ruler during this period as Dalahan Husilao 打刺罕合思老 (Tarhan Khusrau) or Husilao. According to the *Xianbin lu*, "Xiyi zhi" 4.103), northwest of *Qilima'er* 乞力麻兒 lay a sea. This name refers to the capital city of Kerman, of Kerman province in Iran.
- 31 In *Ming shilu* ("Taizong shilu", j. 107) it is mentioned as *Ma'erhalan* 馬兒哈蘭. This is undoubtedly the city of Marghinan/Marghilan in Fergana.
- 32 In *Ming shilu* ("Taizong shilu", j. 114), this country is mentioned together with Asu 阿速 (Aqsu), where the ruler is Hodayila 虎答亦刺 (Hudayar).
- 33 In the Chinese texts, Lapchuk, west of Qumul, is written 腊竺, 蠟燭, 刺竹. Chen Cheng in his *Xiyu xingcheng ji* (p. 35), called it *Lazhu* 腊竺. In his poetry (*ibid*, 125), he called it 蠟燭.
- 34 There can be no doubt that Yedegan is Yetikent. According to *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* (Elias and Ross 1895, 180), Yatikand is a place on the confines of Andijan, whose Persian name is *Hafte-deb*, meaning "Seven towns". Yetikent is the Turkish name for seven towns. According to *Ming shilu* ("Wuzong shilu", j. 60), the ruler of Yedegan is Sultan Mahmud. However, I am of the opinion that this place is located east of Toktogul Reservoir and Karakol city in Kirghizstan, now called Jetigen. Muhammad Haidar mentioned Yetigen together with Uzun Ahmad (*ibid.*, j. 130). Uzun Ahmad River still exists, west of Tokotgul reservoir, a right tributary of the Naryn.
- 35 Cf. note 36.
- 36 The name Yibulayin is frequently mentioned in *Ming shilu* ("Xiaozong shilu", j. 68) as the name of a ruler, a neighbor of the country called Yemiekeki. Yemiekeki 野也克力 or Yemieqili 野也乞里 was located northeast of Hami. According to Bretschneider 1910, II, 293), in *Mingshi*, Yibulayin appears once more as the name of a country.
- 37 In *Ming shilu* ("Xuanzong shilu", j. 94, 95; "Yingzong shilu", j. 84, 224) Kashmir is mentioned either as Geshimi 格失迷, or Keshimi'er 克失迷兒, Qieshimi'er 怯失迷兒, or by the city Alamula 阿剌母刺 (Varahmula or Baramula).
- 38 *Ming shilu* ("Taizong shilu", j. 109) mentioned this name only once as Qi'erjisi 乞兒吉思. This refers to the Yenisey Kirghizs, nowadays known as Khakas.
- 39 The ruler of Tashkent, Yunus Khan (1462–1487) of Moghulistan; in *Mingshi*, the name Yunusi appears once more as the name of a country.

## 2 The Relationships Between the Ming Dynasty and the Qazaq Khanate

As we see from the above passage, the first ruler of Asibie dimian (the territory of Asibie) was recorded in *Ming shilu* as *Zhanibie*, on the day of *jichou* 己丑 in the twelfth Chinese lunar month in the year of *Jingtai* 景泰 (1452). The name *Zhanibie* can easily be recognized as the name the first Qazaq khan *Janibek* (?–1480), son of *Barakh Khan* of the *White Horde*. *Asibie*, *Özbek*, or *Uzbek* appears to represent the title “*Özbek Janibek Khan*.”

As for *Ejibie-Haxin*, *Ming shilu* reports that, in the eleventh year of the reign of *Jiajing* (1532), the country sent envoys with tribute to the Ming court:

The envoys [from the territories outside China], totaling more than four hundred, have paid tribute and shown gratitude [to the Ming court]. They were respectively sent by *Sutan Mansu'er* 速壇滿速爾 (*Sultan Mansur*) of *Tulufan* 吐魯番 (*Turfan*), *Sutan Zhalading* 速壇札刺丁 (*Sultan Jalal ad-Din*) of *Tianfang* 天方 (*Arabia*), et al.; *Sutan Abuxieyi* 速壇阿卜窩亦 (*Sultan Abu Said*) of *Sama'erhan* 撒馬爾罕 (*Sarmaqand*) et al.; *Hami Wei xizhi dudu* 哈密衛襲職都督 (hereditary *tutuq* of *Qumul garrison*) *Mi'er Maheimu* 米兒馬黑木 (*Mir Mahmut?*) et al.; and *Ejibie-Haxin*, et al. According to a report by the *Libu* (Ministry of Rites), [the state of] *Ejibie-Haxin* is *Dada huiyi* 韃靼回夷 (*Tatar Muslim*). [*Ejibie*] never came to pay tribute before, but [it] now also sent over fifty people [to China].<sup>40</sup>

Table 2: Envoys to the Ming court from the Qazaq Khanate as recorded in *Ming shilu*

Year (reign year)	Name of Khanate	Name of Khan or Envoy	Sources
1452 (Jingtai 3)	Asibie dimian 阿思亂地面	King of Zhanibie	“Yingzong shilu”, j. 224
1532 (Jiajing 11)	Ejibie-Haxin 額即亂哈辛	Envoy of Tulusun 土魯孫 (Tursun)	“Shizong shilu”, j. 135 <sup>41</sup>
1533 (Jiajing 12)	Ejibie 額即亂		“Shizong shilu”, j. 154
1533 (Jiajing 12)	Ejibie-Hazu 額即亂哈卒 <sup>42</sup>		“Shizong shilu”, j. 157
1537 (Jiajing 16)	Ejibie-Haxin 額即亂哈辛		“Shizong shilu”, j. 196

40 *Ming shilu*, “Shizong shilu”, j. 134.

