Subjects and Masters: Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire



Michael C. Brose
Western Washington University

Potsdamer Straße, Lesesaal ,
Ausgabeort : Potsdamer Stra
Lesesaal Abholbereit
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Center for East Asian Studies
Western Washington University
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Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire

by

MICHAEL C. BROSE

Center for East Asian Studies,
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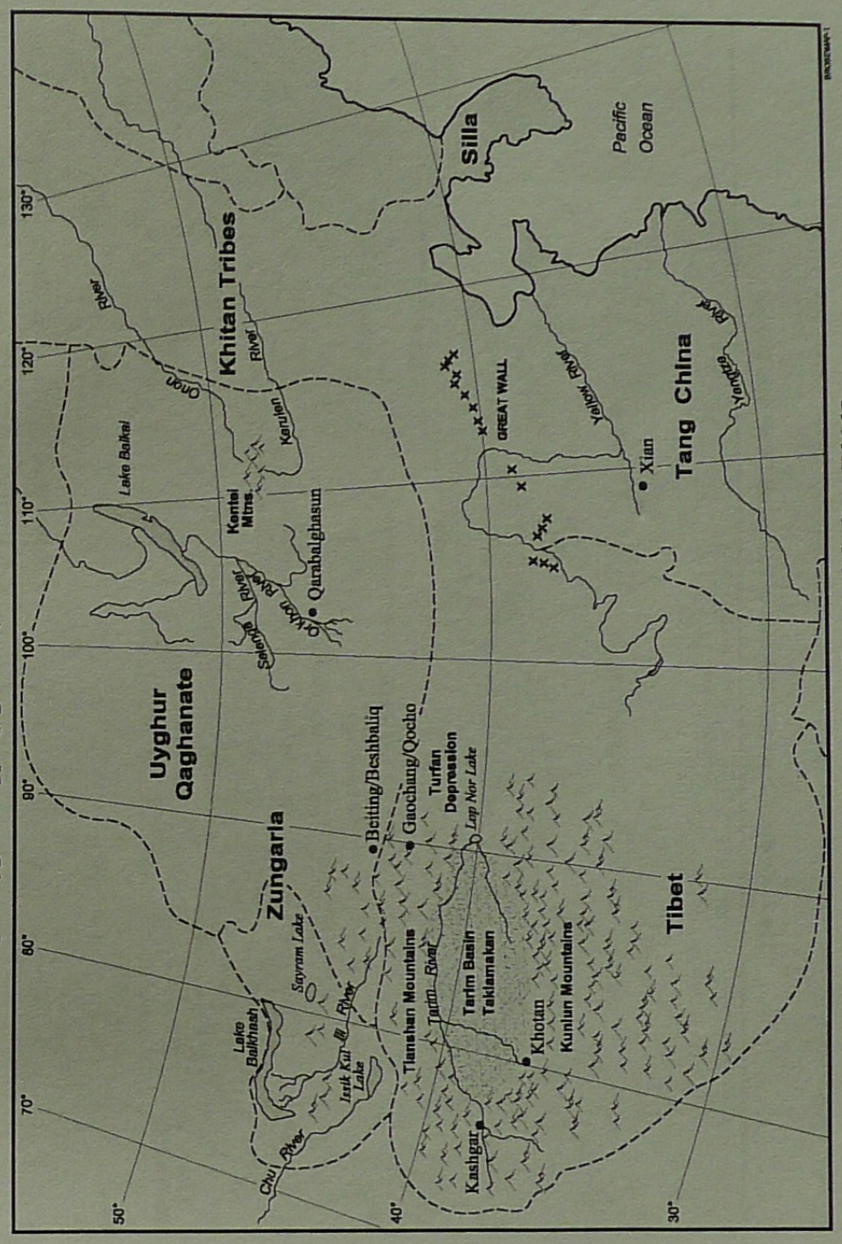
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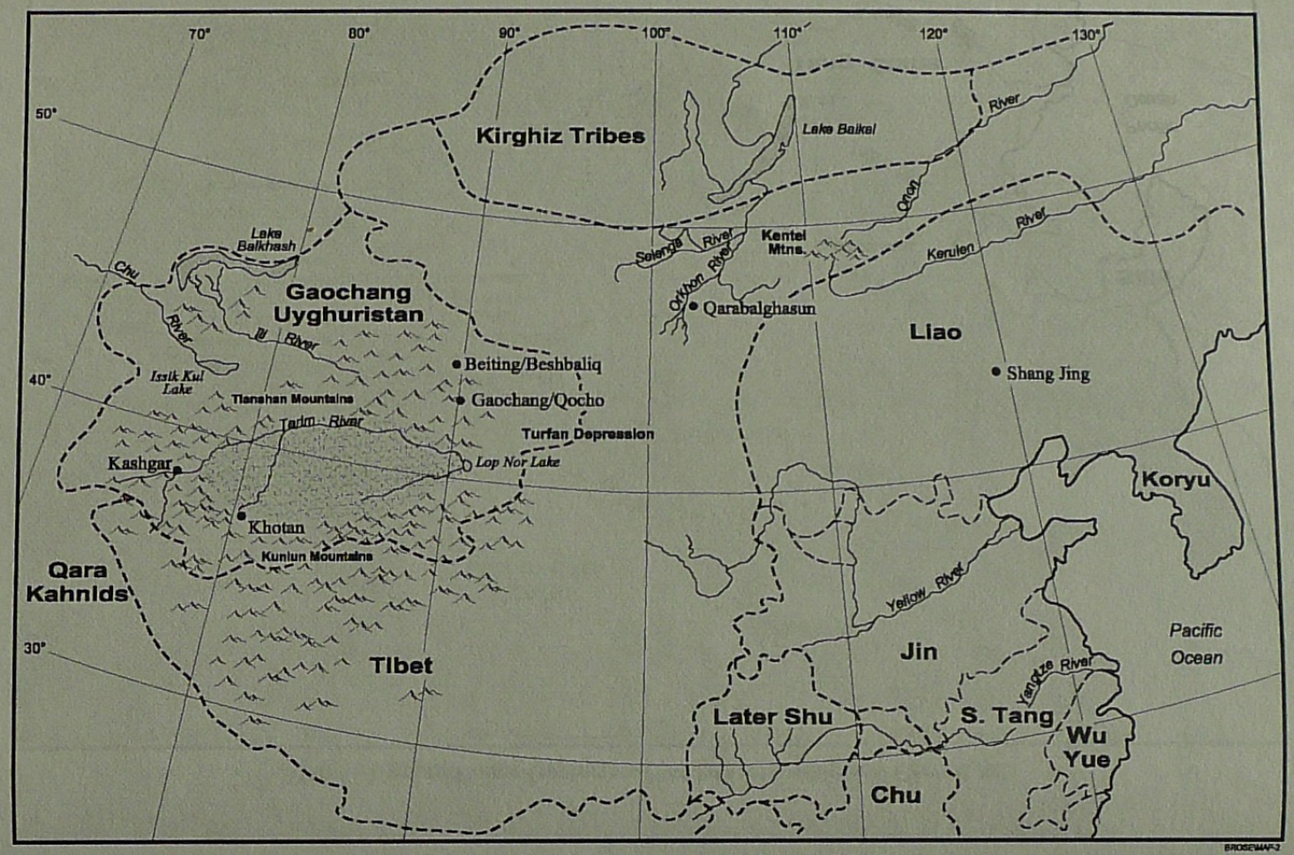


