

研究ノート

Perceptions of Chinggis Khan and the Mongol Conquests in Contemporary Russia

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Introduction

In this article I show what place Chinggis Khan takes in modern Russian culture and public thought. I also consider how the perception of this figure has changed through history to understand what the specific features of the contemporary period are. Since Chinggis Khan's figure is inextricably linked with the Mongol conquests and Mongol rule in Russia, I also touch on these aspects. In some places I cite examples that go beyond the borders of modern Russia but belong to a shared linguistic, social and cultural context. This short article cannot hope to cover all contemporary works devoted to the Mongols and mentioning Chinggis Khan, but the task is to identify main trends and analyze them.

The perception of Chinggis Khan in Russian culture has been contradictory from the very beginning. Russian historians, writers and thinkers viewed and interpreted the role of Chinggis Khan in Russian history depending on their attitudes towards the consequences of the Mongol conquest and its influence on the development of the Russian state and institutions. There have also been those who were interested in Chinggis Khan's personality as a great conqueror. Finally, as the analysis of available texts shows, the name "Chinggis Khan" is often used as a common noun to denote something barbarous and destructive.

1. Chinggis Khan in the Historical Context

Chinggis Khan himself has never taken a very important place in Russian culture but he has always been present since the times of the Mongolian conquest and the Golden Horde. In this case, Chinggis Khan is just a part of the discourse of the Mongolian influence on the Russian history.

In Russia, the question of the Mongolian influence is not simply a historical or a scientific issue; it has serious political and ideological connotations. Since there is an opinion that the Golden Horde's rule over Russia influenced and dramatically changed the subsequent history of Russia, the question of the Mongolian influence became closely connected to the question of Russia's place in the world. In particular, is Russia a European country, or Asian, or Eurasian¹?

While for many Russians and Russian thinkers and historians the Mongols were an external force that imposed foreign traditions and culture on their country, Tatars, Buryats, Kalmyks, Tuvinians and others who live in Russia on the contrary consider the Mongol Empire to be part of their own history and culture. Thus, the perception of the Mongolian heritage in Russia has initially a dual character. While ethnic diversity (that is, the presence of Mongolian peoples) plays an important role, it is not, in my view, decisive.

Generally there are two extreme opinions about the Mongols' influence on Russia. Supporters of the first point of view deny any significant historical consequences of the Mongol conquest and domination. Russian historian Sergei Platonov (1860-1933), wrote: "We can consider the life of Russian society in the 13th century without paying attention to the fact of the Tatar yoke" (Pipes 2011). Followers of another point of view, in particular the theoretician of Eurasianism Peter Savitsky (1895-1968), on the contrary argued that "without Tatarism, there would be no Russia" (Pipes 2011). Between these extremes there are many intermediate positions.

It seems that from the very beginning, the views of scholars on the Mongols' influence depended not so much on historical facts as on their own ideological positions. They just interpreted the facts in such a way as to express their vision of Russia's place in the world. For example, Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826), who started the dispute itself in the beginning of the 19th century by publishing the first systematic history of Russia, wrote that the Russian princes under the Mongols gradually adopted an autocratic form of government and that this was very positive because it laid the very foundations of Russia and its autocracy (*samoderzhavie*) (Pipes 2011). Another famous Russian historian, Sergei Solovyov (1820-1879), a professor at Moscow University, was a committed Westerner, and in his first of twenty-nine volumes of Russian history refused to use the concept of "Mongolian period" at all.

Ideologized Soviet historiography focused on the negative aspects of the Mongols' rule over Russia and interpreted them in terms of the national liberation struggle. The only exception was the circle of émigré publicists who called themselves "Eurasianists," led by Prince Nikolai Trubetskoy (1890-1938) and the above-mentioned Peter Savitsky. According to the Eurasianists, the Mongol conquest not only strongly influenced the

¹ Eurasianism (evrazijstvo) is a Russian political movement according to which Russian civilization does not belong to either "Europe" or "Asia" but is a constituting part of Eurasia.

evolution of the Moscow kingdom and Russian empire but also laid the foundations of Russian statehood (Pipes 2011).

