

The Sinicization and Evaluation of Emperor Shun of Yuan Dynasty

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Abstract: The last emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, Tuohuan Tiemuer, was a controversial emperor. The author used the method of exemplification to prove that in Emperor Shun's early years, he worked hard to govern, advocated Han law, loved drinking tea, and governed the country through literature. He implemented the "Zhizheng Year Reform", compiled the three histories of Liao, Jin, and Song, and his social, economic, and cultural aspects were revitalized, truly deserving of the title of a wise ruler. But in his later years, he indulged in debauchery, disregarded court politics, indiscriminately killed ministers, allowed court ministers to engage in internal strife, and ultimately lost his country and fled to the north, becoming the ruler of the fallen country. This evaluation of Emperor Shun of Yuan is more objective and comprehensive.

Keywords: Emperor Shun of Yuan; Sinicization; Zhizheng Year Reform; Tea Culture; Infighting

1. Introduction

Boerjianjin Tuohuan Tiemuer (1320-1370) was the legitimate grandson of Emperor Wuzong of Yuan Dynasty, the eldest son of Emperor Mingzong of Yuan Dynasty, and the brother of Emperor Ningzong of Yuan Dynasty. He ascended to the throne in Shangdu in 1333 and became the tenth emperor of the Yuan Dynasty and the fourteenth great Khan of the Mongolian Empire. He reigned for 36 years and was the longest reigning last emperor of the Yuan Dynasty. At the age of 51, he passed away in Yingchang, Mobei. He was posthumously named "Wuhagatu Khan" in Mongolian, "Puren Puxiao Emperor" in Chinese, and the temple name "Huizong". Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang of the Ming Dynasty

praised him for "knowing the fate of heaven and retreating," and he was given the honorific title of "Emperor Shun ". He was also known by the people as Zhizheng Emperor, Gengshen Emperor, or Gengshen Jun.

2. Fun Life Stories

2.1 Clever and Skillful, A Lu Ban Style Emperor

Emperor Shun was a technological genius in architecture, mechanical manufacturing, and other fields. He was proficient in construction machinery and had personally designed palace building models. [1] Craftsmen followed the formula to create a luxurious house. The dragon boat was designed to be 120 feet long and 20 feet high, with curtains, corridors, warm pavilions, and a palace on top. The dragon body and palace were decorated with colorful gold makeup, with two claws in front. There were 24 sailors wearing purple clothes, each holding a pole on either side of the boat. After the dragon boat was built, Emperor Shun rode a boat from the harem to the sea below the Qiangong Mountain to play games. As the boat sailed, its dragon head, eyes, mouth, claws, and tail moved. He also made a palace leak, which was actually an automatic timekeeper designed on the basis of previous generation instruments. Emperor Shun also made his own Five Cloud Chariot, which was exquisite and unparalleled. If divided by modern disciplines, Emperor Shun had considerable expertise in physics, mechanics, mathematics, architecture, and other fields. Because Emperor Shun was the ruler of the fallen country, he was criticized for being obsessed with the entertainment, and the play of technical machinery. However, it also demonstrated his superb mechanical architectural design ability from another perspective.