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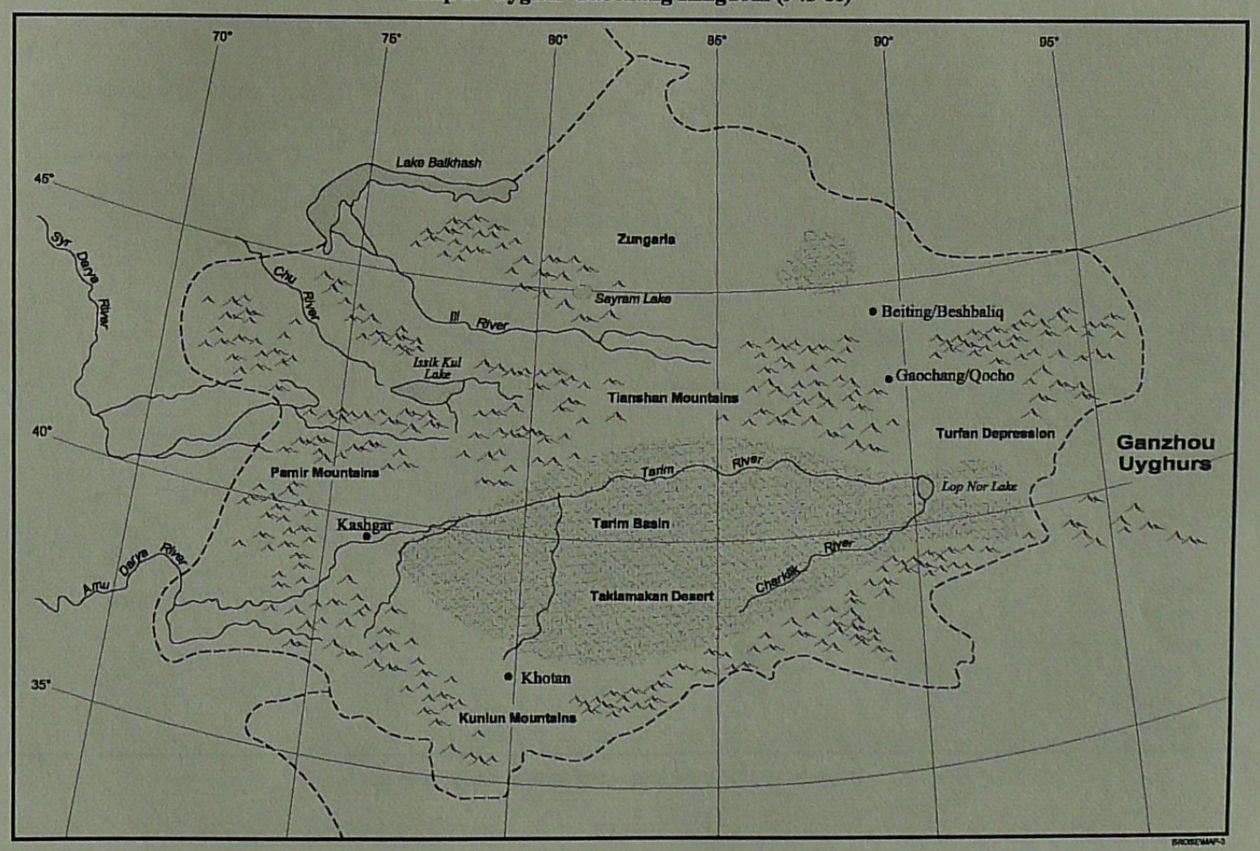
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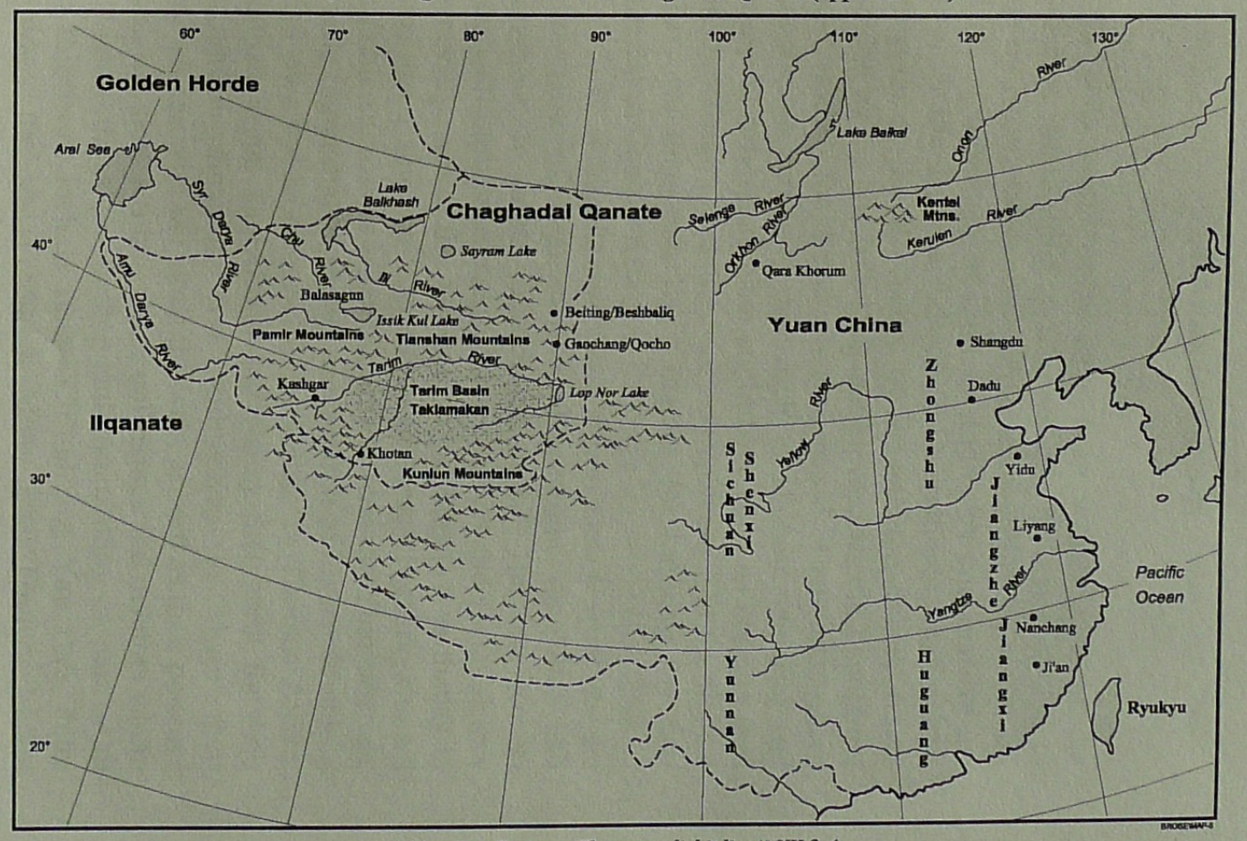
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A Note On Transliteration And Abbreviations