In the context of discussions about the Mongolian influence on Russian history, the figure of Chinggis Khan himself usually did not stand out separately. Moreover, in the Soviet times, authorities considered any attempts to exalt and venerate Chinggis Khan to be manifestations of nationalism, and stopped them. The only area where it was possible to talk relatively freely about Chinggis Khan was in art, especially in literature.

After the collapse of the USSR, the debate about the role of the Mongols in Russian history revived again and with renewed vigor. The disappearance of the Soviet state left many of its citizens at a loss: they could not figure out to what part of the world their new state belonged, to Europe, to Asia, to both, or to neither one nor the other. Many people shared the popular view that because of the Mongols Russia became a unique civilization: Russia is not Europe, nor Asia; it has its own special path. It is not surprising that under these conditions the ideology of Eurasianism got a new birth. The most prominent theoreticians of the revived neo-Eurasianism were Lev Gumilev (1912-1992), professor of philosophy at Moscow State University, Alexander Panarin (1940-2003), and philosopher Alexander Dugin (b. 1963). This ideology was very well suited to the anti-Western sentiments of some of the Russian population and the political elite.

Lev Gumilev wrote his books in the Soviet times, but they gained immense popularity in the 1990s after the collapse of the USSR. Written simply and entertaining, they gave an alternative view of history that was different from the Marxist approach which turned out to be false in the eyes of many post-Soviet intellectuals. Post-Soviet people looked for a new identity and searched for national roots. This process included revisioning their history. What was prohibited, neglected or criticized by Soviet scholars now became important and positive. The eyes of the Turkic (first of all, Tatars) and Mongolian peoples (Buriats, Kalmyks) turned to the glorious times of the Golden Horde and the Mongolian Empire. As a Buryatian poet Esugei Synduyev put it:

*After all, my line is straight,
It goes from where great-grandfathers left their traces,
It comes out of cavalry of Mamai
And from the Baty's horde (Prilepin 2015).²*

It was historians from Tatarstan who took the initiative to remove the term “Tatar-Mongolian yoke” from history textbooks. It is interesting to trace the genealogy of this term which means the oppressive power of the Golden Horde over Russia. It came to the Russian chronicles from Polish historical literature of the 15-16th centuries. Chronicler Jan Dlugos used “iugum barbarum” and “iugum servitutis” in his writings in 1479. Then a professor of the University of Cracow, Matvey Mehovsky, used it in 1517. In 1575, the term “jugo Tartarico” appeared in Daniel Prince’s record of his diplomatic mission to Moscow. In Russian sources, the phrase “Tatar yoke” first appears in the 1660s. Christian Kruse used the phrase “Mongolian-Tatar yoke” in 1817 in his book,

² Ved' liniya moya pryamaya,
Gde pradedov legli sledy,
Idyot iz konnicy Mamaya
I iz Batyevoy ordy.

“Atlas and tables for viewing the history of all European lands and states from their first population to our times,” which was translated into Russian and published in St. Petersburg a few decades later (Malov, Malyshev, Rakushin 1998). For more than a century this term expressed the view of many of the Russian (Soviet) historians on the period of the Mongol rule over Russia. It was removed from the textbooks only in 2013 after the historians of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan openly expressed their dissatisfaction with it. Instead of “Tatar-Mongolian yoke” they proposed “the system of dependence of Russian lands on the Horde khans.” According to Rafael Khakimov, vice president of the Republican Academy of Sciences, “In Tatarstan, the Golden Horde is considered an empire, and Chinggis Khan is not a conqueror but a reformer” (Istoriki poprobovali svesti balans... 2013). Moreover, Khakimov says that Chinggis Khan himself was a Tatar (Rafaehl’ Hakimov... 2017). It is a wide-spread trend that historians from different nationalities try to ‘assimilate’ Chinggis Khan, to make him Tatar, Kazakh, Chinese, etc. R. Khakimov also emphasizes the religious tolerance and discipline imposed by Chinggis Khan and believes that the Mongol empire should serve as an example for modern Russia, “chosen by the Heaven itself to continue the “Eurasian” and not the “Roman-Byzantine” path (Rafaehl’ Hakimov... 2013).

