Kitan Migrations in Eurasia (10th–14th Centuries)

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This study analyzes three different phases of Kitan migration which took place between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries, each of which represents a different Inner Asian migration pattern that continued either synchronically or diachronically. It reviews the Kitan migration from Manchuria to north China and Mongolia, where they established the Liao dynasty (907–1125); Kitan migration from north China to Central Asia, where they founded the Western Liao (Qara Kitai) dynasty (1124–1218); and the vast array of collective and individual migrations that the Kitans experienced under Mongol rule (13th to 14th centuries), which led to their dispersion and assimilation into the ranks of Mongols, Turks, and especially Chinese.

All the migrations referred to above had predominantly political causes. However, the focus here will not be on the reasons for migration, but on the impact it had on the Kitans themselves and on their receiving societies. Each section will conclude with a few sentences about the general migration pattern and its relevance for Eurasian history.

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I. MANCHURIAN CONQUERORS: FROM MANCHURIA TO NORTH CHINA; THE KITAN LIAO 遼 DYNASTY (907–1125)

Given that this is by far the best-known case, I will only go over its general contours. The Kitans, a tribal confederation originating in the Xianbei 鮮卑 and in the region of the Mongolian–Manchurian borderlands, near the Liao 遼 river, appear in historical sources from the fourth century onwards. They came within the orbit of both the Steppe empires of Mongolia—notably those of the Turks (6th to 8th centuries) and the Uighurs (744–840)—and the Chinese empire, especially the Tang dynasty (618–907), and during the sixth to the ninth centuries were subject to one or another of these entities consecutively. In the early tenth century, taking advantage of the collapse of imperial power in both China and the Steppe, Abaoji 阿保機 (r. 907–26) assumed the title *khaqan* (supreme ruler), united the Kitan tribes and began to expand his realm. In 916 Abaoji proclaimed himself emperor, thereby abolishing the rotational leadership of the pre-imperial Kitans, and established the Kitan Empire, later known as the Liao dynasty, that ruled over Manchuria, Mongolia, and parts of north China for the next two hundred years. Abaoji expanded the Kitan territory into northern Mongolia and the Ordos region and in 926 conquered the Manchurian state of Bohai 渤海, a rich and populous agricultural area. Although he launched several campaigns against China, at that time caught up in the turbulent Five Dynasties period (906–60), he never conquered any Chinese territory. In 938 his successor, Yelü Deguang 耶律德光 (r. 927–47), received an area in north China, centered on the location of today's Beijing, in exchange for his support of the emerging Later Jin dynasty 晉 (936–46). While this region, known as the Sixteen Prefectures, was only a small part of Liao territory, it became by far the most populous and economically important part of the Kitan Empire. In 947 Deguang invaded north China, installed himself in its capital Kaifeng, and assumed the title Great Liao (Da Liao 大遼) for his dynasty. After a mere three months, however, he retreated, either due to Chinese resistance or because he was not interested in ruling all of north China, a step that would have seriously shifted the balance of nomads and sedentaries in his realm. The rise of the Song 宋 dynasty (960–1279) and its vain attempts to conquer the Sixteen Prefectures, the only part of China proper it was unable to subjugate, led to several decades of ineffective wars. This situation ended in 1004 when the Song and Liao signed the treaty of Shaoyuan 澶淵, in which the Kitans managed to compel the Song dynasty not only to pay a considerable annual

tribute of silk and silver, but also to acknowledge them as equals: the Liao emperor was declared the northern Son of Heaven and the Song emperor the southern one. After this agreement the Liao practically ceased to expand, but it used the gains from the treaty to enhance its economic base and international prestige. In the early twelfth century, however, the economic difficulties and declining power of the Liao emperors prompted the Jurchens, their former vassals, to rebel, a rebellion that ended with the elimination of the Liao in 1125.

The Kitans did not lose their homeland in the Liao period, but they took over new territories, into which many of them migrated. No less important than the geographical expansion was the political change that accompanied it: from tribal chieftains to emperors. This transformation led to substantial changes in the lifestyle and culture of the Kitan elite. While they did not give up their native traditions (e.g., language, shamanic rituals, myth of origin, nomadic way of life, high position of women), they added new layers, thereby evolving their own complex imperial tradition. This involved both creating new elements that became integral parts of Kitan culture, and adhering to elements of Bohai culture and Chinese imperial tradition. Kitan imperial culture included the invention of two Kitan scripts; a distinctive and sophisticated material culture in which gold played a pivotal role; new burial customs; Buddhist traditions of patronage and legitimation; and intensive urbanization, including the founding of five capitals—although the latter did not prevent the Kitans from remaining nomads, the seasonal movements of the court continuing throughout Liao rule. The royal clan adopted a surname, Yelü 耶律, and its members married exclusively with the Xiao 萧, a clan of Uighur origin that became the Liao consort clan. A notable impact of the new environment on the Kitan way of life was the adherence to the Chinese imperial tradition, including its trappings (e.g., reign titles, calendar, Chinese language used side by side with Kitan and Turkic). To control their complex realm, the Kitans employed a dual administration: the northern branch of the administration, predominantly staffed by Kitans holding Kitan titles and wearing Kitan dress, controlled the affairs of the nomads—Kitans, Mongols, and others—who retained their tribal structure. The southern branch, staffed by Chinese and Kitans holding Chinese titles and wearing Chinese dress, handled the affairs of the mostly Chinese sedentary population by retaining the pre-conquest Chinese bureaucracy.[1]

In their new location and circumstances, the Kitans managed to preserve much of their pre-imperial characteristics, even while creating a new imperial culture which contained both Kitan and Chinese facets, and succeeding in

portraying themselves both inside and outside their realm as no less Chinese than the Song. That China became known in the west—i.e., western Europe, Russia, and the Muslim world—as Cathay, Kitai, or Khatā, attests to the identification of the Kitans with the Chinese at least by outsiders. The dual Chinese-Kitan education and identity seems to have become characteristic of the Kitan Liao elite, and represents the major impact their migration had on them.

What impact did Kitan rule have on their subjects? It certainly involved a vast amount of secondary migrations, as hundreds of thousands of Chinese and Bohai soldiers, officials, farmers, and artisans, as well as some Jurchen subjects, were transferred to populate Kitan cities in Manchuria and Mongolia.[2] The Kitan conquest of Mongolia also led to the migration of remnants of Mongolia's Turkic population westward, and of the forefathers of Chinggis Khan eastward and southward into Mongolia.[3] In Mongolia, the unprecedented degree of urbanization and the strength of the Kitan garrisons won them the local nomads' esteem; Kitan cities also served as a channel that introduced Chinese and Kitan concepts into the Mongolian steppe. In north China, Kitan rule affected many aspects of life of the Chinese elite, from the content of the examinations (where candidates were asked to compose poems about bear hunting), to the officials' need to follow the emperor's mobile court in its seasonal migrations, to artistic production, much of which catered to the Kitan taste. Liao tombs of Han elite families suggest that at least part of the Chinese elite of the Liao went through a process of Kitanization, adopting elements of Kitan material culture.[4] Recently Pamela Crossley has studied this process, offering the example of the Han 韓 lineage of Jizhou 薊州 (near modern Tianjin). Members of this lineage had joined the Liao imperial enterprise in its early days, first as captives but soon afterwards becoming important members of the administration. Their "Kitanization" included adopting the Kitan royal surname; marrying Kitan women of the consort clan; and pursuing military and administrative careers which required not only skills in riding and archery but also a thorough knowledge of Kitan traditional tribal rituals and understanding of the economy and society of the Kitan homeland, as well as fluency in the Kitan language.[5] For these Chinese lineages the impact of the Kitan migration was no less significant than the impact that the new surroundings had on the Kitan elites—the acculturation of the elites was somewhat mutual.[6] The Kitans also enjoyed the support of their Chinese subjects: the Liao Han Chinese population remained loyal to their Kitan masters until the very last days of their dynasty—to the great disappointment of the Song, who had hoped to benefit from a greater degree

of ethnic solidarity.[7]

The pattern of Manchurian people migrating into north China (and continuing into China, Mongolia, or both) did not start with the Kitans, and, as is well known, continued after them—indeed they were dethroned by another wave of Manchurian invaders, the Jurchens, founders of the Jin dynasty (1115–1234), who in turn were the forefathers of the Manchus, founders of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). The amalgamation of various concepts of rulership and legitimation, multiple administrative models, legal systems, languages, and scripts continued under the subsequent Inner Asian conquerors of China, all of whom created complex imperial cultures in which the Chinese facet played a certain role, but did not substitute the indigenous traditions of the conquerors.[8] While the Kitans did not conquer Chinese territories, they proved that by combining Chinese and non-Chinese institutions it was possible to rule China—albeit a small part of its northern lands—without leaving the back of the horse. This lesson was not lost on the future Inner Asian rulers of China.