All translations are by the author except where noted. Abbreviations in the text and notes are spelled out or briefly defined where they first appear, and are also included in the glossary.

Chinese names and terms are transliterated with the standard pinyin system, except in cases where Wade-Giles renderings have become standard usage. All Japanese names and terms have been transliterated according to the standard Hepburn system. Since there is no one standard convention to transliterate Central Asian names and terms, I have relied on suggestions provided by Thomas Allsen, Peter Golden, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing and other specialists of Turkic, Mongol and other Central Asian languages. For example, umlauts have been retained to distinguish the Türk Empire from Turk and Turkic states and peoples generally. All place names have been rendered in the form found in the primary sources used for this project; thus, for example, Gaochang is used in preference to the Uyghur name of the same city, Kocho, since this is the term used in the Yuan sources.

In spite of all of the excellent advice and help I have received from all of the above-named people, I alone am responsible for any and all errors that remain.

Introduction

Who really ran the Mongol empire? The common stereotype of "leadership" during that period of world history most likely consists of a band of savage horse-mounted nomads, led by the fearless and powerful Chinggis Qan, sweeping down from the steppe to conquer and rule with brutal force over the most powerful Eurasian empires of the time. But while the Mongol tribesmen were certainly effective in conquest and empire building, they could not have succeeded alone. In fact, the rapid conquests of Chinggis and his heirs, and the empire that they constructed across Eurasia, were achieved through the skills and efforts of many different peoples who collaborated (willingly or unwillingly) with the Mongol lords. Not only were the nomadic Mongol tribesmen few in number (especially relative to the large agrarian states they would ultimately conquer, China and Persia), but they also lacked the skills and experience needed to hold power over the long term.

Thus, the Mongols depended on personnel recruited in the wake of their conquests to maintain control of the subjugated territories. These were usually foreigners who had no ties to the locality and who ruled alongside or on behalf of their Mongol masters. The polyglot Mongol empire that resulted was of enormous interest to travelers and statesmen across Eurasia, not least because of the potential threat it posed to the known world. The detailed accounts left by Chinese, Persian, Russian and Western European writers of the time provide a vivid picture of that regime's complexity.[1] However, the stories of these inter-

[1] See Thomas T. Allsen, "Ever Closer Encounters: The Appropriation of Culture and the Apportionment of Peoples in the Mongol Empire," *Journal of Early Modern History* 1.1 (1997): 2-23, for a good sense of the multi-ethnic nature of the Mongol empire.

mediary agents are generally less well known than those of their masters, perhaps because their status as subjects renders them less visible than either the flamboyant Mongols or the people they conquered, or perhaps because of the liminal space in which they existed, somewhere between conqueror and conquered.

This was certainly the case in China, where the Mongols brought with them large numbers of men from Central and Western Asia to serve as administrators over the conquered population (in addition to the many disaffected Jurchen and Chinese who also helped the Mongols conquer and retain power in north China). Those men constituted an important group of political elites in Mongol China, second only to the Mongols themselves. Their status was made clear to everyone when the Mongols categorized all of them as members of a single social status group known by the Chinese term "*Semuren*."[2] The roles of these *Semuren* personnel as members of the conquering political elite in China have been the subject of several important studies. Less well understood are the ways in which many of these same people produced and reproduced their status as social and cultural elites. How did these men who had been dispersed to a foreign land to serve their Mongol masters in military and political roles also guarantee their social survival in that alien land, where the locals would surely look on them as merely one of the conquering political elite? This is the question that this book tries to answer.

It is an important question since any answers we may provide will help to illustrate the complex nature of society in China during the period of Mongol rule. Focusing on the

[2] The term *Semuren*, the second of four categories in Mongol China, was an administrative term that meant "people of various categories," and not the literal "people with colored eyes." The error of understanding this term as the latter has long been repeated, as I discuss below.

Semuren personnel as full fledged political and social elites in their own right enables us to see the multiple networks of social power that operated in Mongol China, rather than viewing China as essentially bipolar and static, divided between conquerors and conquered. The question also impinges on several larger issues of interest to historians of late imperial China and the Mongol empire, including the structure of power relations in Mongol China, the impact of the Mongol conquest on the Chinese social order, and the ways in which the Mongols, the other foreign expatriates who worked for the Mongols, and the Chinese themselves were changed by the Mongol conquest of China.

The story of elites in Mongol China is quite complex, not least because it involved so many different groups and modes of production, and because the consolidation of Mongol rule took such a long time (over sixty years from the time of the first Mongol campaigns against the Jurchen Jin in north China to their final conquest of the Southern Song in 1278). In the north, the Mongols drafted Jurchen and Chinese personnel into their administration as well as *Semuren* of various ethnicities, all of whom were then categorized according to Mongol taxonomies. Traditional Mongol nomadic socio-political systems were put in place in the north, for example the large land grants (appanages) given to members of the Mongol royal clan, and a loosely defined administrative system that realized little real distinction between civilian and military spheres of authority. Elites in this context were defined first and foremost by their proximity to the qan and his near relatives, and the major avenues of social mobility consisted of inheritance of duties and office and membership in the qan's personal bodyguard.