2. Chinggis Khan in Cinema

The Mongolian theme has gained popularity in modern Russian cinema. Two main trends can be identified here. The first is related to the desire to shoot blockbusters on the Hollywood model, but with the use of local historical realities, characters, and images. In this case, Mongols (or Tatars) turn into cultural “Other,” most often “Evil Other,” in opposition to which the main hero, the people, or the country develops.

The second trend is represented mainly by local, ethno-national cinema, which tries to comprehend the past of its people (Tatars, Buryats, and others). There is also a third strand connected more with auteur cinema. In this case, the director is interested in the personality of Chinggis Khan as an outstanding historical figure.

One of the first movies about Chinggis Khan shot after 1990 is “The Shadow of the Conqueror” (another title is “The Death of Otrar”), 1991. This film made by Kazakhfilm Studio shows the destruction of the city of Otrar by Mongol troops. Kyrgyz actor Bolot Beyshenaliev played the role of Chinggis Khan, who does not look so much a talented military commander or a bloody conqueror but rather an awe-inspiring “steppe shaman,” a kind of earthly incarnation of Tengri, a wise ruler, striving for the well-being of his people.

In 2007, Sergey Bodrov’s film “Mongol” was released and attracted a lot of attention and interest. S. Bodrov, a neo-Eurasianist, portrayed Chinggis Khan with certain sympathy. The main artist of the picture was a famous Buryat sculptor, Dashi Namdakov. “Chinggis Khan is one of the most unpopular names in Russia,” said Sergei Bodrov in an interview. “I read only bad things about him and the Mongols in my schoolbooks: barbarians; primitive, cruel people; almost monsters” (Dawson 2008). According to the director, the Russians have asked a lot of questions about why he made this movie. For him, Chinggis Khan was not born as a monster, rather, he suffered a lot in his childhood and his history was written by his enemies - Russians and Europeans (Interview 2008). Bodrov acknowledged that the scenario of the film was based on the work of Leo

Gumilev, a popular Soviet scholar and Eurasianist (Horoshilova 2006).

“The Mystery of Chingis Haan” (2009) was a joint production of Russia, Mongolia, and the United States. The film was based on Nikolai Luginov’s novel “At the Command of Chinggis Khan,” and was the first large-scale project of Yakut cinema.

These movies represent second and third trends from the above mentioned classification. The first trend has been particularly noticeable in recent years as Russian filmmakers have turned their attention to the history of the Golden Horde. However, they shoot not historical movies but rather produce free fantasies on the subject, reproducing common myths.

The film “The Horde” directed by Andrei Proshkin was released in 2012. It was shot with the financial support of the film company “Orthodox Encyclopedia” - in other words, by the Russian Orthodox Church. Historian Vadim Rudakov, who was to advise the film crew, finally refused to cooperate with them, saying, “‘The Horde’ is designed in the worst traditions of the old Soviet films about the Tatar-Mongols and the nomads” (Vadim Rudakov... 2012). Despite the undeniable artistic merits of the film, it shows not a real great Empire, but a mythical “dark Kingdom” full of brutal, bloodthirsty, evil-minded, and greedy “Mongols” (ibid).

Interest in the Golden Horde is understandable: Russian princes interacted with the Golden Horde khans, and the “yoke” period is associated first of all with the Horde. According to film critic Anton Dolin, the film creators tried to answer two questions: “Why are we the Horde?” and “Why aren’t we a Horde?” (Dolin 2012).