II. ROYAL REFUGEES: FROM NORTH CHINA TO CENTRAL ASIA; THE QARA KITAI OR WESTERN LIAO DYNASTY (1124–1218)

In 1124, when the Liao was overthrown by the Jurchens, most of the Kitans remained in north China under Jin rule. Yet one Kitan prince, Yelü Dashi 耶律大石, chose not to submit to the new rulers. Instead, he led his adherents westward, hoping to return subsequently to restore the Liao in its former domains. After spending six years at Kedun 可敦, the Liao's western-most garrison post in Mongolia, where he gained many adherents, Dashi became aware both of his inability to challenge the Jurchen Jin dynasty, and of the relative weakness of the Central Asian kingdoms. He thus decided to continue further west, and in a little more than a decade had succeeded in setting up a new empire in Central Asia that was known there as the Qara Kitai (the Liao Kitans),[9] and in China as the Xi Liao 西遼 (Western Liao). The dynasty persisted for nearly ninety years, and was finally vanquished by the Mongols in 1218.

After concluding their conquests in 1142, the Qara Kitai ruled over nearly the whole of Central Asia, from the Oxus to the Altai mountains, and, until 1175, even further eastward into the territory of the Naiman and the Yenisei Qirghiz, their empire being roughly equivalent to most of modern

Xinjiang, Qirghizstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and south Kazakhstan. The population of this vast empire was multi-ethnic and heterogeneous. Apart from the Kitans, who were a small minority in their empire, it was mainly composed of Turks (including Uighurs), Iranians, Mongols, and a few Han Chinese. Most of the population was sedentary and Muslim, although there was a considerable nomadic component (including the Kitans themselves), as well as flourishing Buddhist, Nestorian, and even Jewish communities.[10]

When the Kitans moved westwards, their symbols migrated with them. In fact the most striking characteristic of the Qara Kitai is that they retained their Chinese trappings (Chinese symbols of rulership and vassalage as well as the Chinese language) even in Central Asia. As I have shown elsewhere,[11] the Chinese trappings were retained because they were useful: they contributed to the legitimation of the Qara Kitai among their diverse subjects, including their substantial Muslim population. In Muslim Central Asia of the tenth to the twelfth centuries, China, though known but vaguely, was closely associated with notions of grandeur and prestige, and the memory of former Chinese sovereignty was still alive even in the Western Liao's westernmost province, Transoxania. Moreover, the institutional means embedded in the Chinese–Liao tradition, such as the elevated position of the emperor and the nomination of successors, helped in consolidating the power of the dynasty and overcoming one of the most pressing problems in nomadic states—the struggles over succession. Furthermore, the Qara Kitai arrived in Central Asia as fugitives. The cultural capital that they owned was their former status in China. This cultural capital provided them with a strong sense of identity, which differentiated them from other nomads in Central Asia. It also gave them much prestige, both among their supporters and in their dealings with the existing political units in the new environment.

The retaining of the dynasty's name and of the Liao Chinese trappings—as well as most of the Kitan identity markers (language, scripts, shamanic rituals, nomadic way of life, position of women) did not mean that the rule of the Qara Kitai resembled that of the original Liao. Here we can see the impact of the new environment on the Kitans. Qara Kitai rule was far less centralistic than the Liao's: apart from its central territory, most of the Qara Kitai realm was administrated indirectly and in a rather minimalistic way: the local dynasties remained mainly intact, most of them maintaining their rulers, titles, and armies, and no permanent Qara Kitai army was stationed in the subject territories. Liao peculiarities such as the dual administration or the system of five capitals were not retained, and despite the use of Chinese titles, no Chinese bureaucracy existed under the Western Liao. Instead, in

a typical Inner Asian amalgamation, the Qara Kitai administration also included Turkic and Persian elements, manifested, for example, in the use of Persian and Turkic in addition to Chinese and Kitan, and in the use of Turkic and Persian titles, including prominent titles of the dynasty such as *tayangyu* (Turkic: chamberlain) and *shiḥna* (Persian: local governor). Even the ruler's title, *Gürkhan* (universal khan), was a hybrid Kitan-Turkic title.[12] Despite these influences, however, and in a sharp contrast to their predecessors and successors in Central Asia, throughout their rule the Qara Kitai did not embrace Islam, the dominant religion in their new environment, and instead constructed their identity and legitimacy on the unique combination of the common nomadic political tradition and the prestige of China in Muslim Central Asia.[13]

What impact, if any, did the Qara Kitai have on their receiving society? Due to its mainly indirect character, as well as to the scarcity of relevant documentation both literary and archaeological, it is not easy to assess the impact the Qara Kitai dynasty had on the region. Yet most of the twelfth century was a period of relative peace and prosperity in Central Asia, especially in the central territory of the Qara Kitai (Semirechye), where growing urbanization is attested to from the 1150s onward. The trade with the Chinese states continued, mainly via the Western Xia (Xi Xia 西夏) realm, and the Muslim perception of Central Asia as being part of China was retained and even strengthened throughout the rule of the Qara Kitai.[14] Apparently at least some of the Muslims who fulfilled important posts in the Qara Kitai administration acquired a degree of knowledge of Kitan or Chinese.[15] Moreover, the emergence of female rulers in the thirteenth century eastern Muslim world (about which see below), most of them having Kitan connections, suggests that the influence of the Qara Kitai on their new environment might have been deeper than the external sources enable us to detect.

The pattern of royal fugitives who were forced into flight by a superior military power and ended up creating viable polities in their new environment on the basis of their original cultural capital, also continued after the Qara Kitai period. The most prominent example is the Moghul dynasty of India (1526–1858). Founded by Timurid fugitives migrating from Central Asia, the Moghuls continued to adhere to their Timurid traditions while adding elements from the new and mainly Hindu environment to their imperial culture.[16] The Shaybanid Uzbeks, who caused this Timurid migration in the sixteenth century, also display this pattern: migrating into Transoxania due to the rising power of rival Jochid factions, the Shaybanids

used their Chinggisid origin and Chinggisid legitimation concepts to assert their rule in the new environment.[17]

III. EURASIAN DISPERSION: THE KITANS UNDER MONGOL RULE

Both the Qara Kitai and the Jin Kitans were conquered by the Mongols in the early thirteenth century. However, this conquest led not to Kitan unification but to their dispersion. The Mongols took over the Qara Kitai in 1218, in a quick and uncharacteristically benign conquest. Mongol incursions into the Jin's territories began in 1211, but they finally subjugated it only in 1234. The Jin conquest was a rather bloody affair, but the Kitans were relatively unhurt, since many of them had chosen to join the Mongols in the early stages of the conquest. In fact Kitans were to be found among Temüjin's early supporters even before he had been enthroned as Chinggis Khan.[18] This early incorporation into the Mongol Empire meant that the Kitans took part in the complex array of population movements initiated by the Mongols, many of them resulting in permanent migrations.[19] Kitan migrations in this period were mainly impelled by the imperial needs of their new rulers, and while there were also attempts to establish new Kitan states (in Manchuria, the original homeland; and in Kirmān, in southern Iran) they were the exceptions and not the rule. The most evident phenomenon of this period is the geographical dispersion of the Kitans, which, together with the elimination of their independent political framework, contributed much to their future assimilation into the ranks of the Mongols, the Turks, and the Chinese. I will treat the Qara Kitai and the Jin Kitans separately.