41 The envoy of Tursun from Ejibie is also found in *Shuyu zhoubi lu* 15.492f.

42 *Hazu* 哈卒 is undoubtedly a scribal error for the very similar form *Haxin* 哈辛 or *Qazaq*.

Another record containing the name Ejibie-Haxin appears in the same section of *Ming shilu*:

The envoys, sent by the rulers of the Western Region, like King Ejibie Haxin, et al., carried twenty-nine official papers dedicated to China written in *fanwen* 番文 (foreign languages), asking for silk, coins, and barter. By edict the emperor gave them cloth, silk, tea, medicines, etc.<sup>43</sup>

### 3 The Question of the Capital of the Early Qazaq Khanate

During the second half of the fifteenth century, Janibek and Kerey, descendants of Urus Khan (1361–1376), the eighth khan of Aq Orda (also the White Horde), possessed a legitimate claim to his legacy, but lacked the strength needed to oppose Abulkhair Khan (1412–1469, r. 1428–1469), so they moved with their people to the northern border of Moghulistan and established the Qazaq Khanate. Regarding the whereabouts of Janibek and Kerey after the assassination of Barakh Khan, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* reports:

At that time, Abulkhair Khán exercised full power in Dasht-i-Kipchák. He had been at war with the Sultán of Juji; while Jáni Beg Khán and Karáy Khán fled before him into Moghulistán. Isán Bughá Khán received them with great honor, and delivered over to them Kuzi Báshi, which is near Chu, on the western limit of Moghulistán, where they dwelt in peace and content. On the death of Abulkhair Khán the *Ulus* of the Uzbegs fell into confusion, and constant strife arose among them. Most of them joined the party of Karáy Khán and Jáni Beg Khán. They numbered about 200,000 persons, and received the name of Uzbeg-Kazák. The Kazák Sultáns began to reign in the year 870 [1465–1466] (but God knows best), and they continued to enjoy absolute power in the greater part of Uzbegistán, till the year 940 [1533–1534 A. D.].<sup>44</sup>

The official Soviet history of the Qazaq SSR and the history of Kazakhstan considered the date of the formation of the Qazaq Khanate as 1465–1466 and Kuzi Bashi in Zhetisu (Semirechiye) as its political center.<sup>45</sup>

The identification of Kuzi Báshi with Qozi Basy of Qorday Mountain, which sits along the borders of modern Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, has long been established. The evidence from *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* is overwhelming. Ac-

43 *Ibid.*, j, 157. Cf. Table 2.

44 Elias and Ross 1895, 82.

45 *Qazaqstan Tarihy*, II, 336–344.

ording to Ney Elias, another reading of this name is *Jud Kuzi Báshi*.<sup>46</sup> Muhammad Haidar clearly indicated that Kuzi Báshi or Jud Kuzi Báshi was located on the western edge of Moghulistan. Pointing to the territory of Moghulistan, he observed that its eastern frontier adjoins the Kálmák country – that is to say, Báris Kul, Imál, and Irtish. The territory was bounded on the north by Kukcha-Tangiz, Bum Lish, and Karátál; on the west by Turkistán and Táshkant; and on the south by the provinces of Farghána, Káshghar, Aksu, Chálísh, and Turfán.<sup>47</sup> It can be easily deduced from the directional order of the place-names that they were recalled in a counter-clockwise direction, that is, from the east to north, to west, and then south.

The *Shuyu zhoubi lu* provides another piece of evidence of the territory Ilibali (Moghulistan in Persian sources). He reports that Ilibali is situated in a desert, probably in the territory of Yanqi (modern Qarashahar in Xinjiang) and Qiuci (Kusan or Kuchar), south of the mountain Baishan 白山 (mountain north of Kuchar). The capital of Ilibali is the city of Yan-cheng 延城. Its mountains, river, and lakes include Baishan, Congling (Pamir), Jinling (Bogda), and Rehai (Issyk-köl). It is bordered on the south by Yutian (Khotan), on the north by Wala (Oirats), on the west by Sama'erhan (Samarqand), and to the east is contiguous to ancient Shazhou; it is distant from the Jiayuguan by 3700 *li*.<sup>48</sup>

After the reign of Burunduk Khan (1480–1511), Qasym Khan, Janibek Khan's son, became ruler of the Qazaq Khanate. He made Karatal his winter residence. Ney Elias located Karatal on the modern Qaratal (Black) River, south of the modern city of Taldykorgan in Kazakhstan. Other insignificant spots called Karatal also exist, he added.<sup>49</sup> Karatal, evidently Kara Abdal, near Sighanaq (or Segnakh) (as Fazlallah ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani writes the name in his *Mikhman-name-ii-Bukhara*), means the winter quarters of the Qazaq Khanate.<sup>50</sup> In my opinion, Karatal lay west or northwest of Kukcha-Tangiz (modern Balqash Lake). In order to show this, two things need to be shown: first, that Karatal (Qaratal) is only a misreading of Kara-Abdal (Qara Abdal); and second, that Kara-Abdal lay north or northwest of modern Sighanaq. Ruzbihan wrote that Shaybānī Khan marched with a great army from Samar-