In the beginning of 2018, the main Russian TV channel “Pervyj Kanal” started showing a 16-episode adventure melodrama “The Golden Horde” that was also criticized by professional historians for historical unreliability. However, the creators of the series themselves consider it a “fantasy” genre (“Zolotaya Orda” Pervogo kanala...).

A little earlier the Russian audience saw the historical movie “with elements of fantasy” called “The Legend of Kolovrat.” The plot based on “The Tale of the Capture of Ryazan by Batu” tells the story of the legendary hero Kolovrat who defended the city of Ryazan against the Mongols in the 13th century. The image of Batu Khan is quite interesting in this film. He appears as a feminine man, intelligent and refined. No doubt the creators of the film were inspired by the image of Persian king Xerxes from Zach Snyder’s “300.” But in spite of this, all the above mentioned films depict the Golden Horde as some kind of infernal evil, which existed outside of Russia and attempted to suppress it.

Interestingly, while Russian authors oppose themselves to the Horde, some Ukrainian artists transfer the image of the Horde to Russia itself. This most telling example is the comic book “The Horde” by the famous Ukrainian artist Igor Baranko (Orda). In the center of the plot there is a radical Russian dictator who intends to follow the path of Chinggis Khan to world domination. Under the influence of drugs, he learns that he is another reincarnation of the great Mongolian commander, and all he needs to do is to taste the body of the previous incarnation of Chinggis Khan.

3. Chinggis Khan as a Literary Character

If we look at Russian literature we will see that it represents both extreme points of view on Chinggis Khan: He is both a cruel barbarian and a national hero.

Denis Davydov, a famous 19th century poet, calls Chinggis Khan “my ancestor of blessed memory.”³ On the contrary, for popular Russian poetess Marina Tsvetaeva, Chinggis Khan is a synonym for a terrible disaster.⁴

In the 1920s, the ideas of the Eurasianists Nikolay Trubetskoy, Petr Savitsky, Georgy Vernadsky, and Erenzhen Hara-Davan dominated in social and political journalism and the philosophy of history. Soviet historiography and historical literature represented Mongols and Chinggis Khan as conquerors and enslavers. However, it is noteworthy that despite the negative image of the Mongolian past and Chinggis Khan, it was in Soviet times that major literary works on Chinggis Khan and the Mongol invasion were published.

The most famous product of this kind was the trilogy of Vasily Jan “Invasion of the Mongols” which consisted of “Chinggis Khan” (1939), “Batu” (1942), and “To ‘the last sea’” (1955). In the first novel, Chinggis Khan appears as a powerful military leader, a subtle diplomat, a skilled and a far-sighted politician. The main theme of the trilogy was the struggle of the ancestors of the USSR’s peoples with the Mongol conquerors in the 13th century. That is why publication was possible. Later, Leo Gumilev published his books developing the Eurasianist theme.

Another popular publication was “The Cruel Age” (1978), a historical novel by Isai Kalashnikov. It recreates the life of the Mongols in the late 12th - early 13th centuries. Chinggis Khan here is both a monster and an ingenious commander. This novel is based on “The Secret History of the Mongols.” The first translation of the SHM into Russian was made in the 19th century, but the full classical translation by Sergei Kozin was published in 1941. This made it possible for all writers and screenwriters who addressed the topic of Mongolian history to base their creations on the historical source.

Russian and Soviet literature in many ways repeated and embodied the ideas of Russian historians and thinkers. Books published in the early 1990s continued the Soviet literary tradition. For example, “White Cloud of Chinggis Khan” is a novel (1992) by the famous Soviet Kazakh writer Chingiz Aitmatov. The main plot

³ Blazhennoj pamyati moj predok Chingiskhan,
Grabitel', ozornik s arshinnymi usami,
Na uharskom kone, kak vihr' pered gromami,
V blestyashchem pancire vletal vo vrazhij stan
I moshchno rassekal tatarskoyu rukoyu
Vsyo, chto protivilos' mogushchemu geroyu.