2.2 Enjoy Drinking Tea, Tea Maid Promoted to Empress

Chinese tea culture has a long and brilliant history, and continues to this day. The tea activities of various dynasties are intertwined, and the tea culture of the Yuan Dynasty is an indispensable part of the development chain of Chinese tea history. It is also a critical period for the significant turning point in the way Chinese people drink tea. It inherited the customs of ordering tea from the Song, Liao, and Jin Tang bottles, and began a new trend of brewing loose tea in the Ming and Qing dynasties. The tea industry in the Yuan Dynasty objectively existed and cannot be ignored. In the Yuan Dynasty, drinking tea became popular, enjoying both refined and popular tastes, and treating guests with tea became a basic etiquette in society. The entertainment of literati, such as "qin, qi, calligraphy, painting, poetry, wine, and tea," expanded into the essential "seven things to open the door, firewood, rice, oil, salt, soy sauce, vinegar, and tea" in people's daily lives; Many beverages that do not belong to the tea category can be called tea; Drinking tea emphasizes simplicity and practicality, gradually shifting from the method of preparing final tea to the method of brewing sprouted tea. The nomadic people enjoyed eating meat, and due to the digestive and health promoting effects of tea, tea was popular in the Yuan court. The Yuan government established specialized institutions in Jianning and Changhu to supply imperial tea. Kublai Khan bestowed the name Ruiying Spring on him due to the special use of the Jinsha Spring for tea making. Emperor Wuzong of the Yuan Dynasty exclusively drew water from the well in Zoudian, the capital. At the end of the Yuan Dynasty, even a Goryeo woman named Qi ascended to the throne of empress due to her expertise in tea making. The Emperors of the Yuan Dynasty had a fondness for drinking tea. The third empress of Emperor Shun was a woman from Goryeo, with the Mongolian surname Sulanghe and the name Wanyan Hudu. She was called Empress Qi not only because of her surname Qi, but also because she was the first woman to become an empress as a tribute to Goryeo. Empress Qi was the daughter of Qi Ziao, a nobleman of Goryeo, born in Xingzhou, Goryeo. Presented

to the Yuan court as a Korean tribute girl, served in the palace, and served as a tea maid.[2] She was not only beautiful, but also very well behaved and clever. Emperor Shun doted on her very much, and later she was favored and became the third empress of Emperor Shun. The Yuan Dynasty and Goryeo maintained a relatively special relationship. Since Emperor Kublai Khan of the Yuan Dynasty, almost all the kings of Goryeo had been the son-in-law of Yuan emperors, and Goryeo's beautiful women had become a special tribute. After the fall of the Yuan Dynasty, the Ming Dynasty continued to receive this tribute, and the Qing Dynasty was no exception.

3. Governing Ideology

In June of the first year of the Yuantong era (1333), Tuoyue Tiemu ascended the throne, and Boyan gained the trust of the young emperor with his support. Aru Hui, Timur Er, and other ministers suggested that "the world's affairs are important, and it is advisable to appoint prime ministers to make decisions. The common people should blame them for their success; if they listen to themselves, they will bear a bad reputation." Therefore, Emperor Shun "lived deeply in the palace, and had no special expertise in everything." Boyan took advantage of the situation to control the court, "monopolized the state's affairs, and had his power at his own discretion." The power was scorching, "and" those who were good at nobility should be pardoned for death, allowed to be wicked and corrupt, and innocent people should be killed. At that time, many tribute and taxes were paid to the Boyan family throughout the country, and officials from the provincial and provincial courts all left their homes. Every time Boyan left the court, they all supported him and retreated, leaving the court empty. According to Tao Zongyi's "Record of Dropping out Farming in the Southern Village", "A grand and powerful figure, with treacherous and corrupt officials monopolizing power." [3]

3.1 Zhizheng Year Reform

After Emperor Shun overthrew the powerful minister Boyan, his political ambition was to achieve great success in the world. The "History of Yuan" recorded: "Eliminate corrupt officials, think more about governing", and