46 Cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 82, note 1.

47 Cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 365.

48 Cf. *Shuyu zhoubi lu* 15.493f.

49 Cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 274.

50 Cf. Dzhaililova 1976, 132. Sighanaq is located to the east of the city of Kyzylorda of Kazakhstan, on the east bank of Syr Darya, about Sighanaq (Segnakh), see Bretschneider 1910, I, 170.

qand to Turkestan. When he reached the border of the Qazaqs, and passed Sighanak, he approached Kara-Abdal, which lay at the center of their winter camps. According to the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Baranduk (Burunduk) Khan lived at Sarai Chuk (Saraichuk, modern Sarayshik of Western Kazakhstan). Qasym Khan, in order to be far away from him, went to the confines of Moghulistan, where he made Karatal his winter quarters, with the intention to return to his return to his original capital early in the spring.

Where was the original capital of Qasym Khan? Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlát explains that he traveled to Ubaira-Subaira, in order to look after his kingdom. In commentators' notes to the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Ney Elias identifies Ubaira-Subaira with the Ibir-Sibir.<sup>51</sup> Called *Yibir Shibier* 亦必兒失必兒 in the *Yuanshi*, Ibir-Sibir lies in modern Siberia. According to Akimushkin, Elias' identification is a mistake copied from a nineteenth century edition of the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*. All earlier editions give Aspara.<sup>52</sup> However, during the time of Qasym Khan Aspara sat between the modern cities of Chu and Merke in South Kazakhstan, and was still the main town belonging to Moghulistan. Mirza Muhammad Haidar wrote in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* that

Kásim Khán subdued the whole of the Dasht-i-Kipchák. His army numbered more than a million [a thousand thousand] men. Excepting Juji Khán, there had never reigned a greater Khan than he in that country.<sup>53</sup>

In his early days, the young Qazaq Khan led the fight to all the Qazaq tribes. With the death of Abulkhair Khan, the majority of people in Dasht-i Qipchaq joined the Qazaq Khanate. Under Qasym Khan's rule, significant steps were taken to centralize state power, which and strengthened the positions of the khanate in the western and northern regions of Kazakhstan.

Qasym probably made the city of Tura his capital. Also known as Chingit-Tura, it was a medieval city that belonged to the White Horde, and served as the first capital of Abulkhair Khan. According to the *Tarikh-i-Abulkhair Khani*, Abulkhair Khan, the founder of his self-named Abulkhair Khanate, proclaimed himself Khan in Tura in 1428–1429.<sup>54</sup> The Asia map of Abraham Ortelius, based on his early wall map printed in 1567, displays a city called Teron, situat-

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51 Cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 282.

52 Cf. Akimushkin 2010, 92.

53 Elias and Ross 1895, 82.

54 Cf. *Qazaqstan Tarihi*, II, 156, 162; Grousset 1965, 557; Akhmedov 1965, 46.

ed southwest of the city of Sibir.<sup>55</sup> In 1586, Russians built the fort of Tyumen on the ruins of Chimgi-Tura.<sup>56</sup> It can also be found in Gerard Mercator's Atlas, which very clearly marked a place called Tyumen, here named *Weliki Tumen* (Great Tyumen), located in Hondius Tartary.<sup>57</sup> However, some centuries later, inhabitants of Sibir also referred to Tyumen as Chimgi-Tura. According to Gerhard Friedrich Müller, who visited the city in 1741, the Tatars there called the city Chimgi-Tura, not Tyumen, but Chimgi-Tura.<sup>58</sup> On an eighteenth-century map of the river system flowing into Lake Zaisang in the *Xiyu shuidao ji* 西域水道記 (*Waterways of the Western Regions*), completed by Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848), the city of Tura is named as Dola 多拉.<sup>59</sup>

The most important maps of the countries west of China during the Ming period are the “Menggu shanshui ditu” 蒙古山水地圖 (The Mongolian landscape map) and “Xiyu tudi renwu tu” 西域土地人物圖, which is included in the chapter “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” 西域土地人物略 of the *Shaanxi tongzhi* – gives rich geographical and historical information about the Xiyu during the Ming dynasty.<sup>60</sup> Both maps display the place names of regions far to China's west; from Jiayuguan to Lumi or Rong dimian (Rum, modern Istanbul), but geographical information contained in the “Xiyu tudi renwu tu” richer than that found in the “Menggu shanshui ditu”. Comparing the two maps, the “Menggu shanshui ditu” map was made earlier than the “Xiyu tudi renwu tu” map. This is known because the “Menggu shanshui ditu” map shows Hala Sipan 哈刺思盼 (Qala-i Zafar), which means that the map was definitely produced after 1505. That year, according to Babur and Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlát, Shaybāni Khan's forces invaded Badakhshan, but were defeated by a local chief named Mubarak Shah at his fort, which is why the fort was called Qala-i Zafar (the Fort of Victory).<sup>61</sup> A Chinese scholar named Huang Shengzhang 黃盛璋 has pointed out that the “Xiyu tudi renwu tu” map was definitely produced later, and suggests 1542 (the twenty-second year of the Jiajing reign), the year that the *Shaanxi tongzhi* was completed, as the earliest possible date.<sup>62</sup>