⁴ Esli dusha rodilas' krylatoy —
Chto ej horomy i chto ej haty!
Chto Chingiskhan ej — i chto — Orda!
Dva na miru u menya vraga,
Dva blizneca, nerazryvno-slityh:
Golod golodnyh — i sytost' sytyh!

develops in the middle of the 20th century in Kazakhstan. Among the papers of the protagonist there is a text of a legend telling a story of Chinggis Khan's campaign in Europe. One woman gives birth to a child from a soldier of Chinggis Khan despite the prohibition of any love relationships during the military campaign. Chinggis Khan orders them executed and soon after that loses the favor of the Great Blue Sky.

In 1997 the historical novel of the famous Yakut writer Nikolay Luginov "At the Command of Chinggis Khan" was published both in the Yakut and a year later in the Russian language. The second part of the novel in the native language appeared in print in 2000, and in 2001 two parts of the novel were published in Russian. Luginov carefully studied the scientific, art and documentary literature about Chinggis Khan. Chinggis in the novel first of all is a philosopher and a teacher of his people who has to be a warrior, but he is not a cruel punisher and despot. According to Luginov, Chinggis sent children, women, and old men of his tribe to the north and they reached Yakutia and became relatives with Yakuts and Evenks. The main idea of the novel is that to create an empire is not enough, it is necessary to develop it. This is a kind of attempt to magnify the history of the Yakut people, linking it with the history of the Mongolian Empire.

Soon Neo-Eurasianism replaced the Soviet tradition and became a popular ideology, which offered its way out of the situation of social, economic and ideological crisis of the 1990s.

The famous Russian ideologist of Eurasianism Alexander Dugin wrote: "the Moscow Kingdom itself, the Romanov Empire and even the Soviet Union demonstrate to us a variety of versions of Mongolian, Chinggis Khan's Russia, the development, expansion and strengthening of the single Mongol sphere..." (Dugin). Following these ideas, contemporary Siberian poet Vladimir Beryazev in his poem "The Banner of Chinggis Khan" refers to Chinggis Khan as "a Creator of the Russian space" (Maroshi 2017: 186).

The famous Russian writer Zahar Prilepin believes that Russia must inevitably see itself as the heir of Chinggis Khan. "Chinggis Khan's inheritance is our pride," he writes (Prilepin 2015).

As in cinema where the Horde is viewed through the lenses of the fantasy genre, contemporary Russian literature puts Chinggis Khan and his heritage into the realm of science fiction or makes them a part of alternative history.

In the cycle of novels titled "Eurasian Symphony" (2000-2005) by sinologists Vyacheslav Rybakov and Igor Alimov Russia, Mongolia and China in the 13th century form a single state called Ordus' (or Hordus', which is Horde plus Russ) (Maroshi 2017: 186).

The works of the ideologists of alternative history Gleb Nosovsky and Anatolij Fomenko and books of the popular writer Alexander Bushkov ("Chinggis Khan. Unknown Asia", 2006, and others) represent radical development and modification of the Eurasianist idea. They deny the existence of the Mongols or the Mongolian Empire at all saying that it was just a part of the Moscow Kingdom. In other words, Russia did not experience the influence of the Mongols, Russia was the great "Mongol" Empire itself. The Horde, according to Gleb Nosovsky and Anatolij Fomenko, "is not a foreign entity that seized Russia from the outside, but it is just a Russian regular army, which was an integral part of the old Russian state" (Maroshi 2017: 193).

It can be assumed that such an interpretation of the place and role of Chinggis Khan and the Mongols in the history of Russia is a consequence of the ambivalent perception of the Mongols in Russia. On the one hand,

they were brutal conquerors who inflicted serious damage and enslaved Russia. On the other hand, it is the Mongols who were at the origin of the Russian statehood, who had, in the opinion of a number of historians and publicists, a major impact on Russian history and formed a single Eurasian space. Postulation of pseudo-historical theories and concepts of alternative history is a possible way out of this contradiction.