When the Mongols completed the conquest of south China a generation later, some of the traditional Mongol social and administrative taxonomies – such as inheritance of office and the structure of the qan's bodyguard – were

retained, and even codified into law. These continued to be the main points of access to power for Mongols and *Semuren*. But the system also looked quite different than it did in the north. For example, the power of the Mongol princes had been diminished by that time, especially with regard to their landholding since the old appanage system was not continued in the south. Moreover, some parts of the pre-existing Chinese administrative system, and attendant routes of social mobility, had been retained in the south, and expanded over time. Thus, for example, the Chinese civil service exam system was restarted in 1315, and became an important, albeit limited, point of access to bureaucratic service for Chinese personnel. So the ways that hierarchies of power operated, and the very definition of those hierarchies, changed over time and depending on location.

One of the issues often overlooked in studies of Mongol China's social history is the liminal nature of the *Semuren*.[3] While it is generally acknowledged that these men were at one and the same time subjects as well as members of the conquering elite, the focus has mainly been on their careers and actions as political elite who enforced Mongol rule, while their roles as actors on a complex social landscape are often overlooked. It is natural to understand the *Semuren* as part of the conquering political elite – as generals and administrators – since they owed their very lives and livelihoods in China to their Mongol masters and most of the primary sources that document their lives reflect that reality. But it is easy to lose sight of the more nebulous forms of power that this group, and individuals within the group, assumed as social actors as much at home

[3] Elsewhere I have described this liminal existence as the experience of alterity. See Michael C. Brose, "Central Asians in Mongol China: Experiencing the 'Other' from Two Perspectives," *Medieval History Journal* 5.2 (2002): 267-89.

among the powerful Chinese *shidafu* elite as they were among the Mongol nobility.

In fact, *Semuren* moved through at least three different networks of social interaction and power in Mongol China: they were members of a political elite dominated by the Mongol nobility; they were part of a social elite usually dominated at the local level by prominent Chinese; and they were progeny of a specific diaspora community defined by place of origin. The Mongol conquest, bringing with it all of these foreign ethnic and tribal groups allied to the Mongol nobility, created an entirely new social space in China that rearranged the traditional infrastructures of power that Mongols, Chinese, and *Semuren* had inhabited and understood before the conquest.[4] In other words, the conquest changed the ways in which each of these groups imagined and constructed community, and determined which of these groups were able to create and interpret culture, and in which realms of human intercourse.[5]

To maintain their hold on power, the Mongols had to recognize and integrate different views and traditions. Their rule of China also brought together for the first time a host of tribal and ethnic groups, some of which had had uneasy

[4] I draw heavily from Michael Mann's discussion of the infrastructure of power here and throughout the book. See his *The Sources of Social Power*. Vol. 1: *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). His claim that societies should be seen as a series of networks of social interaction and power, rather than as a series of unitary entities, is especially useful in understanding and describing how these three groups interacted in Mongol China.

[5] See Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), for an insightful example of how conquest affected cultural production and elite strategies, especially their competing claims to cultural authority. Even though his subject is late-nineteenth century Uzbekistan, the parallels to Mongol China are striking.

relations at best before the Mongol conquest. These groups were now forced to coexist and get along as *Semuren* equals.[6] Chinese networks of power were likewise disturbed, especially once the south was conquered and all of traditional China reintegrated under one rule for the first time since the Tang Dynasty. Focusing our study on the *Semuren* in Mongol China highlights their interstitial or liminal existence, in which they lived in several overlapping and intersecting networks. At a higher level, this focus allows us to develop an understanding of these various networks, and how social power was really distributed and operated in Mongol China. To borrow Michael Mann's terminology, Mongol China is rightly seen as a "confederal" rather than a unitary society.[7]

In order to understand the role of the *Semuren* in Mongol China we first have to comprehend Mongolian notions of social, political and ethnic identity. The steppe social landscape was populated by a range of nomadic, semi-nomadic and settled groups, and every tribe or state that ruled the steppe developed their own taxonomies of identity. Certainly, as we shall see, the Mongols developed their own categories that served mainly as mechanisms of mobilization and control. Some of these categories were inherited from earlier nomadic peoples (who had themselves drawn on a wide array of models taken from various societies with which they maintained contacts), while others were taken by the Mongols from societies they conquered as their imperial project emerged. In fact, the

[6] A useful distinction between "tribe," as a group with some political coherence or organization, and "ethnic group" as a group defined by a perceived cultural distinctiveness, is provided by R. Brian Ferguson and Neil L. Whitehead, "The Violent Edge of Empire," in *War in the Tribal Zone: Expanding States and Indigenous Warfare*, ed. R. Brian Ferguson and Neil L. Whitehead (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1992), 1-30. I shall have more to say on this issue below.

[7] Mann, *Sources of Social Power*, 16.

evidence suggests that the Mongols developed an elaborate, interlocking set of classifications that included tribal, ethnic, occupational and religious identities and origins. One of the larger goals of this book will be to set the *Semuren* within this network of categories. The fact that these categories continued to be important throughout the period of Mongol rule in China points to another issue addressed by this book: Why the Mongols used so many foreigners in China.

