



Seljuks in the Chinese Sources: A New Interpretation

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Introduction:

The main idea of this poster presentation is to initiate a new interpretation of some geographical names in the Chinese Historical records, particularly after the Tang dynasty period. The focus of the poster is to re-examine particular place names in Chinese historical sources.

Seljuks in Chinese Historical Records: A new approach to some geographical names

There are certain geographical names used and referred in Chinese sources formerly interpreted differently by Sinologists. The reinterpretation of the names emphasizes that these names indicate the Seljuk Empire. The names go under three main titles. According to Hirth, the name could be the Arabic «Mulhidin» which means the «infidels» and another interpretation was «Memluk» The interpretation in this poster is that the names could have come from the Arabic word for the Anatolia used frequently «Rum», and first two names should be the Chinese transliterations of «Malik-al-Rum» which means the «The King of Rum.»

1. Meilu Gudunguo [眉路骨敦国]:

2. Meilu Guguo [眉路骨国]:

3. Lumei or Lumei Guo [蘆眉国]:

Conclusion:

Within all sources there are typical and identical features of the Seljuks. The «番塔» «Foreign Towers» symbolizes a typical aspect of the Seljuk architecture the minarets. The «番人塚» «Foreigner's Tombs» also indicates a very typical type of Seljuk heritage the tombs called «Kümbet» which many can be found all around Anatolia and the land ruled by Seljuks even today. The clothes described in the texts were also typical of the Seljuks of the time, the turbans; and the food was also typical for the Seljuks, meat and the bread. The commodities produced described in the text also indicate the Seljuks such as a particular kind of silk called «Seta Turchia» by Venetians, the rose water, flowers, bezoar stone and the borax.

References:

LWDD [嶺外代答]

ZFZ [诸蕃志]

YYZ [异域志]

SCTH [三才图会]

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