The disintegration of the Qara Kitai empire had begun before the Mongol conquest, when in 1210 a former vassal, the Khwārazm Shāh Muḥammad, conquered Transoxania.[20] Many Qara Kitai lost their lives in these battles, and many others were taken captive and sold as mamluks. Some of these mamluks can be traced to the Delhi sultanate, where they filled important posts, while others reached Egypt and Syria, where at least some of them retained certain ethnic characteristics until the late thirteenth century.[21] Some of the captives rose to power in the Khwārazmian ranks, and one of them even took advantage of the upheavals in Khwārazm following Chinggis Khan's western campaign (1219–25) to migrate westward and found another Kitan state in Kirmān in southern Iran. The Qara Kitai of Kirmān ruled the province for nearly a century (1222/3–1306), most of the period under

Mongol dominion. The dynasty's founder was a scion of the Qara Kitai royal family, known as Baraq Ḥājib (Baraq the Chamberlain, r. 1222/3–35). The Khwārazm Shāh, who detained Baraq after the 1210 battle, was impressed by his talents, appointing him as chamberlain (*ḥājib*), and subsequently attaching him to his son, Ghiyāth al-Dīn, who governed Persian Iraq. The latter appointed Baraq as his governor in Isfahan. After his arrival in Khwārazm and before his departure for Kirmān, Baraq converted to Islam, probably to improve his standing in the new environment. He arrived in Kirmān around 1222, either due to Ghiyāth al-Dīn's nomination or on his way to Delhi, to which Ghiyāth al-Dīn allowed him to migrate upon his request. Passing through Kirmān on his way, Baraq was attacked by the local governor. He defeated the governor and replaced him, thereafter renouncing the intention of proceeding to India. Baraq remained a—somewhat rebellious—subject of the Khwārazm Shāhs until around 1226 or 1228. Estranging himself from Khwārazm, he addressed the ʿAbbāsid Caliph, asking for an investiture. The latter conferred upon him the title *Qutlugh Sultan* (the fortunate sultan). Soon after his investiture by the ʿAbbāsids, or later, after the Mongol commanders had reached Sistān in 1232, Baraq submitted to the Mongols, sending his son to the Mongol court. Chinggis Khan (d. 1227), or his successor Ögödei (r. 1229–41), conferred upon Baraq the title *Qutlugh Khan* (the fortunate khan), also borne by his successors.[22] Yet despite this array of titles, and despite the cultivation of Islam, throughout its rule the Kirmānid dynasty continued to be known as the Qara Kitai, probably due to the prestige the name still had in the eastern Islamic world and among Kirmān's new overlords, the Mongols. The Qara Kitai of Kirmān remained vassals of the Mongol Great Khans, and later of the Ilkhans, until the end of their rule. They conducted matrimonial relations with the Ilkhans, as well as with the Chaghadaid Mongols and with the neighboring local dynasties of Yazd, Luristān, and Fārs.[23] In 1306 the Ilkhan Öljeitü deposed the last of the Qara Kitai of Kirmān, who had neglected to pay his dues to the Mongol treasury, and appointed a governor over the province. The last of the Qutlughkhanids, Quṭb al-Dīn II (r. 1306–7), escaped to Shiraz, to his father's wife. In 1328 his daughter, Qutlugh Khan, became the wife of Mubarriz al-Dīn Muḥammad, the founder of the Muẓaffarid dynasty (1314–93). In 1340, when Mubarriz al-Dīn took Kirmān, his historian described the event as the reestablishment of the Qara Kitai court,[24] and even as late as 1356 Mubarriz al-Dīn legitimized his conquest of Luristan by the kinship between his Qara Kitai wife and the Atabegs of Yazd.[25] Yet individuals identified as Qara Kitai are extremely rare in the Muẓaffarid chronicles, and Qutlugh Khan's sons, who became Muẓaffarid rulers, were

never designated that way. With the dissolution of the Kirmānid dynasty by Öljeitü, the Qara Kitai thus ceased to exist as a political entity, and were soon assimilated into the Turkic population of Iran.

The main impact that the new environment had on the Qara Kitai of Kirmān was their Islamization, a course that the Qara Kitai refrained from taking throughout their rule in Central Asia. In addition, they went through a process of both Persianization and Turkicization: the Qara Kitai adopted Persian concepts of legitimation, such as the title Khusrawī[26] and the Persian language. They used Persian not only for recording their history but also as a way to express themselves, and we find at least one Kirmānid queen writing Persian poetry. One such verse of Padshāh Khatun (r. 1292–95) is relevant here, as the queen says:

> Although I am the child of a mighty sultan
> And the fruit of the garden that is the heart of the Turks,
> I laugh at fate and prosperity
> But I cry in this endless exile.[27]

"Exile" here refers to a long period of separation from her husband, not to the general post-migration environment, but the interesting point is that the queen defined herself—in Persian—as Turkic. Referring to the Central Asian Qara Kitai as Turks had been very common among contemporaneous Muslim writers.[28] It could also have smoothed the Qara Kitai position in Kirmān, a region that had previously been under the rule of the Seljuq and the Khwārazm Turks, especially since at least part of the troops that reached Kirmān with Baraq were Turks.[29] It seems as if the Liao-Chinese cultural capital of the Qara Kitai was not valid in Kirmān, and therefore the Kirmānid dynasty had to adopt more elements of the receiving society in order to obtain legitimation. Alternatively (or in addition, since we do not know the exact relationship of Baraq to the Qara Kitai ruling family), the cultural capital of the dynasty's founders might have been too weak to be proclaimed in the new environment. This mode of fuller assimilation was typical also of other migrating rulers, usually of less exalted origin and hence with a greater need for legitimation, who ruled in the eastern Islamic world, such as the Seljuqs or the Ghazvavids.[30] However, the Kirmānid rulers retained their connection to the Qara Kitai as another facet of their legitimation.

What did the Kirmānid Qara Kitai preserve of their former identity? The most obvious characteristic they retained was the high position of women in the Kirmānid state: out of the dynasty's nine rulers, two were queens: the

celebrated Terken Khatun (r. 1257–82), and her daughter Padshāh Khatun, whose verse was just quoted. Both ruled not only as regents but in their own right.[31] The apologetic attempts by Munshī Kirmāni, the historian of the Kirmānid dynasty, to justify women's rule by reference to (quite obscure) Muslim precedents of women from the royal houses of the Seljuqs, Buwayhids, and Samanids,[32] manifest how much he strove to portray his new lords as "good Muslim rulers" and to erase the memory of their steppe tradition. This tradition, however, was still apparent: the pious Terken Khatun consulted a shamaness (*Kāhina*) who foresaw her future,[33] and the marriage arrangements of the Kirmanid rulers were not always in accord with Muslim law. Both Baraq Ḥājib and his heir Quṭb al-Dīn practiced levirate marriages, marrying the wives of the rulers they succeeded, and this is also true for the two queens, who were first a spouse of a certain man and then of his heir or heirs. Padshāh Khatun also married two infidels—Ilkhan Abaqa (r. 1265–82) and later his son Gaikhatu (r. 1291–94).[34] Levirate marriage was common among the Mongols, including the Ilkhans, just as it was among the Kitans, and this probably facilitated the acceptance of it (or at least the silence) in the Kirmānid chronicles that displayed the queens as exemplary Muslims.[35] The ability to retain some of their original family norms in their new Muslim environment must have facilitated the assimilation of the Qara Kitai in Mongol and post-Mongol Iran.