"the meaning of governing is very clear.". Between the late Yuan and early Ming dynasties, a hermit wrote: "During the reign of the emperor for thirty-six years, during the reign of Yuan Tongzhi and the period of Zhiyuan, the emperor was under the control of powerful officials, who either died or were executed one after another. The emperor's fear relaxed, but his leniency grew." In the early years of Zhizheng, Emperor Shun appointed the prime minister Tuotuo to carry out a series of social rectification and reforms, which was known as the "Zhizheng Reformation". Breaking away from the old policies of Boyan, we promulgated the "Essentials of Agriculture and Sang", reorganized the administration of officials, conscripted reclusives, exempted taxes, opened up the ban on horses, reduced salt production, and established regular warehouses. In terms of culture and education, the restoration of the imperial examination system for selecting scholars, the establishment of the Xuanwen Pavilion, the reopening of scriptures, the translation of historical books, the compilation of historical books such as "Biographies of Empresses and Heroes", the revision of classics such as "Zhizheng Tiaoge" and "Liutiao Zhenglei", the execution of the Four Seasons Sacrifice of the Imperial Temple, the worship of the suburbs to the sky, and the execution of the ritual of personal cultivation, etc. Of particular note was the compilation of the three histories of Liao, Jin, and Song. The tradition had been formed since the Tang Dynasty, with the establishment of bureaus by the government, the compilation of historical records for the previous dynasty, the preservation of a generational system, and lessons learned from chaos. After the establishment of the Yuan Dynasty, due to the dispute over orthodoxy, the history of the Liao, Jin, and Song dynasties had not been formally edited. In March of the third year of the Zhizheng era (1343), Tuo Tuo was appointed as the CEO of Tuo Tuo, who had issued a decree to revise the three histories of the Liao, Jin, and Song dynasties. Tuotuo decided that the Liao, Jin, and Song dynasties were all orthodox, and organized Han Chinese historians such as Jie Xisi and Ouyang Xuan, Wu'er tribe Lianhui Mountain Hague, the Dangxiang tribe Yuque and Shalaban, and the Mongolian tribe Taibuhua to participate in history revision, setting a precedent for

cooperation among historians of all ethnic groups. Under the diligent and capable efforts of Emperor Shun, the Yuan Dynasty in the early years of the Zhizheng era showed a revival, and the suppressed emotions of Han Confucian scholars during the Boyan era were also renewed. Later generations affirmed the "Zhizheng Year Reform" of Emperor Shun's reign.

3.2 Adhere to the Laws of Han and Govern the Country through Culture

Emperor Shun of Yuan had received a good education in Han studies, and his cultural achievements in Han were quite profound, second only to Emperor Wenzong of Yuan among the emperors of the Yuan Dynasty. [4]He was very good at calligraphy, and Tao Zongyi's "Essentials of the History of Calligraphy" evaluated his calligraphy as "rigorous and dense, not something that can be achieved through simple learning". Emperor Shun left behind many calligraphy treasures, such as "leisurely looking at the clouds", "Yuancheng Palace", "Shanzhai", "Jiuxiao", "Mingliang", "Qingshou", "Fanggu", "Yuanjue", "Jiangnan Loyal and Righteous Scholars", and so on. He also presented the "True Grass Thousand Character Monument" to his subordinates. The calligrapher Sheng Ximing once compiled eight volumes of the "Examination of the Book of Laws", and Emperor Shun read them thoroughly and ordered them to be stored in the Forbidden City. Emperor Shun of Yuan had a passion for the art of calligraphy, and many imperial edicts were personally written by him. Under the guidance of Emperor Shun, the Yuan court developed a calligraphy style, and the Crown Prince Ai You Shi Li Dala was also proficient in calligraphy. Even the Minister of Emperor Shun, Ha Ma, was skilled in writing large characters. In addition to calligraphy, Emperor Shun also enjoyed painting, and he was considered "good at calligraphy and painting". Emperor Shun also had a good study of literature, and many of his Han poems were excellent. Ye Ziqi recorded a beautiful line in his poem "Grass and Trees": "Birds sing in the red trees, and people are in the verdant greenery.". The beauty and elegance revealed by a few words are enough to glimpse the extraordinary poetic talent of Tuohuan Tiemu Er. Xian Xiangtuo also requested Emperor