55 Cf. Schüler 2010, 126f.

56 Cf. Kyzlasov 2006, 63.

57 Cf. Schüler, 2010, 130f.

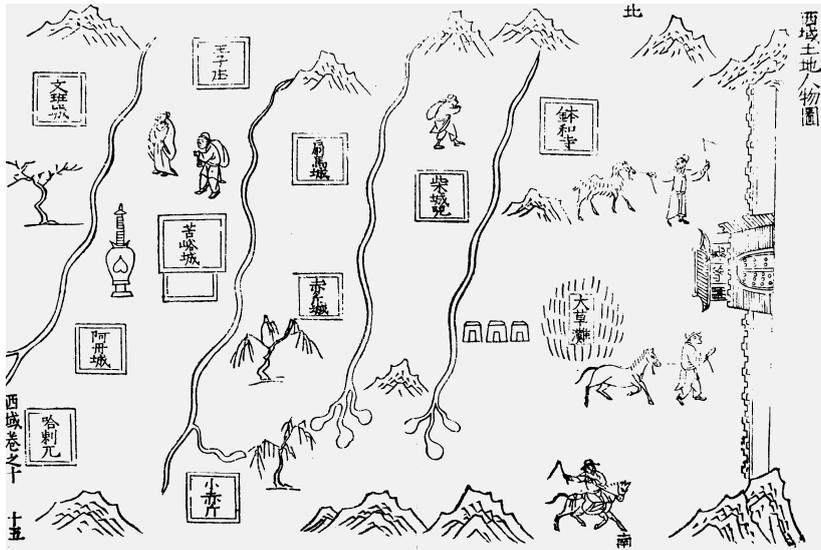
58 Cf. Pokrovskij 1996, 296.

59 Cf. *Xiyu shuidao ji*, 376f: “Zaisang nao'er suoshoushui disan tu” 宰桑淖爾所受水第三圖 [Third map of the river system of subject to flowing around Lake Zaisan].

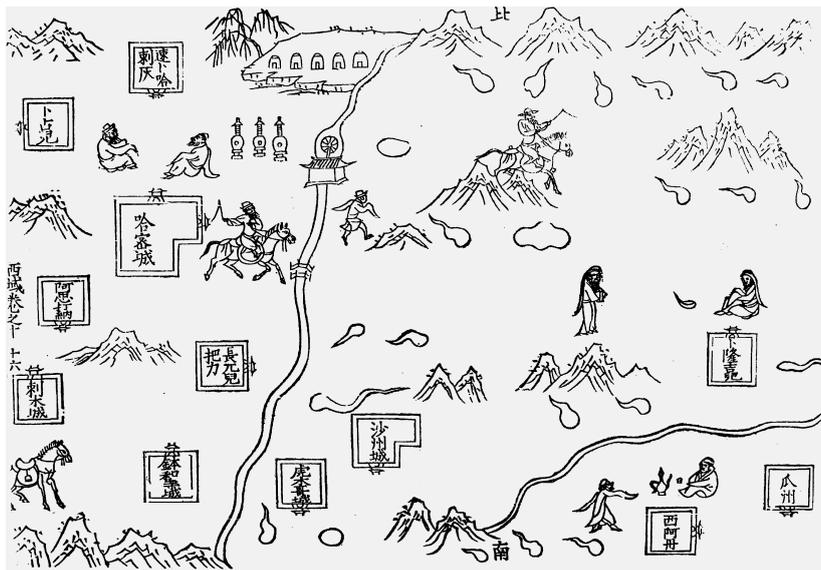
60 *Shaanxi tongzhi*, j. 30-49, 55-66; cf. Lin Meicun 2011.

61 Cf. Beveridge 1922, I, 242; Elias and Ross 1895, 220f.

62 Cf. Cao Wanru 1995, 41.



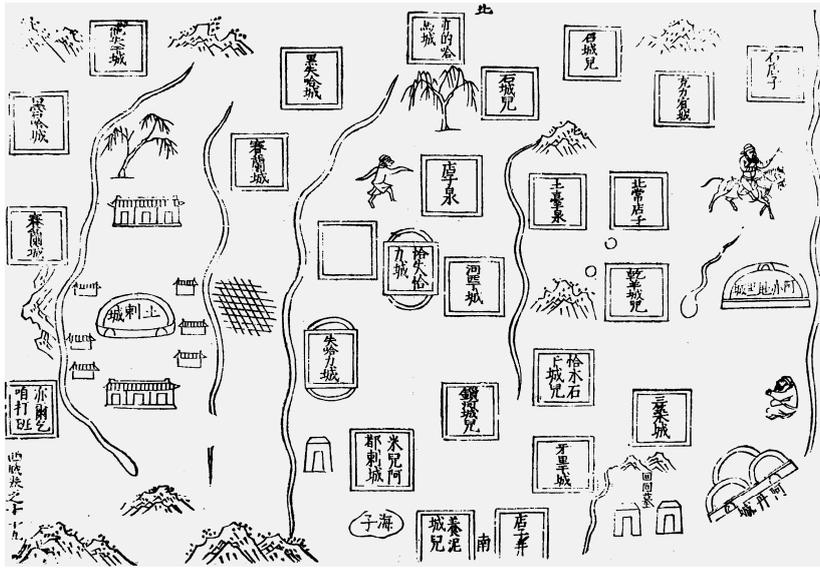
“Xiyu tudi renwu tu” (in *Shaanxi tongzhi* 10.15)<sup>63</sup>



