



## Eurasian Historical Geography as Reflected in Geographical Literature and in Maps from the 13th to the Mid-17th Centuries

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Deutsche Ostasienstudien 24

December 2021

Paperback (17,6 x 25,0 cm), viii + 380 pp.

ISBN: 978-3-940527-96-7

€ 48,50

This monograph focuses on two geographical texts, the *Kangnido*, the oldest surviving detailed Chinese "world map", compiled in Korea in 1402, and a travelogue describing a route from China to the Mediterranean, first published in 1546.

The *Kangnido* map, the full title of which can be rendered in English as "Comprehensive Map of Integrated Lands and Regions of Historical Countries and Their Capitals", is based on earlier Chinese maps drawn by cartographers of the Mongol Empire, who relied primarily on maps and descriptions from the Islamic world for the names of places in regions outside China. As for the place names relating to Africa, Europe, and Western Asia, the map-makers drew the information they needed from medieval maps and geographical works in Arabic, Persian and other Western and Central Asian languages, as, e.g., al-Isṭakhrī's *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik* (Book of Routes and Realms) and ibn Ḥawqal's *Kitāb ṣūrat al-arḍ* (Book of the Face of the Earth) dating from the 10th century, and transcribed the required place names into Chinese characters. The western part of this map can therefore justly be called a crystallization of the merging of Chinese and Muslim geography, in other words, this section of the map is the result of a multicultural integration.

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The travelogue, consisting of a set of maps entitled "Xiyu tudi renwu tu" (Atlas of the Territories and Peoples of the Western Regions) and an annotated itinerary entitled "Xiyu tudi renwu lüe" (Outline of the Territories and Peoples of the Western Regions), were included in the same chapter of the *Shaanxi tongzhi* (Gazetteer of Shaanxi Province), the province from which the caravans set out westward on the Silk Roads. Based on a thorough analysis of this 16th-century travelogue, the author convincingly shows that a famous scroll consisting of more than 30 meters length, referred to by some scholars as *Menggu shanshui ditu* (Mongolian Landscape Map) and was by others titled *Silu shanshui tu* (Silk Road Landscape Map), can also be evidenced to be a product of the Ming Dynasty.

The results presented by the author with regard to the *Kangnido* world map as well as those relating to the descriptions of the Silk Roads demonstrate how strong China's interest in the outside world must have been before the government had decided to isolate China from the rest of the world for the centuries to come.

Imprint:

**OSTASIEN Verlag**

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