What impact did Qara Kitai rule have on the receiving society? Their most notable effect is the legitimizing of female rule: apart from the Kirmānid Kitans, several other queens emerged among Muslim rulers in Iran and India, and most of them had Kitan origin: Abish Khatun, Queen of Fārs (r. 1264/5–86/7) who ruled under the Ilkhanid Mongols, had a Kitan mother and grandmother; and Sultana Raḍiyya b. Iltutmish, the Sultana of Delhi (r. 1237/8–40), was either a Kitan herself or was enthroned by her father's Kitan commanders.[36] In the long run, however, after the abolition of their state, the Qara Kitai of Kirmān were assimilated into the Muslim Turkic population without leaving a significant mark on the position of Muslim women there or elsewhere.

Assimilation into the Turco-Mongolian ranks was also the fate of the majority of the Qara Kitai, who did not end up in Kirmān. Here we are not talking about royal migrants but mainly people migrating due to military deployment. After the defeat of 1210, many of the Qara Kitai soldiers, estimated at 70,000 men, were incorporated into the Khwārazmian army, where they retained their separate units. They accompanied the Khwārazm Shāh in his attack on Iraq in 1218, where the Caliph tried to ally with them,

and were a substantial part of the army with which the Khwārazm Shāh tried to hold back the Mongols. Some Qara Kitai troops fought against the Mongols in Bukhara, but soon afterwards, disillusioned with the Khwārazm Shāh, whom they even attempted to assassinate in 1220, the Qara Kitai in the Khwārazmian army turned to the Mongols and were incorporated into their troops.[37]

Incorporation into the Mongol army was also the fate of the Qara Kitai who remained with Güchülüg, the Naiman prince who in 1211 had taken over the Qara Kitai throne. Even before Güchülüg's capture, a segment of the Qara Kitai troops or their auxiliary forces were already fighting with the Mongols against him.[38] After Güchülüg's elimination, most of his army—both Naiman and Qara Kitai—seems to have been incorporated into the Mongol army.[39] At least some of those forces, as well as most of the troops of the Qara Kitai's former eastern vassals (the Uighurs, the Qarluqs, and the remnants of the eastern Qarakhanids) formed part of the Mongol force that attacked the Khwārazm Shāh in 1220.[40] Surprisingly, and in sharp contrast to the ample information on the eastern Kitans, we have hardly any evidence in Chinese or Muslim sources of Qara Kitai who achieved merit in the Mongol army. The reason for this might have been that the Qara Kitai who had been subject to Güchülüg—a Naiman Mongol—chose to define themselves as Mongols, not as Kitans, in order to benefit from the advantages of belonging to the ruling strata. This process is beautifully portrayed by the greatest historian of the Mongols, Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 1318) in an often-quoted passage.[41] Such identity change should have been relatively easy for the Kitans, who are described as nomads "adjacent to the Mongol nomads and their language, physiognomy and customs are quite similar."[42]

Another explanation is that most of the Qara Kitai units (perhaps especially those incorporated in the Khwārazmian army) found themselves in Jochi's service, and we do not have good documentation concerning the Golden Horde's army. The inclusion into the Jochid troops is suggested by the large amount of tribal names and toponyms that include the elements "Kitai" or "Qara Kitai" and appear mainly in the polities originating in the Golden Horde. Toponyms including the name "Kitai" appear in the fourteenth century in the region of the lower Don, near the Caspian sea; in the sixteenth century in the Ob region in western Siberia; in modern Bashkiria, on both sides of the Ural mountains; in the steppes of southern Moldavia, formerly inhabited by the Qipchaq tribes, where there is even a place called Qara Kitai; and in modern Tajikistan.[43] Clans and tribes called Qara Kitai, Kitai, or Katai appear among the Bashkirs, the Crimean Tatars, the Qara Qalpaqs,

the Nogais, the Qazaqs, the Uzbeks, and the Qirghiz, as well as among the seventeenth-century Afghans.[44] This implies both the geographical dispersion of the Qara Kitai (and perhaps also the Kitans from China, for which see below) and the subsequent process in which the Kitans lost their identity as an ethnic group and were reduced to clan or tribal units in the new collectivities established in post-Mongol Eurasia.

All the ethnic groups mentioned above as including Kitan tribes or clans were Muslim, and we can therefore suggest that the main impact the new environment had on the Qara Kitai immigrants was their conversion to Islam. This spiritual migration, which the Qara Kitai refrained from taking as long as they held political power, was probably facilitated by the close and continuous contact between the Qara Kitai and the Turkic Muslim population, first as their subjects and then as their peers in the Mongol army.[45] What impact, if any, these Kitans had on the new peoples to whom they eventually belonged must await clarification on the basis of further study, but the mere survival of the name suggests a certain preservation of Kitan identity.[46]

Assimilation—but into China—was also the main process apparent among the Jin Kitans after the Mongol conquests. After the fall of the Liao dynasty (1125) they remained in Manchuria and north China under the Jurchen Jin dynasty (1115–1234), for the most part maintaining their distinct Kitan identity. While a few Kitan dissidents migrated into secluded places in northern Manchuria or Inner Mongolia to avoid Jin service, and while quite a few Kitans served in the Jin administration, and hence were often transferred southward into Chinese territories that were held by the Jin but not by the Liao, most of the Kitans served in Jin border armies in separate Kitan units, thereby remaining in their former domains. These units were among the first that defected to the Mongol ranks when Chinggis Khan began his invasions of north China in the 1210s.[47]

Of special importance was the defection of Yelü Liuge 耶律 留哥 (1174–1220), a scion of the Liao royal family who, like the Qara Kitai of Kirmān, strove to establish a new Kitan state, but in the original Kitan homeland. Yelü Liuge served as a commander of thousand in the Jin army. In 1212, allegedly leading 100,000 Kitans, he surrendered to the Mongols. In 1213 his followers enthroned him as the king of Liao (*Liao wang* 遼王) in the Kitans' original homeland in Liaodong. Liuge's state retained many of the Kitan identity markers, such as the dynasty's name, the Kitan tribal religion, the trappings of the Chinese imperial traditions (reign titles, seals etc.), the leadership position of the Yelü clan, and the high position of women; and quite a significant component of its population was Kitan. Yet this state did not manage to

attract all or even most of the Jin Kitans, and turned out to be much more ephemeral than the Kitan states discussed above. This was partly due to the internal instability of the new Liao dynasty: after a series of victories against the Jin, in 1215 Liuge's supporters demanded that he appoint himself emperor, not king, on an equal footing with Chinggis Khan and the Jin emperor. When Liuge declined, they rebelled against him, and while in 1219 he was finally able to quell this mutiny with Mongol help, his state had lost most of its power. During the conflict a significant segment of Liuge's opponents migrated to Korea, and after their second surrender to the Mongols in 1219, part of the rebels, allegedly 50,000 Kitans, were distributed among Mongol military units. Liuge's state, centered in Guangning 廣寧 in modern Liaoning, continued to exist after his death (1220), ruled first by his widow and then by his son. In 1236 Ögödei abolished it, conferring the Guangning region as an appanage to Belgütei, Chinggis Khan's brother. Liuge's descendants continued to serve in the Mongol army and are attested to in the sources up to 1269, but there was no further attempt to set up a Kitan state under the Mongols.[48] The lack of a political framework again encouraged Kitan assimilation into Mongol ranks.