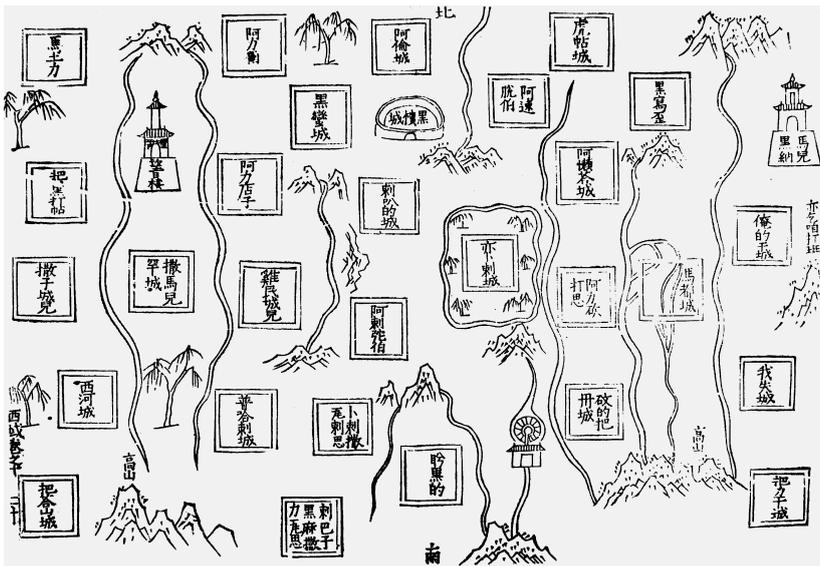
*Shaanxi tongzhi* 10.16

63 “Xiyu tudi renwu tu” consists of 10 maps covering *Shaanxi tongzhi* 10.15-24.