Chinggis Khan also appears in a number of works but just as one of the characters, not playing any key roles. It is interesting that Chinggis Khan appears not only in historical or pseudo-historical works, but also in fantastic stories and novels. For example, there is a grotesquely fantastic story of Oleg Khafizov, “District Court” (2016) (Hafizov 2016). In the future, scientists have found a way to clone historical figures like Oliver Cromwell, Napoleon, Lenin and others in order to trial them for their brutal deeds, killing people, etc. Chinggis Khan is on trial in the Russian district court. He is accused of looting and destroying Samarkand, Bukhara and other cities, imposing the death penalty for misconduct and cowardice among his soldiers, and other crimes. During a break, a correspondent working in the court goes to the buffet, where he talks with a friend. The story ends with the announcement that Chinggis strangled the guard, broke the judge’s head off with a hammer, hacked with a sword half the journalists, and escaped.

Another example is Sergey Volkov’s trilogy “Chingis Khan” which is a part of the fantastic series “Ethnogenesis.” It tells the story of a student Artem Novikov who in 1979 received a silver figure of a horse, which is a talisman that connects Artem’s life with the fate of Chinggis Khan.

The book “Chinggis Khan. Temujin. The birth of a leader” (2017) by Alexej Gatapov tells the story of young Temujin who lost his father and learned the injustice of the world. Unlike many other authors who wrote about military campaigns of the fearsome conqueror and ruling by the great empire, Gatapov is interested in how a child turns into a man and becomes the future Great Khan. The author tried to recreate in detail the life of the ancient Mongols. Earlier, Gatapov had published a collection of short stories about Chinggis Khan and his times entitled “The First Nuker of Chinggis Khan” (2005). Gatapov is a Buryatian author and his novels represent another dimension of how the Mongol heritage is perceived in Russia. For Buryats as well as for Kalmyks and Tuvans, the Mongol Empire is a part of their national and cultural heritage. For them, this kind of literature is a way of recreating national identity and finding ethnic roots. It is significant that the novel “Temujin” was republished several times and translated into Mongolian and even Old Mongolian languages.

Another example is the famous Buryatian artist Dashi Namdakov whose sculptures are devoted to mythical and historical figures of the Mongolian world. The most famous in this respect is the monumental sculpture “Chinggis Khan” in London. In this case, Chinggis Khan is an embodiment of national pride, a symbol of the nomads’ universe.

4. Chinggis Khan as a Common Name and Some Other Cases

Chinggis Khan’s name also became synonymous with something barbaric, destructive and wild.

Belorussian writer and Noble prize winner Svetlana Alexievich in “Secondhand Time: The Last of the Soviets” wrote: “Chinggis Khan ruined our gene pool ... and serfdom played its part as well... We’re used to

the idea that everyone needs a good whipping, that you won't get anything done without flogging people” (Aleksievich 2013).

In Leonid Yuzefovich's novel “The house of datings” (2001), one “educated man” stabbed a poodle with his rapier and cut off its ears. Later he explained it first by aberration of consciousness, but then blamed Chinggis Khan: “he ...has the blood of Chinggis Khan in his veins” (Yuzefovich 2001).

Another author, a publicist, thought that “[George] Bush is modern Chinggis Khan, not endowed, unfortunately for the first, with the strategic mind and charisma of the latter” (Avanesov 2003).

There are also curious cases of using the name Chinggis Khan. In 2009 The Ministry of Culture and Mass Communication of the Perm Region decided to promote the image of the region and “to define the key figure, the symbol of Perm, a historically important personality, thanks to which the capital of the region began to develop and got the prospects of its future” (Patris Lumumba... 2009). Patrice Lumumba, Zarathustra, and Chinggis Khan got to the top of the chart.