Liuge was not the only nor even the first Kitan military leader who defected to the Mongols. A few Kitans joined Temüjin even before he was enthroned as Chinggis Khan, and in the years 1211–15, when the Mongols were attacking the Jin, we find at least six more Kitan generals, each leading a considerable number of mostly Kitan troops, joining the Mongol ranks. More defections followed the conquest of the Jin capital in 1215, and by the completion of the Jin conquest in 1234 the great majority of the Jin Kitans were subject to the Mongols.[49]

This early incorporation of the Kitans into the Mongol ranks meant that the Kitans were dispersed according to the needs of the ever-expanding empire. The Mongols recognized the advantage of the Kitans as both nomadic soldiers closely acquainted with Jin territory and strategy, and as administrators well versed in managing Chinese territories. Kitan units and individuals played leading roles in the different phases of the Jin conquest and in the shaping of Mongol administration in north China—the most obvious example here being that of Yelü Chucai (1189–1243), Chinggis Khan's astrologer who became Ögödei's grand minister. Yet the Mongols also sent the Kitans across Eurasia, thereby beginning a new series of Kitan migrations. Already in the 1220s Kitan farmers were being transferred to Central Asia, to repopulate the areas devastated by the Mongols, and Yelü Ahai 耶律 阿海, one of Chinggis Khan's early Kitan supporters, was

appointed to govern Transxoxania.[50] However, the main arena both of Kitan migration and Kitan Mongolization under the United Mongol Empire was the army. Kitans incorporated in the Mongol army took part in all the major campaigns of the *Yeke Monggol Ulus*: Chinggis Khan's invasion of Central Asia (1219–25), Ögödei's incursion into Europe (1237–41), Hülegü's campaign in the Middle East (1256–60), Möngke's conquest of Sichuan and his attacks on the Song (1256–59), and Qubilai's conquest of Yunnan (1253–54).[51] Most of the information we have is about those Kitans who came back to China after the campaigns, but some of them must have stayed behind—and others got killed. Moreover, just like the case of the Qara Kitai discussed above, the common service in the army, together with the similarities between Kitans and Mongols, encouraged Kitan Mongolization.[52] Mongolization was expressed, among others, by receiving—or assuming—Mongolian names, titles, and wives.[53]

But while Kitan communities that remained in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia were eventually incorporated into Mongol ranks, most of the Yuan Kitans found their way into the ranks of the Chinese: while during the conquest period the Mongols were willing to accept non-Mongols as their own, things were less obvious when the conquests were over. Moreover, with the growing literacy of the Mongol aristocracy, the Kitans were less needed as intermediaries. Under Qubilai Khan (r. 1260–94), and after the completion of the conquest of the Southern Song (1276–79), in which the Kitans participated as well, the Kitans were classified as *Hanren* 漢人. This was the same class that was used for the northern Chinese and other Jin subjects, and it was less prestigious than that of the Mongols or *Semuren* 色目人 (people of various kinds, i.e., people who were neither a Mongol nor Chinese), where most of the steppe people (Uighurs, Tanguts, Central Asian Muslims etc.) were grouped. The division was not always clear-cut, nor was it dutifully kept,[54] but basically it meant that from Qubilai's time onward the Kitans were legally and socially grouped with the Chinese, not with the Mongols or the other steppe people, and many important posts were therefore less accessible for them.[55] Simultaneously, the post-conquest reforms in the Han army, which began in Qubilai's times and were completed under his heirs, led to the decline in the power of the Kitan generals and the dissolution of the separate Kitan units. The last Kitan-led unit, the Black Army (*Hei Jun* 黑軍), was dissolved under emperors Chengzong and Wenzong (i.e., between 1295 and 1311), and its soldiers absorbed into the Han army that was stationed in China.[56]

The conquest of the Song also resulted in a growing Kitan internal

migration into all parts of China, but mainly to the south. Unlike most of the migrations in the *Yeke Monggol Ulus* period, these migrations were mainly individual. The flourishing economy of the south might have had something to do with it, but most of the migrations were dictated by official appointments, i.e., were compelled by the Mongols. Moving southward—mainly to Huguang 湖廣, Yunnan 雲南, Sichuan 四川, Jiangxi 江西, and Zhejiang 浙江—led to further Kitan dispersion, and it is not uncommon to find a few generations of one family spread out in various parts of China.[57] Moving southwards meant that the Kitans had to give up the nomadic way of life, and that they had even more contacts with the Chinese, who vastly outnumbered any other ethnic group in the south. Due to their dual Sino-nomadic education, the Kitans could blend easily into the Chinese environment. Just like in Mongol Iran, this assimilation was made easier by the ability to retain Kitan social norms, such as levirate marriages, that in Yuan time and under Mongol influence became partly accepted by the Chinese as well,[58] and in general by the greater cultural diversification of Mongol-ruled China. Even more important as an assimilation factor was intermarriage with Han women, a phenomenon that increased towards the mid–late Yuan period.[59] The mention of many Kitans as filial sons or chaste wives—that is, as exemplary Confucians—also attests to their growing assimilation into Chinese ranks.[60] The most apparent sign of assimilation was the taking of Chinese surnames, which, in contrast to the situation in Jin times, was done without any external pressure. The most popular Chinese surname among the Kitans was Liu 劉, both due to its vocal similarity to Yelü and to its prestige as the surname of Han dynasty emperors; Li 李, retaining the surname of the Tang rulers which they conferred on their vassal Kitans, was also a popular choice; as was the surname Wang 王, literally king or prince, which retained the memory of their royal ancestry. Most of the Xiao 萧 simply held on to their original family name, which is also a Chinese surname, and many who formerly changed their names from Xiao to Shimo 石抹 or Shulu 述鲁 returned to the original version. In Yunnan, Yelü was changed to Alu 阿律 and then to simply A 阿 (following the first character in the name of the founder of the Liao dynasty, Abaoji).[61] Apart from the Yunnan case, the surnames that the Kitans took made them indistinguishable from the Chinese—in contrast, for example, to the Uighurs who adopted as their Chinese surnames rare characters, such as Xie 偰 or Lian 廉, that still served as ethnic markers.[62] The taking of Chinese surnames was both a sign of assimilation and another incentive for its continuation. It also meant that the Kitans became almost untraceable in late Yuan sources. Significantly,

Ming sources (1368–1644) treat the Kitans as people who belong to the past, not the present, thereby attesting to their full incorporation into Chinese society.[63]

While the Kitans contributed much to the Mongol conquest of China and to the initial shaping of Mongolian rule in China, it is very hard to locate any specific impact which Kitan assimilation had on Chinese society, which in Yuan times absorbed many other non-Han people. We might mention, however, two contemporaneous groups that claim to be descendants of the Kitans in China today: the Yunnan Kitans, and the Dagurs (Daurs). The Yunnan Kitans, a group of about 150,000 people living in western Yunnan, ascribe their origin to the Yuan garrison sent to the southwest in the 1280s and claim to retain Kitan traditions, although their actual connection to the original Kitans is still debated. The Dagurs, a Mongolian-speaking people inhabiting northeast Inner Mongolia and Manchuria, number around 130,000 (in 2000) and, unlike the Yunnan Kitans, are considered a minority in contemporary China. The Dagurs, who emerged into history in the seventeenth century, are said to be related to the Kitans in terms of language and perhaps DNA, and are described as descendants of those Kitans who in Yuan times remained in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia and were Mongolized, later reclaiming—perhaps with the help of the Chinese government—a separate identity from the Mongols.[64] The Dagur example and the retaining of the surname Yelü in several Inner Mongolian tribes seem to be the results of a process similar to the one described above for the Kitans on the other side of the steppes, namely the reducing of the steppe people into tribes, clans, minority groups, or larger collectives and their assimilation into the neighboring sedentary civilizations. Such transformation, originating in the array of migrations that accompanied the expansion and rule of the Mongol Empire, and leading to the dispersal of long-established peoples, was also the fate of other contemporary steppe people, such as the Uighurs, the Tanguts, and the Qipchaqs.[65]

IV. CONCLUSION

This study followed the course of Kitan migrations over more than four hundred years, thereby comparing modes of acculturation and assimilation across the Eurasian steppe in the vicinity of both China and the Muslim world, and among both rulers and ruled.