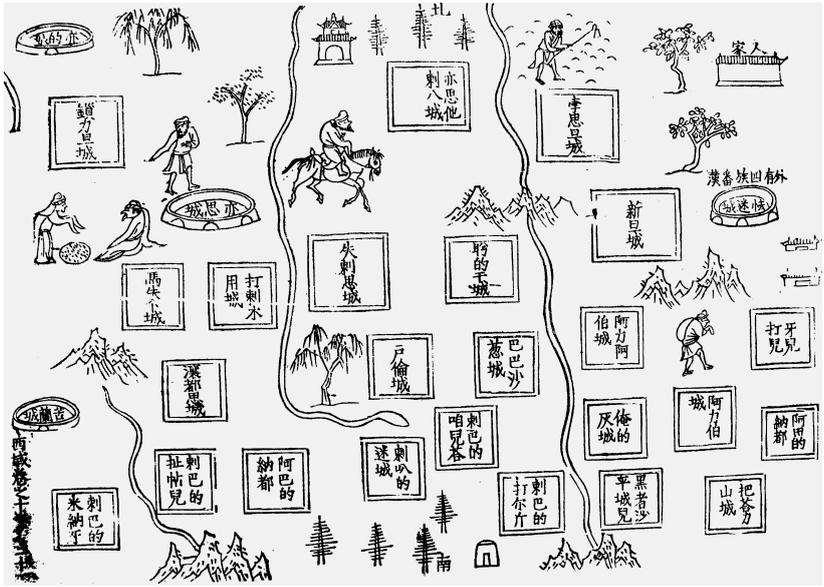




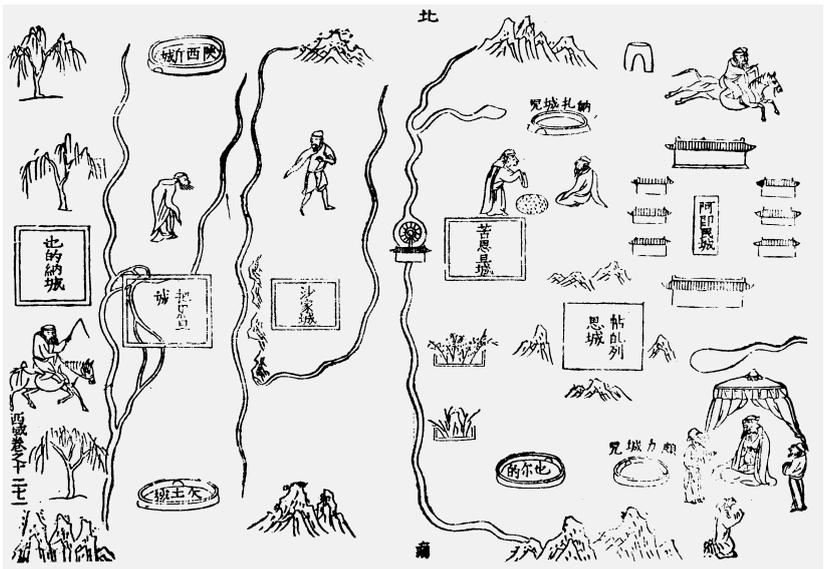
Shaanxi tongzhi 10.19



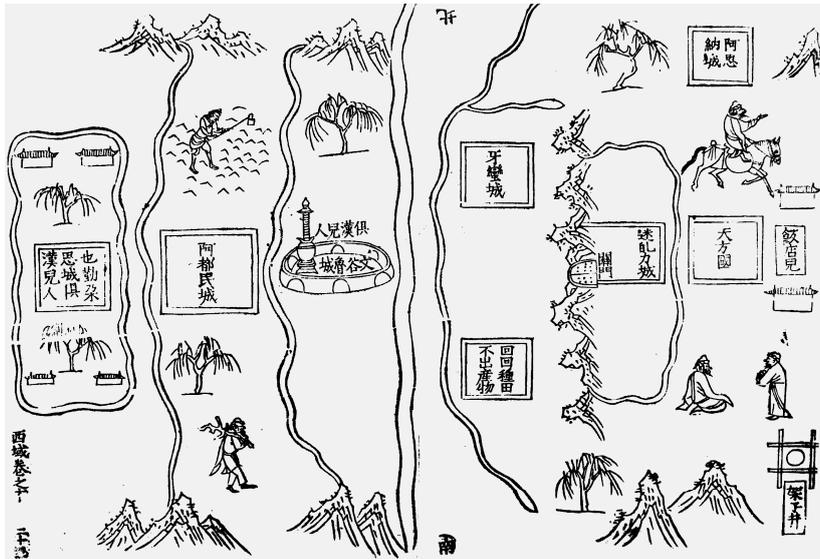
Shaanxi tongzhi 10.20



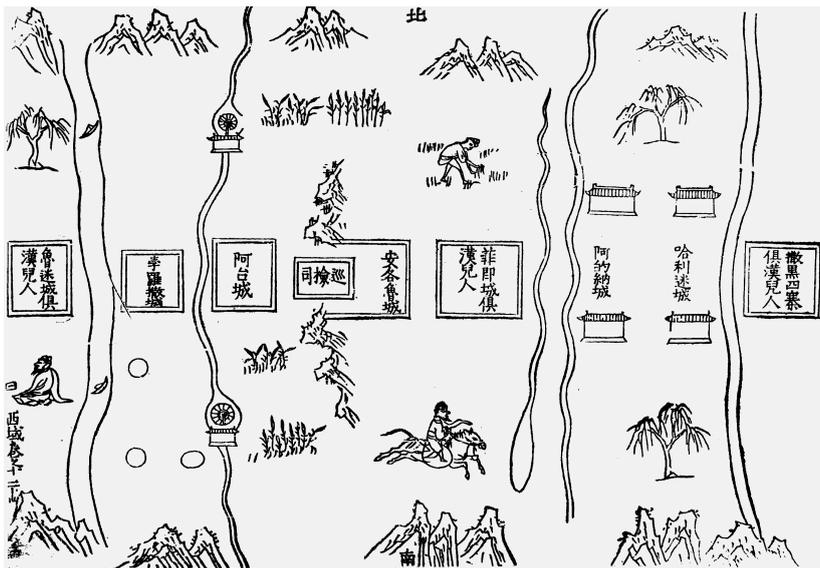
Shaanxi tongzhi 10.21



Shaanxi tongzhi 10.22



Shaanxi tongzhi 10.23



Shaanxi tongzhi 10.24

The nomadic king's seat of government, according to the "Xiyu tudi renwu lüe", lay in Tula. Following a description of the city, a passage reads:

To the northwest is the city of Sailan 賽蘭, and five hundred li further west, Tula 土剌. This city has a roundish form, with houses roundabout, and is ruled by a king. The Muslims in that country do not wear turbans but [instead] caps made of sheep's wool. Nor do they till the ground. They eat fish, mutton and *kumis* (mare's milk). Seven hundred li further west is the city of Yasi 牙思. The Muslims there wear turbans. Among the country's products mentioned are *lingyangjiao*<sup>64</sup> and *tiejiaopi* 帖角皮.<sup>65</sup> Four hundred li west of Yasi is Yeshibu 也失卜. South of the place are Basu'er 巴速兒, and Daxiani-andesu 打下你俺的速; to the north, the city of Tashigan 他失干.<sup>66</sup>

Many of the distances stipulated in the "Xiyu tudi renwu lüe" account are noticeably incomplete or incorrect, indicating that the city of Tula should be sought somewhere in the Dasht-i Qipchaq. As for the text's other toponyms, those that along the northern route are obvious, such as Sailan 賽蘭 (Sairam, a town east of Chimkend in Kazakhstan), Sailan 賽蘭城兒 (Sawran, a town northwest of the city of Turkestan),<sup>67</sup> and Yasi (an old name for the city of Turkestan or Hazret-e Turkestan in Kazakhstan). The map places the city of Tula between Sawran and Sayram.