Central to this issue is the division of labor in nomadic societies, and the fact that the Mongols, like all nomads, depended on personnel from sedentary societies for specialized skills required to administer the large settled societies that they conquered.[8] In addition to their skills, these foreigners also brought significant prestige and majesty to the Mongols. As Mary Helms so eloquently points out, people with special manual and intellectual skills were associated with spiritual power. Estimation of their power increased in proportion to the distance they lived from the king who was able to summon them to his court. Any nomadic qan who could attract these powerful individuals to his court thus obtained for himself important spiritual power and real prestige, not to mention their work product.[9]

But bringing so many subjects into the qan's tent also held risks for the Mongol ruling elite. One of the most efficient ways of maintaining power over these subjects while also enabling them to wield power on the Mongols' behalf was to create a social hierarchy that reified the

[8] This dependency relationship is examined by Anatoly Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), and will be discussed below.

[9] See Mary W. Helms, *Ulysses' Sail: An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge, and Geographical Distance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); and *Craft and the Kingly Ideal: Art, Trade and Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993). I am indebted to Thomas Allsen for introducing this concept and Mary Helms's work to me.

Mongols' dominant position in terms of real power and prestige. Thus, the Mongols drew on categories already familiar to them to create in China a hierarchical system comprised of four separate social status groups where the *Semuren* ranked below – but just below – the Mongols in terms of status and power.

Some of the specific issues that this book addresses include the mechanisms of social power utilized by the Mongols in the early years of their imperial project, the ways the first *Semuren* were integrated into Mongol networks of power as political elites, how their descendants reproduced that identity as political elites, and how they made the transition to social elites. We can easily understand how the first generation of *Semuren* subjects to be drawn into the Mongol empire collaborated with their new masters, but what about their descendants? The descendants did not have the advantage of association with immediate conquest, and had been fit into the typical nomadic administrative machinery where they were expected to perform equally well in military and civil matters. How did those men become political elites and perpetuate their family's status in a foreign land? Moreover, how was it that many of these same descendants of Central Asian military/political elites also came to exemplify the Chinese literati lifestyle and associate themselves with traditional Chinese cultural elites?

This book seeks to answer these questions by examining examples from one constituent group of *Semuren* personnel, the Uyghurs. The Uyghurs were among the very first Central Asian kingdoms to submit to Chinggis Qan. Because of that early submission, and because of the skills and manpower they brought to the Mongol imperial project, they eventually became the most prominent part of the larger *Semuren* status group in China. They were certainly not the only important immigrant group in Mongol China, nor should they be seen as representative of

the *Semuren* group as a whole. Nonetheless, because of the relatively abundant primary sources that document their lives and activities (especially vis-à-vis other *Semuren* constituents), and because they did figure so prominently within the *Semuren* status group, they make an inviting subject through which to study the question of non-Chinese elite reproduction in Mongol China.

Theories of Social Mobility

One of the basic questions this book seeks to address is how social mobility and the production and "reproduction" of social structures worked in the Mongol Empire, especially among the array of foreigners who were brought into a given area by the Mongol conquering elite. Specifically, what kinds of strategies did those foreigners employ to make sense of and survive in their new world? The work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu on social reproduction of culture provides a good approach to this question, since his interest has long been to understand the strategies and resources of social actors, and to bring our focus back onto the person, rather than focus mainly on social structures (a traditional approach of many sociologists, which views the person as secondary, acting according to a set of predetermined social rules).[10] Since one of the goals of this book is to recover the agency of these liminal *Semuren* individuals and families in Mongol China as social actors, and to recognize them as social and

[10] Bourdieu's emphasis on social actors and their agency is seen especially in his: *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, tr. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); and *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). For useful summaries of Bourdieu's work, see Derek Robbins, *The Work of Pierre Bourdieu: Recognizing Society* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991); and David Swartz, *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

political elites, Bourdieu's focus on the practices of people to acquire and assert power, and his expansion of the concept of capital are both useful devices that we can employ in our study of this group of individuals.

Thus, my focus will be on the practices of Uyghur *Semuren* personnel in Mongol China that produced and reproduced their elite status (as political, social, and cultural elites), and specifically, the strategies they adopted to become members of the Mongol political elite and members of the Chinese social elite. Understanding these practices may illuminate not only the roles of these individuals in Mongol China's society, but may provide us with a new vantage point from which to view Mongols and the Chinese elites as well. Several questions come immediately to mind. For example, how did their roles and powers as political elites influence their social survival and eventual status as social elites? Did the Uyghur *Semuren* employ local or national strategies? What was the nature of their relationship to the Chinese population, and especially to the Chinese *shidafu* elite? This last question points to the continuing cultural power of Chinese in their own communities and throughout Mongol China, in spite of their loss of political suasion (at least in the south).