Shun to pay attention to the sacred teachings. In this context, Emperor Shun reopened the Jingyan and later changed the Kuizhang Pavilion to the Xuanwen Pavilion as a fixed venue for Jingyan lectures. Emperor Shun appointed Prime Minister Tuo Tuo as the head of the Jingyan affairs, under whom there were three officials: concurrently serving as Jingyan officials, counselors, translators and historians, four reviewers, five writers, and four envoys, further improving the Jingyan system since Emperor Taiding. Emperor Shun ordered the selection of four Confucian officials, including Ouyang Xuan, Li Haowen, Huang Jin, and Xu Youren, to give lectures every five days, read the Five Classics and Four Books, write large characters, play the qin and ancient tunes, and often instruct the Wen Pavilion to speak and act diligently, with a sense of admiration and admiration. Mr. Zhang Fan, a famous expert in Yuan history, pointed out that among the emperors of the Yuan Dynasty, only Emperor Wenzong and Emperor Shun had a high level of proficiency in Chinese, which can be said to be accurate and profound. The appointment of important officials such as Tuotuo and Taiping by Emperor Shun generally continued the governing philosophy of "governing the country through culture". As scholars have said, looking at the political reform of the imperial court from the first year of the Zhizheng era to the eleventh year of the Zhizheng era (1341-1351), it can be seen that both the detached views on reform and good governance, as well as the cultural governance views of Arutu and Taiping, can be classified into the category of the concept of cultural governance.[5]

4. Evaluation of Emperor Shun

Emperor Shun of Yuan was a controversial double-sided figure in history. Although he initially paid attention to politics, he had no outstanding aspirations. In his early years, he worked hard to govern, advocated Han law, ruled the country through literature, and promoted "Zhizheng Year Reform". He compiled the three histories of Liao, Jin, and Song, and his society, economy, and culture were revitalized, truly deserving of the title of a wise ruler with achievements; But in his later years, he indulged in debauchery, disregarded the government, indiscriminately killed ministers, and allowed the court to engage in

internal strife and internal strife. The imperial party group competed with the crown prince party and the empress party groups for power and profit, [6] and major warlords and bureaucrats also attacked each other, ultimately leading to a distant retreat to the north and becoming a ruler of the country's downfall. As recorded in historical books, Emperor Shun of Yuan retreated to the northern desert and continued to rule the Mongolian grasslands, known as the "Northern Yuan" in history.[7] Qiu Shusen's "The Tale of Tuohuan Tiemuer" had pointed out that Tokugawa Takamoto ascended to the throne, and in his nearly 30-year political career since he came to power, he seemed to be completely different: the first Tokugawa Takamoto was associated with Tuotuo, leaving behind the image of a young emperor who was once lively, determined to eradicate corruption, and had a significant impact in history; the other Tokugawa Takamoto was associated with Hama and Jisijian, who were promiscuous, incompetent, and created internal turmoil "The foolish ruler." [8] However, if we change our perspective, in Mongolian historical books such as "The Golden Historical Outline of the Origins of All Khans", "The Origins of Mongolia", and "The Crystal Pearl of the Great Yuan Dynasty", the image of Emperor Shun of Yuan was the embodiment of all Bodhisattvas and the ruler of the universe. Emperor Shun lost his political power due to the mandate of heaven and was rarely explicitly criticized; The reason why Emperor Shun lost his country was because he did not follow the teachings of the lamas and did not follow the administrative teachings well, or because it was a difficult time to change dynasties; The Yuan Dynasty was not destroyed in the hands of Emperor Shun. Emperor Shun only lost control of the Han region, After returning to the homeland of Mongolia, he became a Khan of the Mongols and continued the rule of the Yuan Dynasty. [9] As recorded by the Secretary of History, Emperor Shun of Yuan returned to northern desert and continued to rule the Mongolian grasslands, known as the "Northern Yuan". Emperor Shun, as the longest reigning emperor of the Yuan Dynasty and in his hands, ended the Yuan Dynasty's rule in the Central Plains, thus becoming a controversial emperor. [10]

5. Conclusion

The last emperor of Yuan Dynasty, Emperor Shun, received mixed praise and praise. In the first half of his life, he devoted himself to governance and practiced Han Chinese culture. He had a high level of literary cultivation, enjoyed drinking tea, and was skilled in calligraphy and painting; In the latter half of his life, he grew tired of power struggles and allowed court officials to engage in internal conflicts, transforming from a wise ruler to a foolish ruler. In personal writings in Chinese, there were more criticisms about Emperor Shun than praises, and in the relevant records of Mongolian chronicles, there were more praises than criticisms.

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