Three general conclusions are apparent from the discussion of

the different modes of Kitan migration. First, and most obvious, is the importance of a political framework for retaining identity: migrants can more easily retain elements of their original culture and identity and have a more distinct impact on the receiving society when they become rulers, even where most of the inhabitants of the new realm differ from them ethnically and linguistically. Second is the significance of the amalgamation of various cultural traits, legitimation concepts, and administrative measures along migration routes and among rulers: the Kitans retained at least part of their own attributes in all the regions over which they ruled (in China, Central Asia, or Iran), but in each they appropriated layers of new elements, either borrowed from the receiving society or created as part of the process of state formation. Such appropriation is often described as "barbarian" assimilation into more elaborate sedentary culture or as a proof of the non-autarkic character of nomadic culture.[66] Instead, this amalgamation could better be described as part and parcel of the Inner Asian mode of governance, and is consistent with the multi-cultural outlook of Inner Asian nomads. They acknowledged the practical political gains of such selective appropriation for the consolidation and legitimation of their rule in their new environments, and did not necessarily see it as a threat to their indigenous identity. With the collapse of the indigenous Inner Asian political framework, however, such a composite background could facilitate the assimilation of the former rulers into the surrounding society.

The third general conclusion is the pivotal role of the Chinggisid imperial enterprise in the history of Eurasia and its migrations: the population movements induced by the Mongols completely refashioned the ethnic configuration of Eurasia, leading to the dispersion of many long-established peoples (such as the Tanguts, the Uighurs, the Qipchaqs, and the Kitans), and the emergence of new collectivities which form the basis for many of the modern Central Asian peoples (e.g., Uzbeks and Qazaqs). What is more, Inner Asian people who followed the patterns of Kitan migrations in post-Mongol Eurasia, whether as Manchurian conquerors or as royal fugitives seeking to establish new polities on the basis of their former cultural capital, have all used Chinggisid concepts as part of their legitimation and rule. The Mongol Empire was therefore a watershed not only in Eurasian history but also in the history of Eurasian migrations.

NOTES

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[1] For the Liao see, e.g., *Perspectives on the Liao* (collection of papers prepared for the Yale-Bard Graduate center conference 30 Sept to 2 Oct 2010); Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907–1125)* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1949); Denis Twitchett and Klaus-Peter Tietze, "The Liao," in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 6: Alien Regimes and Border States 907–1368*, ed. D. Twitchett and H. Franke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 43–153; Shen Hsueh-man, ed., *Gilded Splendor: Treasures of China's Liao Empire (907–1125)* (New York: Asia Society, 2006); Naomi Standen, "What Nomads Want: Raids, Invasions, and the Liao Conquest of 947," in *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Outside World*, ed. R. Amitai and M. Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 129–74; Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossings in Liao China* (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 2007); Liu Pujiang 刘浦江, *Song mo zhi jian: Liao Jin Qidan Nüzhen shi yan jiu* 松漠之間: 遼金契丹女真史研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2008); Liu Pujiang 刘浦江, *Liao Jin shi lun* 遼金史論 (Shenyang: Liaoning da xue chu ban she, 1999). For the Kitan language, see Daniel Kane, *The Kitan Language and Script* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

[2] Hodong Kim, "The Resettlement of the Pohai (or Palhae) Population in Liao in the 920s," *Journal of Turkic Studies* 9 (1985): 187–96; Standen, "What Nomads Want," 155–56, 158–59; Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 54, 67, 142–43, and 555–57; N. N. Kradin and A. L. Ivliev, "The Downfall of the Bohai State and the Ethnic Structure of the Kitan City of Chintolgol Balgas, Mongolia," in *Current Archaeological Research in Mongolia*, ed. J. Bemmann et al. (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 2009), 461–77.

[3] Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic People* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 184–86; O. Pritsak, "Two Migratory Movements in the Eurasian Steppes in the 9th–11th centuries," *Proceedings of the 26th Congress of Orientalists* (New Delhi, 1968), 2:158–62, repr. in idem, *Studies in Medieval Eurasian History* (London: Variorum, 1981), art. 6; Sharaf al-Zamān Marwazī, *Ṭabā'i' al-Ḥayawān*, translated and edited by V. Minorsky as *Sharaf al-Zamān ṭāhir Marvazī on China, Turks and India* (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1942), 18 (Arabic), 29–30 (English).

[4] Li Qingquan 李清泉, *Xuanhua liaomu: Muzang yishu yu Liaodai shehui* 宣化遼墓: 墓葬藝術與遼代社會 (The Liao-dynasty tombs of Xuanhua: Tomb art and Liao-era society) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2008), e.g., 2:366–73.

[5] Pamela Crossley, "Outside In: Power, Identity and the Han Lineage of Jizhou," in *Perspectives on the Liao*, 121–55.

[6] Witfogel and Feng (*Liao*, 20) describe Kitan impact on their Chinese subjects as creating a "third culture" (in addition to Chinese and Kitan). I agree with Crossley ("Outside In," 146ff.) that "Kitanization" is a more suitable term.

[7] See, e.g., Michal Biran, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History: Between China and the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 21–23.

[8] For the role of Manchurian people in China's history see, e.g., Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989); see also Denis Twitchett and Herbert Franke, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 6*, 1–42, see esp. 21–42.

[9] Daniel Kane, "The Great Central Liao Kitan State," in *Perspectives on the Liao*, 7. On the basis of the Kitan inscriptions, Professor Kane has convincingly suggested that the Mongolian term **hara-kida* was actually a version of the Kitan **xuri*(*s*) *kida*(*n*), the Chinese equivalent of which is the Liao Kitans. This was the name by which the Kitans called themselves on the eve of the Jurchen

conquest. Since "Qara/Khara" in Mongolian and Turkic means "black," the name was understood in both the Muslim world and Yuan China as meaning "the Black Kitans." Kane's interpretation implies that the Liao dynasty in China and Yelü Dashi's state in Central Asia were known by the same name. Following accepted Western conventions, I will continue to refer to Dashi's state as the empire of the Qara Kitai.

[10] On the Qara Kitai, see Biran, *The Empire*; Wei Liangtao 魏良弢, *Kelahan wang chao shi, Xi Liao shi* 喀汗王朝史, 西辽史 (Beijing: Renmin chuban she, 2010), 204–382. Recent archaeological findings suggest that the Kitan character of this dynasty was more definite than previously thought. See especially Viacheslav P. Zaytsev, "Rukopisnaiiakniga bol'shogo kidan'skogo pis'ma is kollektsii Instituta vostoch'nyx rukopisei RAN," *Pis'mennye pamiatniki Vostoka* 15, no. 2 (Autumn-Winter 2011): 130–50.

[11] Biran, *The Empire*, 196–201; Michal Biran, "True to their Ways: Why the Qara Khitai did not Convert to Islam," in *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. R. Amitai and M. Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 175–99.

[12] Michal Biran, "Between China and Islam: The Administration of the Qara Khitai Empire," in *Imperial Statecraft: Political Forms and Techniques of Governance in Inner Asia, Sixth–Twentieth Centuries*, ed. David Sneath (Bellingham, WA: Western Washington University Press, 2006), 63–84. Kane recently suggested that the *Gür* element of the word *Gürkhan* derives from Kitan **gur*, state (in this respect "all-under-heaven," and hence "universal Khan," as explained in the Secret History and Muslim sources); *khan* is a Turkic word meaning "ruler." To the best of my knowledge, this title was not in use in the Liao dynasty. Daniel Kane, "Kitan and Jurchen," in *Tumen jalafun jecen akū: Manchu Studies in Honour of Giovanni Stary*, ed. A. Pozzi, J. Janhunen, and M. Weiers (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2006), 124–25.

[13] Biran, "True to their Ways," 175–99.

[14] Biran, *The Empire*, 100–101, 137–39.

[15] See, e.g., Kamāl al-Dīn Abū 'l-Faḍl Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *Talkhīṣ majmaʿ al-ādāb fī muʿjam al-alqāb*, ed. Muṣṭafā Jawwād, 3 vols. (Damascus: Wizārat al-thaqāfa wa'l-irshād al-qawmī, 1962–65), 4/3: 297.