The Mongol conquest also displaced Chinese people from their native places, and those cases provide interesting parallels to the *Semuren* in China. Paul Smith has studied Chinese elites who were dispersed from Sichuan by the Mongol conquest.[11] He examines the strategies that group of displaced elites used to retain their social status and power in Yuan China, and his approach provides another useful model for my study of the Uyghur *Semuren*.

[11] Paul J. Smith, "Family, *Landsmann*, and Status-Group Affinity in Refugee Mobility Strategies: The Mongol Invasions and the Diaspora of Sichuanese Elites, 1230-1300," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52.2 (1992): 665-708.

Because of their situation, these displaced Sichuanese elites did not have recourse to the kind of resources they would normally have utilized to maintain their identity and status, especially a local power base. Smith identifies three kinds of resources, in the form of critical relationships, that those individuals were able to tap for the strategies they employed as they sought to retain identity and status as elites: relationships to family, native place, and status-group affinity. Their flight from Sichuan to southeast China put them in a precarious position as elites for two reasons; as immigrants they had no property, wealth or local connections on which to rely, and they were forced to compete with an enormous number of Chinese from the southeast for the small number of official positions open to Chinese under Mongol rule. In other words, poverty and rootlessness put this group of refugee diaspora elites from Sichuan at a double disadvantage in the typical localist strategy of elite production that prevailed in the Southern Song and Yuan periods. Their primary form of "capital" thus consisted of their ties to family, native place, and status-group affinity, which Smith shows they mobilized to good effect. The Sichuanese diaspora could also be described as a type of "mobilized" diaspora group, a convention that will be useful in describing the Yuan Uyghurs.[12] In this sense, these Sichuanese elites provide a model for comparison with the *Semuren* who migrated to China at the behest of and in service to their Mongol masters.

Since this book focuses on the production of elites in Mongol China, I need to say a word about the scholarship on Chinese elites in general, upon which I base my discussion of social and political elites here. We know a great deal about the ways that elites were produced in

[12] John A. Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," *The American Political Science Review* 70.2 (1976): 393-408.

imperial China, especially during the preceding Song period. Those studies have set a pattern for studies of subsequent eras. Unfortunately, relatively little attention has been paid to the production of *Semuren* as full-fledged elites in Mongol China.[13] There are undoubtedly several reasons for this lacuna, not least of which is the usual pattern of studying either the Mongols or the Chinese segment of the population. The liminal space that they occupied between Mongol and Chinese populations has also obscured the roles of the *Semuren.* Furthermore, in this complex age, nomadic and traditional Chinese institutions of power overlapped and intersected, causing considerable confusion in understanding the boundaries and definitions of administrative power.

The Yuan has also been neglected because it was the first time in the long history of China that non-Chinese conquered and ruled all of traditional China. This dynastic era has frequently been portrayed as an irruption between periods of Chinese rule. According to this view, not only did the Mongols succeed in legitimizing two earlier alien states as Chinese dynasties (Liao and Jin), but the Mongol conquest also disrupted the most important Chinese social and political institutions and practices.[14]

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[13] The work of Chen Yuan, Thomas Allsen, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, and Shang Yanbin stand out as notable exceptions, and are discussed in more detail below.

[14] This traditional view has not been universally shared among historians. Scholars such as Herbert Franke, Francis Cleaves, Denis Sinor, Igor de Rachewiltz and Wang Gungwu have fought against this grain in their path breaking work for several decades. The volume of essays edited by Morris Rossabi, *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), was a milestone in scholarship because it questioned the received view of a static, monolithic Chinese world order that dominated all of East Asia for centuries. But the fact that this is still a minority view may be reflected in the fact that scholars still find it necessary to dethrone the old dynastic cycle model and attendant assumptions about the place of non-Chinese dynasties in China's

One of the examples frequently pointed to as evidence of this irruption is the new methods of production of social and political elites; the Mongol conquest dislocated the usual ways in which power was distributed throughout Chinese society by imposing their own social class structure on China and by distributing real power through often-informal mechanisms that were based on nomadic patrimonialism instead of learning and culture.

It is by now well known that a large transformation in the production of elites took place in China between the Northern and Southern Song periods, moving from a national "professional elite" who focused mainly on holding office at the national level in the Tang through Northern Song period to an elite that was more focused on local power, emphasizing local connections, the building up of wealth and a variety of careers for one's sons, including but not limited to holding office and taking the imperial civil service examinations.[15] This later pattern of elite production came to characterize the Southern Song and Yuan dynasties, at least among the Chinese elites, with

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imperial past. One example is the collection of fine essays edited by Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn, *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press, 2003).

