



The Mongol Century: Visual Cultures of Yuan China, 1271-1368

Shane McCausland

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The Mongol Century explores the visual world of China's Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), the spectacular but short-lived regime founded by Khubilai Khan, regarded as the pre-eminent khanate of the Mongol empire. This book illuminates the Yuan era - full of conflicts and complex interactions between Mongol power and Chinese heritage - by delving into the visual history of its culture. Shane McCausland considers how Mongol governance and values imposed a new order on China's culture and also how a sedentary, agrarian China posed specific challenges to the Mongols' militarist and nomadic lifestyle. He also explores how an unusual range of expectations and pressures were placed on Yuan culture: the idea that visual culture could create cohesion across a diverse yet hierarchical society, while balancing Mongol desires for novelty and display with Chinese concerns about posterity. Although in recent years exhibitions have begun to open up the inherent paradoxes of Yuan culture, this is the first study in English to adopt a fully comprehensive approach. It incorporates the full range of visual media of the East Asia region to reconsider the impact Mongol culture had in China, from urban architecture and design to tomb murals and porcelain, and from calligraphy and printed paper money to stone sculpture. A fresh and invigorating analysis, The Mongol Century explores, in fascinating detail, the visual culture of this brief but captivating era of East Asian history.

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