[16] For the Moghuls and their Turco-Mongol connections see, e.g., Richard Foltz, *Mughal India and Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Lisa Balabanlilar, "Lords of the Auspicious Conjunction: Turco-Mongol Imperial Identity on the Subcontinent," *Journal of World History* 18, no. 1 (2007): 1–39; eadem, "The Begums at the Mystic Feast: Turco-Mongol Influences in the Mughal Harem," *Journal of Asian Studies* 69, no. 1 (February 2010): 123–47.

[17] For the Uzbeks and the Chinggisid revival under them see, e.g., Robert D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundation of Change* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1996). The Shaybanids ruled in Transoxania in the sixteenth century (1501–98). Other Uzbek dynasties continued to rule in Central Asia until the nineteenth century.

[18] For a good description of these conquests see, e.g., Th. T. Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire and Mongolian Rule in North China," in *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 6*, 321–413; for Chinggis Khan's early Kitan supporters, see P. D. Buell, "Yeh-lü A-hai, Yeh-lü T'u-hua," in *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol–Yuan Period*, ed. I. deRachewiltz et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1993), 112–22.

[19] See Th. T. Allsen, "Population Movements in Mongol Eurasia," forthcoming in *Eurasian Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change*, ed. M. Biran and R. Amitai.

[20] Biran, *The Empire*, 70–78.

[21] See, e.g., Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, ed. ʿA. Ḥabībī (Kabul: Dunyā-i kitāb, 1963–64), 2:9, 13, 19, 22, 28; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar wa-jāmiʿ al-ghurar*, vol. 7, ed. S. ʿAshūr (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo, 1972), 372, and vol. 9, ed. H. R. Roemer (Cairo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo, 1960), 16–17; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ* (London: al-Furqān

Islamic heritage Foundation, 2002), 3:694. According to al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442) the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl (r. 1290–93) created a Kitan guard as part of his reorganization of his father's royal Mamluks into ethnic guards. I could not find a reference to this guard in earlier Mamluk sources.

[22] There are several different versions of the early history of Baraq and his brother. See, e.g., Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, *Simṭ al-ʿulā li'l-ḥaḍra al-ʿulyā*, ed. I. ʿAbbās (Tehran: AHS, 1328/1949), 22; Muḥammad Nasawī, *Sīrat al-sulṭān Jalāl al-Dīn Mankubirtī*, ed. Ḥ. A. Ḥamdī (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 1953), 174; Muʿīn al-Dīn Naṭanzī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh-i Muʿīnī*, ed. J. Aubin (Tehran: Haydari, 1957), 22; Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Shabānkāraʾī, *Majmaʿ al-ansāb*, ed. M. H. Muḥḥadith (Tehran: Muʾasasat-i intishārāt-i amīr kabīr, 1363/1984), 195; Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Taʾrīkh-i guzīda* (Paris: J. Maisonneuve et E. Guilmoto, 1903), 518–20; ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAṭāʾ-malik Juwaynī, *Taʾrīkh-i Jahān-Gushā*, ed. M. M. Qazwīnī (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1912–37), 2:211ff., translated by J. A. Boyle as *History of World Conqueror* (repr. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 476ff. See also George Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (Richmond: Routledge, 2003), 102–22.

[23] V. Minorsky, "Ḳutlugh Khānids," *Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd edition*, vol. 5 (1986), 554; Ann K. S. Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1988), 276–87.

[24] Kutubī, *Tarīkh-i āl-i Muẓaffar* (Tehran: Muʾasasat-i intishārāt-i amīr kabīr, 1968), 42.

[25] Kutubī, *Tarīkh*, 72.

[26] Munshī Kirmānī, *Simṭ al-ʿulā*, 22, 26. Khusraw (Khosrau, Chosroes) was a famous Sasanid king (r. 531–79) whose name became a synonym for a just and illustrious ruler.

[27] Munshī Kirmāni, *Simṭ al-ʿulā*, 70; anonymous, *Taʾrīkh-i shāhī-i Qarā Khitāʾiyyān*, ed. M. I. Būstānī Pārīzī (Tehran: Ishārāt-i bunyād-i farhang-i Īrān, 1976–77), 61; translated by George Lane in *Early Mongol Rule*, 110.

[28] Biran, *The Empire*, 143–46.

[29] Juwaynī, *Taʾrīkh-i Jahān-Gushā*, 2:212, tr. Boyle, *History*, 477.

[30] For the Seljuqs see, e.g., Lambton, *Continuity and Change*; for the Ghaznavid Islamization and adoption of Persian tradition see, e.g., Clifford E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran, 994–1040* (Beirut: Librarie du Lubnan, 1973). The Seljuqs were descendants of a military commander of the Oghuz and the Ghaznavids of a Samanid *ghulām*. None can claim a royal descent.

[31] For the Kirmanid queens see, e.g., Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, 102–22; Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, 258–88.

[32] Munshī Kirmānī, *Simṭ al-ʿulā*, 40.

[33] *Taʾrīkh-i shāhī*, 134–35; Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, 114.

[34] Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, 258–88; Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, 106–8. Terken Khatun, a noble Kitan sold as a slave to Khwārazm in the early thirteenth century, ended up as the wife of Ghiyāth al-Din, son of the Khwārazm Shāh. When Baraq executed Ghiyāth al-Dīn, he claimed to inherit his position and his wives and fought for Terken Khatun. After Baraq's death, she was married to his heir and nephew Kuṭb al-Dīn.

[35] For levirate of the Kitans see, e.g., Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 207, 211; see also J. Holmgren, "Marriage, Kinship and Succession Under the Ch'i-tan Rulers of the Liao Dynasty (907–1125)," *T'oung Pao* 52 (1986): 44–91. For the Mongols in Iran see, e.g., Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍlallāh, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*, ed. A. A. ʿAlizādah (Baku, 1957), 3:96–98, translated by W. M. Thackston as *Jamiʾu't-tawarikh* [sic]: *Compendium of Chronicles* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1998–99), 3:515–16 (the marriage arrangements of Abaqa Khan). While Munshī Kirmānī refers to Terken Khatun's early marriages, the *Taʾrīkh-i shāhī*, written for Terken's daughter from her third marriage, Padshāh Khatun, ignores them, presenting Terken solely as Kuṭb al-Dīn's wife.

[36] For Raḍiyya, see P. Jackson, "Sultan Raḍiyya bint Iltutmish," in *Women in the Medieval Islamic*

World: Power, Patronage and Piety, ed. G. R. G. Hambly (London: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 181–99; for Abish Khatun, see Munshī Kirmānī, *Simṭ al-ʿulā*, 56; Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, 272–76; Biran, *The Empire*, 167.

[37] Biran, *The Empire*, 86–87, and see references there.

[38] Song Lian 宋濂, *Yuan shi* 元史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 120/2969. This was in addition to the Uighur troops who also took part in the Mongol force: see *Yuan shi* 122/3000; Yu Ji 虞集, *Daoyuan xue gu lu* 道園學古錄 (Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1937), 24/403.

[39] For the careers of Naiman and Qara Kitai in the Mongol Army, see A. Sh. Kadyrbaev, *Ocherki istorii srednevekovykh Ujgurov, Dzhalairov, Najmanov i Kireitov* (Almaty: Rauan, 1993), 110; Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍlallāh, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*, ed. B. Karīmī (Tehran: Iqbāl, 1338/1959), 1:669, translated in Thackston, *Jamiʾuʾt-tawarikh*, 2:642.

[40] *Yuan shi* 120/2969–70; Juwaynī, *Taʾrīkh-i Jahān-Gushā,* 1:63, tr. Boyle, *History*, 82.

[41] "Now [presumably the early fourteenth century] it has come about that the people of *Kitai*, Jurchen, Nankiyas (i.e., south China), Uighur, Qipchaq, Turkmen, Qarluq, Qalaj, and all the prisoners and the Tajik races that have been brought up among the Mongols are also called Mongols. All that assemblage takes pride in calling itself Mongol." Rashīd/ʿAlīzādah, 1:163–64, tr. Thackston, *Jamiʾuʾt-tawarikh*, 1: 44 (my italics).