The city of Tula could be a transcription of Tura. The term *tura* was often applied to a fortress in medieval times, and with a further extension meaning stone or wood city. I presume, however, that Tula refers to Tura of Tyumen. From the sixteenth until the seventeenth century, under the reign of Qasym Khan, the great line of communication between the Qazaq Khanate and the Ming dynasty lay along the northern slope of the Tianshan Mountains. At the same time, the Chinese began to hear about a country in the west that they called Ejibie-Haxin, which they apparently thought of it as a kind of White

64 Cf. *Lingyang* 凌羊 refers to *lingyang* 羚羊, antelope horns.

65 *Da Ming huidian* (j. 107) mentions an envoy from Samarqand who presented *Tiejiaopi* 鐵角皮 to the Ming court. According to *Huibui guan yiyu*, 197: 忒革 = 鐵角皮, which in Persian is *tuqah*. In *Gaochang guan zazi*, 65, it appears as *taka*: 鐵角.

66 Tashigan is Tashkent, capital of modern Uzbekistan.

67 On the "Xiyu tudi renwu tu" map, two cities named Sailan are marked, lying both east and west of the city of Tula. To the east lies Sairam, to the west Sawran or Sabran. According to the chapter on "The countries of the Western Region" of Zhang Yu's 張雨 *Bianzheng kao* 邊政考 (8.604, "Xiyu zhuguo" 西域諸國), printed in 1547, the second Sailan is called the *cheng'er* (little city) of Sailan. *Ming shilu* ("Xuanzong shilu", j. 7, 8) records either Salan 撒藍, or Sailan.

Horde. In addition to Tura, the “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” mentions five other capitals in the Xiyu where a *wangzi* (king) lived.

Table 3: Five countries in the “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe”

Capital	King's title	Account in the “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe”	Notes
Tula 土刺	Wangzi 王子 <sup>68</sup>	500 li further west of Tula 土刺. This city has a roundish form of house and is ruled by a king. The Muslims in that country do not wear turbans but [instead wear] caps made of sheep's wool.	Tura.
Puhala 普哈刺	Samahanke 撒馬罕克 <sup>69</sup>	500 li west of Zamin 雜民 <sup>70</sup> is the city of Puha. The people of the country are Muslims. They till the ground, cultivate sundry fruits, and breed silkworms. Samahanke live in the city of Puha 普哈.	Puha is Buhara, mentioned in the Xiyu zhuguo of Bianzheng kao as Puhala 普哈刺.
Qiemi 怯迷 <sup>71</sup>	Wangzi	1500 li west is the city of Qiemi. It is ruled by a king. Outside the city live four families of non-Chinese and Chinese ( <i>sizu fanhan</i> 四族番漢) <sup>72</sup> The country produces gold and diamonds.	Qiemi is Kishm, the capital of Badakhshan. <sup>73</sup>

68 The kings of the Western Regions, in the “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” had the title *wangzi* 王子. Wangzi means “son of the king” or “the Little King”.

69 Mentioned as Samahanxiong 撒馬罕兄 in the chapter “Xiyu zhuguo” of *Bianzheng kao*. The Samahan xiong, who lived in Bukhara, was the son of Mahmud Sultan (Shaybānī Khan's brother) and probably a relation of Ubaid Ullah Khan (1512–1539). The name *Samahan* refers to Shaybānī Khan, while the term *xiong* means “brother” in Chinese; Samahan xiong, therefore, indicates Shaybānī Khan's brother. According to the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, during the time of Shaybānī Khan's reign, Ubaid Ullah Khan, who was sultan, was going to Bukhara, which was his hereditary seat of government. At this time, the capital of the Shaybanid Khanate lay in Samarqand, under the rule of the two khans Kuchum Khan and Abu-Said (1530–1533). But Ubaid Ullah, for all intents and purposes, the sultan of the Shaybanid Khanate, for he ruled the whole of Transoxiana, including Bukhara. As Stanley Lane-Poole (1882, xiv) remarks, although Samarqand was officially the capital, a powerful and sometimes autonomous government generally operated in Bokhara. Cf. Elias and Ross 1895, 206f; Adle and Habib 2003, 41.

70 Zamin is a city between Tashkent and Samarqand, situated on the Zamin su, southeast of Dizakh; see Barthold 2002, 216.

71 Sunao Hori (1978, 50) identifies Qiemi with Kabul.

72 *Sizu fanhan* 四族番漢, literally means “four tribes of non-Chinese and Chinese.” This term most likely has a connection with the Siahposh people of Kafiristan. Siahposh Kafirs was the

Tiebieliesi 帖儿列思	Wangzi	Further west is the city of Tiebieliesi. It is ruled by a king. The people of the country wear turbans (Muslims).	Tiebieliesi is Tauriz or Tabriz. <sup>74</sup>
Feilang 菲郎	Wangzi	Further west is the city of Feiji 菲郎. <sup>75</sup> It is surrounded by two walls and ruled by a king. The inhabitants are Ju-han-er-ren 俱漢兒人 (Kuffar).	Feilang is Pərəng, Farang in the Eastern authors. <sup>76</sup>
Lumi 魯迷	Wangzi	Further west is the city of Lumi. It is situated 1200 li west of Boluosa 李羅撒 and enclosed by two walls. It has an independent king. The inhabitants are Muslims and Han-er ren (Juhan'er ren). <sup>77</sup>	Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire which was called Rum in Middle Eastern texts. <sup>78</sup>

former designation of the major group of the Hindu Kush Kafirs inhabiting Kafirstan, now called Nuristan.