In 2012 before the presidential and deputies of municipal assemblies elections, the Moscow City Council organized a rehearsal for the elections at 12 polling stations. But the list included not real candidates' names but historical characters: Alexander the Great, Peter I, Winston Churchill, Chinggis Khan, and Napoleon Bonaparte. “Muscovites will be able to tick off Chinggis Khan, who is nominated from the Tatar-Mongol Horde,” Secretary of the Moscow City Council, Fayas Khalilulin, explained (Predvybornaya repeticiya... 2012).

Conclusion

Some features of the perception of Chinggis Khan in Russia are not exceptional or new. Images of Chinggis Khan as a great conqueror, cruel ruler, barbarian and enslaver, Asian sage, shaman, etc., are presented in cinema, literature, and culture in general. If we look for some special features of Chinggis Khan's perception in Russia, they are primarily associated with the fact that Russian history is inseparable from Mongolian history, from the history of the Golden Horde. As shown above, various authors evaluated the importance of the Mongolian period of Russian history differently. Some considered it key to the subsequent history of Russia, while for others it is only a minor episode. But the fact that modern authors include the Mongolian or the Horde period in their works, try to comprehend it, and use the figure of Chinggis Khan, indicates that the Mongolian influence seems to them important. It may be important regardless of the historical sources and proven facts. What is more important is mythology and interpretations of the past that use the Mongol conquest and the personality of Chinggis Khan to create alternative visions of the past and future. They help Russian thinkers and artists reflect on their history and look for Russia's place in the world. Chinggis Khan as the personification of the Mongol invasion and the Mongol Empire serves as a kind of mirror, at which Russian culture looks, trying to find its European or Asian features.

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要 旨

チンギス・ハーンとモンゴルによるロシアの征服は、廃れた歴史の一部などではない。ロシアにおいては、歴史学の黎明期より、モンゴルによる支配とロシアのその後の歴史への影響に関して、様々な論争があった。多くのロシア人やロシアの思想家たちにとって、モンゴルは、ロシアに対して異国の文化や伝統を押し付けた外部勢力であった。これに対して、ロシア国内に住むタタール人やトゥヴァ人、ブリヤート人やカルムイク人にとって、モンゴル帝国は自身の歴史や文化の一部とみなされてきた。したがってロシアにおいてモンゴル帝国の遺産をどう認識するかという問題は、二重の性格を持つものであった。しかしながら民族の多様性は、決定的ではないものの、重要な役割を果たしてきたと考えられる。ロシアに対するモンゴルの影響に関して、一般的に両極端の立場があった。第一の立場を支持する者たちは、モンゴルによる征服と支配に関して、歴史的意義を全く見出さない。例えば歴史学者のプラトノフのように、13世紀のロシアの社会生活に関して「タタールの軛」を考慮に入れずに描きだせるとする立場である。もう一方の立場は、ユーラシア主義者の理論家ピョートル・ザビツキーのように「タタール主義なしでは、ロシアというものは存在しえない」とする立場である。もちろん、この中間に位置する論者も多々いた。

現代ロシアの文化において、例えば映画表象に関しては二つの傾向がある。一つは、ハリウッド映画のような大ヒット作を狙ったものであり、主人公であるヒーローに対してその敵役であるモンゴル人やタタール人を「邪悪な他者」として描き出す類の映画である。もう一つの傾向は、タタール人やブリヤート人などが自らの過去を理解するためにつくった地方のエスノ・ナショナルリズム的映画である。ロシアでは文学においても、チンギス・ハーンは残忍な野蛮人とナショナルなヒーローという両極端なイメージで表象されてきた。以上のことから、モンゴル人と黄金のオールドは、現代ロシア文化や社会思想において、ロシア人が世界の中でアジア的あるいはヨーロッパ的な自分を見つけ出す上での鏡であったといえる。