[42] Rashīd/Karīmī, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*, 1:321, tr. Thackston, *Jamiʾuʾt-tawarikh*, 1:214.

[43] Denis Sinor, "Western Information on the Kitans and Some Related Questions," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115 (1995): 264–67; B. I. Bushkov, "Formirovanie sovremennoj etnicheskoj situatsii v severnom Tadzhikistane," *Sovetskaia Etnografiia* 2 (1990): 30–41.

[44] Niʿmatʾallāh Harawī, *Taʾrīkh-i khān jahān*, ed. Imām al-Dīn (Dacca, 1960–62), 2:649–50; Gennadii G. Pikov, *Zapadnye Kidani* (Novosibirsk: Izd-vo Novosibirskogo University, 1989), 112–13; Sinor, "Western Information," 264–67.

[45] The close contact in the army also contributed greatly to the Islamization of the Mongols in Western and Central Asia and in Eastern Europe. See, e.g., Charles Melville, "Padshah-i Islam: The Conversion of Sultan Mahmud Ghazan Khan," *Pembroke Papers* 1 (1990): 159–77; Devin DeWeese, "Islamization in the Mongol Empire," in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia vol. 2: The Chinggisid Age*, ed. P. B. Golden, N. DiCosmo, and A. Frank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 120–34.

[46] Sinor, "Western Information," 262–69.

[47] For the Jin Kitans see, e.g., Liu Pujiang 劉蒲江, "Liao chao wangguo zihou de Qidan yimin" 遼朝王國自候的契丹移民 [Kitan descendants in post-Liao dynasty (*sic*)], *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京學報 10 (2001): 135–72.

[48] On Liuge see, e.g., *Yuanshi* 1/16, 19, 20, 149/3511–14; Rashid, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh/Thackston, Jamiʾuʾt-tawarikh*, 1:220–22; Tu Ji 屠寄, *Mengwuer shi ji* 蒙古兒史記 (Taibei: Shijie shuju, 1962), 31/1–4; Yanai Watari 箭內亙, *Yuan dai jing lue Dongbei kao* 元代經 略東北考 (Taipei: Taiwan shang wu yin shu guan, 1963), 76–90; Liu Pujiang, "Qidan Yiming," 158–60; Henry D. Martin, *The Rise of Chinngis Khan and His Conquest of North China* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1950), 150–58, 195–203, 215–18, 236–37, 283–84; Michal Biran, "The Mongols and Nomadic Identity: The Case of the Kitans in China," forthcoming in *Eurasian Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change*, ed. M. Biran and R. Amitai.

[49] For the Jin Kitans under Mongol rule, see Biran, "The Mongols and Nomadic Identity"; Su Pengyu, 苏鹏宇 "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu" 蒙元时期契丹人研究 [Studies on the Kitans during the Yuan Period] (PhD diss., Northwest Normal University Institute of Culture and History, May 2010).

[50] Li Zhizhang 李志常, "Chang Chun xi you ji" 長春西游記, in *Menggu shiliao sizhong* 蒙古史料四種, ed. Wang Guowei 王國維 (Taibei: Zhenzheng shuju, 1975), 327, translated by Arthur Waley as: Li Chih-chang, *The Travels of an Alchemist* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 93; Buell,

"Yeh-lü A-hai, Yeh-lü T'u-hua," 112–20.

[51] See, e.g., *Yuan shi* 149/3512, 3532, 150/3548, 151/3577, 179/4156; Feng Jiqin 冯继钦, "Cong zhanji he guanzhi kan Qidan ren zai Mengyuan shiqi de fenbu" 从战迹和官职看契丹人在蒙元时期的分布 [On the distribution of the Kitans according to their records in war and their official positions], *Beifang Wenwu* 北方文物 42 (1995): 64–70.

[52] For a beautiful description ascribed to Chinggis Khan, in which he explains how the common military experience in Central Asia turns a Kitan into a Mongol, see *Yuan shi* 149/3512.

[53] E.g. Feng Jiqin 冯继钦, "Jin Yuan shiqi Qidan ren xing ming yanjiu" 金元时期契丹人姓名研究 [Study of the names the Kitans adopted in Jin and Yuan periods], *Heilongjiang minzu congkan* 黑龙江民族丛刊, 1992/4: 106–10; Hu Xiaopeng 胡小鹏 and Su Pengyu 苏鹏宇, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidan ren hunyi yanjiu" 蒙元时期契丹人婚姻研究 [On marriage of Kitan people in the Yuan Dynasty [*sic*]], *Xibei shidaxue bao* 西北師大學报 46, no. 6 (2009): 44–48; Biran, "The Mongols and Nomadic Identity."

[54] For the Yuan system see, e.g., Fredrick Mote, "Chinese Society under Mongol Rule 1215–1368," in *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 6*, 616–64, esp. 627–35; for a recent criticism of the perceived wisdom regarding Yuan classification, see Yoshiyuki Funada 舩田善之, "Semuren yu Yuan dai zhidu, shehui- Zhongxin tantao Menggu, Semu, Hanren, Nanren huafen de weizhi" 色目人与元代制度，社会一重新探讨蒙古，色目，汉人，南人划分的位置 [Semu people and the system and society in the Yuan: Re-examining the classification of the Mongols, Semu, Hanren, and Nanren], *Yuanshi luncong* 9 (2004): 162–74.

[55] E.g. *Yuan shi* 6/118, in which in 1268 Qubilai fired the Kitan, Jurchen, and Han *daluhuazhi* (local commissioners), but let the *Semuren* keep their posts. See also *Yuanshi* 21/458, 92/2052.

[56] Huang Jin 黃晉, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 金華黃先生文集 (Sibu conggan), 27/6a; Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren," 20–21, 47.

[57] E.g. the descendants of Yelü Ahai who until the end of the thirteenth century held offices in Liaodong, Hebei, Huguang, Zhejiang, and Sichuan, while Ahai and his son also spent considerable time in Transoxania in the Yeke *Monggol Ulus* period. *Yuan shi* 150/3548–50.

[58] For the complex fate of levirate marriage in Yuan China, see, e.g., Bettine Birge, "Levirate Marriage and the Revival of Widow Chastity in Yuan China," *Asia Major*, 3rd ser., 8, no. 2 (1995): 107–46.

[59] Hu Xiaopeng and Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan," 44–48.

[60] E.g. *Yuan shi* 197/4443, 4446, 200/4492; Huang Jin, *Jinhua*, 27/7.

[61] Feng Jiqin, "Qidan ren xing ming," 106–10.

[62] For the Uighurs, see Michael C. Brose, *Subjects and Masters: Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire* (Bellingham, WA: Western Washington University Press, 2007); Patricia Ebrey, "Surnames and Han Chinese Identity," in *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan*, ed. M. J. Brown (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 11–36.

[63] See, e.g., Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉, *Ming shi* 明史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1974), 179/4756, 320/8279, 8280, 328/8504.

[64] For the Yunnan Kitans see, e.g., Meng Zhidong 孟志东, *Yunnan Qidan houyi yanjiu* 云南契丹后裔研究 [Research on the descendants of the Kitans in Yunnan] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995); for the Dagurs and their connection to the Qidan see, e.g., Sun Jingji 孙进己 and Sun Hong 孙泓, *Qidan minzu shi* 契丹民族史 [A history of the Kitan nationality] (Guilin: Guangxi Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2009), 267–70.

[65] Th. T. Allsen, "Ever Closer Encounters: The Appropriation of Culture and the Apportionment of Peoples in the Mongol Empire," *Journal of Early Modern History* 1 (1997): 2–23; Peter B. Golden, "'I Will Give the People unto Thee': The Chinggisid Conquests and their Aftermath in the Turkic World," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd ser., 10, no. 1 (2000): 21–41; Brose, *Subjects and Masters*, passim; Michal Biran, *Chinggis Khan* (Oxford: Oneworld publications, 2007), 101–2.

[66] In the Kitan context see, e.g., Sun Jingji and Sun Hong, *Qidan minzu shi*, 271–75.