- 73 Yan Song (in *Nangong zouyi*, 29, “Yichu Gansu yigong”) acknowledged a place he called “Qiami”, which undoubtedly refers to Kishm. The city became the capital of Badakhshan during the sixteenth century, according to the Turkish admiral Sidi Ali Reïs. Cf. Vambéry 1899, 67.
- 74 Shah Ismail founded the Safavid dynasty in 1501, choosing Tabriz as his capital. Shah Tahmasp I made *Qazvin* the capital of the *Safavid* dynasty in 1548, following the temporary capture of Tabriz by the Ottomans, until it was moved to Esfahan in 1598; cf. Adle and Habib 2003, 252, 255.
- 75 According to *Bianzheng kao* 8.617, the city was called Feilang 菲郎.
- 76 The name Folin 佛蒜 has the variant Feilang, which occurs also in *Xianbin lu*, “Xiyi zhi” 3.82.
- 77 Han'er ren 漢兒人, according to *Shaanxi tong zhi*, j. 49, “Xiyu tudi renwu tu”, refers to Juhan'er ren. The “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” describes the Juhan'er as an ethnic group, rather than Chinese as Bretschneider (1877, 240f) and other Chinese scholars (Li Zhiqin 2004, 120; Lin Meicun 2011, 89) suggest. This term probably denotes *kuffar*, which is an Arabic term that, used in an Islamic doctrinal sense, usually translates as “unbeliever” or “disbeliever,” *Juhan'er ren* or *kuffar* refers to Europeans or Christians. In Middle Chinese the character of *ju* 俱 sounds like *kyə* or *ku*. The author of “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” usually adds the suffix ‘-n’ to write many toponyms. For example, *fandian'er* 飯店兒 in the “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe”, means “hotel” or “little hotel” in Chinese. But here the city of Batn Mar is a town near Mecca. The Chinese name sounds like *Juhan'er*, which stands precisely for *kuffar*.
- 78 The name for the country of Rum originates as a reference to the city of Rome, however, over time it came to refer to Constantinople and, by the late thirteenth century, to the Ottoman Empire. Chinese sources reflect this. In *Ming shilu* the country of Rum appears in four different forms: Roumi 肉迷, *Lumi*, *Rong* 戎, and *Rong dimian* 戎地面 (Place of the Rong). Bretschneider first correctly identified Lumi with Rum, and recognized the existence of alternative names like *Rong dimian*, which appears in the “Menggu shanshui ditu”.

Table 3 lists five countries that the “Xiyu tudi renwu lüe” identifies in the Western Region during the first half of the sixteenth century: the Qazaq Khanate, the Shaybanid Khanate, the Safavid dynasty, the Ottoman Empire, and “Europe” (probably Rome in Italy). The King of Tura (Tula) was probably Qasym Khan; we cannot exclude the possibility that the Haxin had contact with him.

## Conclusion

Scholars have often assumed that contacts between China and the Qazaq Khanate formed during the Qing period. However, a careful examination of Chinese sources reveals that contact between the two countries and geographic knowledge about each other actually reached its historical peak during the first half of the sixteenth century. The first diplomatic contact between Ming China and the Qazaq Khanate occurred through the Chinese system of tribute trade during the mid-fifteenth century. Evidence for this appears in a reference to the arrival of the first group of people claiming to be an embassy sent from Asibie (Özbek) to China, which was recorded in 1452. Under the reign of Jiajing (1522–1566), the foundations for a flourishing relationship between Ming China and the Qazaq Khanate were established. At that time, the Chinese knew the Qazaq Khanate by the name Ejibie-Haxin, in other words, Özbek-Qazaq. Despite the political turmoil that erupted after the fall of the White Horde, Chinese gleaned new information about the Qazaq Khanate from envoys who arrived from Central Asia. From this information, Ming Chinese scholars and geographers drew new works of cartography like the “Menggu shanshui ditu” and “Xiyu tudi renwu tu”. Both maps display fairly accurate representations of the countries of Central and Western Asia and the Mediterranean during the sixteenth century.

The fourth Qazaq ruler, Qasym Khan, made Karatal (Qaratal) his winter residence. Karatal is Kara Abdal (Qara Abdal) near Sighanak. His realm included various cities in Dasht-i Qipchaq, such as Saraichuk and Tura. Unfortunately, Muhammad Haidar’s work does not provide much new information about the original capital of Qasym Khan. Nonetheless, the nomadic city of Tula is found on the *Renwutu* map which shows the major cities of Central Asia using Muslim geographic knowledge about the Qazaqs.

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Table 1: The Eleven Countries within Xiyu  
that did not send tribute through Qumul

1. Qi'erma 乞兒麻 <sup>30</sup>	2. Mi'erhalan 米兒哈蘭 <sup>31</sup>	3. Ketuobie 可脫亂 <sup>32</sup>
4. Lazhu 蠟燭 <sup>33</sup>	5. Yedegan 也的干 <sup>34</sup>	6. Lazhu 刺竹 <sup>35</sup>
7. Yibulayin 亦不剌因 <sup>36</sup>	8. Geshimi 格失迷 <sup>37</sup>	9. Qi'erjisi 乞兒吉思 <sup>38</sup>
10. Yunusi 羽奴思 <sup>39</sup>	11. Haxin 哈辛	