[15] Robert Hartwell called the Northern Song elite a "professional elite," in part to distinguish them from their southern counterparts who turned to a more localist strategy of upward social mobility. See Robert M. Hartwell, "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750-1550," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42.2 (1982): 365-442. On the Song elite, see also Edward A. Kracke, "Family vs. Merit in Chinese Civil Service Examinations under the Empire," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 10 (1947): 105-23; and his *Civil Service in Early Sung China, 960-1067* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953). For a review of the history of the study of elites in imperial China through the Yuan, see Robert P. Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-chou, Chiang-Hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), especially the introduction.

a return to a more nationally oriented professional elite in the Ming and Qing periods.[16]

But did elites in Mongol China all follow this localist pattern? And just who constituted the "elite" at that time? Everyone would agree that the Mongols defined and dominated the political elite, sharing some but certainly not all power with their *Semuren* subjects. As most scholars also know, the Chinese were, for the most part, excluded from the highest stratum of political elites, and it is usually assumed that they continued to follow their localist strategies of elite production in the social and cultural realms. Embedded in this view of China during the Mongol period is the assumption that there was a clear division between political elites (Mongols and *Semuren*) and social and cultural elites (Chinese).

In this book I will try to paint a more complex picture of Mongol China, a society in which the supposedly impermeable barriers between these two groups was in fact much more porous than generally assumed. In fact, the sources from the period reveal a good deal of crossover; Mongols and *Semuren* played the role of gentleman in the social and cultural realms, while many Chinese held important roles in the political realm. Moreover, the notion that elites employed the same purely localist strategies in the Mongol period that they did in Song seems dubious. In fact, there appears to be a trend towards a more nationalist strategy of elite production and reproduction, both among the *Semuren* and the Chinese. This is not to deny the fact that many Chinese still followed localist strategies, but

[16] See, for example, Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility*, 1368-1911 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962). For a general review of the scholarship on elite production in Ming and Qing periods, see the editors' "Introduction," in *Chinese Local Elites and Patterns of Dominance*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick and Mary Backus Rankin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 1-24.

simply to point out that nationalist strategies are found among these various elites in Mongol China. Finally, the book argues that the power that Uyghur *Semuren* derived from political networks and the power they derived from social networks actually reinforced each other, and resulted in the survival of those Uyghurs well beyond the period of Mongol rule.

Structure of the Book

In Chapter One I examine the traditional Mongol social order and the precedents it set for the situation faced by the *Semuren* diaspora as new members of the Mongol empire. Of particular interest are the patterns of elite production and reproduction practiced among the various Mongol tribal units before they were united as a confederation under Chinggis Qan, since it was those patterns that continued to dictate virtually all aspects of the Mongol empire, especially in its early decades. Following a discussion of these typical Mongol patterns as seen in pre-imperial steppe history, we then look at the ways in which those same patterns continued to be utilized in the first decades of the Mongol empire. Included in discussion will be themes such as the "hybrid" culture of the Mongol empire, the social classification system imposed by the Mongols in China that grew out of their own views of social norms, and the notion of the *Semuren* as a status group.

Chapter Two examines the history of the Gaochang Uyghurs, focusing upon the history of the Uyghuristan kingdom in the Tianshan-Tarim Basin area up to the time of the Mongol conquests, on Uyghurs as a diaspora group within the early Mongol empire, on the position of the Uyghurs within the *Semuren* status group as first among equals, and on the question of whether Uyghurs in fact constitute an adequate case study through which to observe

the processes of *Semuren* elite production and reproduction in Mongol China.

In Chapter Three we will turn to consider specific cases of diaspora Uyghur elites in the early Mongol empire. Seven examples will be considered of prominent Uyghur individuals who made the transition into Mongol service with apparent ease. These examples will illustrate changes that took place within the larger Uyghur community and among prominent Uyghur individuals and their families, the strategies these individuals employed to retain their status as political elites in the Mongol empire, and the repercussions of those strategies for themselves and their descendants.

Chapter Four then looks at later generations of two of these prominent families to assess the ways in which strategies used to produce and reproduce status as political elites changed over time. Following the final conquest by the Mongols of south China, and their increasing engagement of time, materiel and personnel in that part of their empire, came increasing reliance upon Chinese modes of administration, as opposed to traditional Mongol institutions. The net result of this can be seen in increasing clarity and definition in the Yuan administrative structure. The civil and military spheres of authority grew more clearly separated, and officials were less frequently expected to serve with equal competence in civil and military affairs. Furthermore, some of the old Chinese institutions such as the civil service exam system were now reintroduced by the Mongols in an attempt to regularize the administrative machinery and to bring the southern Chinese social and cultural elite to the table of governance.

The two case studies of prominent Uyghur families considered in Chapter Four then set the pattern for the inquiry presented in Chapters Five through Seven, each of which focuses on a family of descendants of one of the three prominent Uyghur individuals discussed in Chapter

Four. Chapter Five examines two generations of the family descended from the Uyghur high minister, Bilge Buqa, as transitional figures in the history of this family as political elites. The chapter argues that while these men continued to act as powerful political elites in China, the facts of their careers and personal choices illustrate important shifts in their own conceptions of identity.

Chapter Six looks at the ways that members of the Uyghur Xie family were perceived by their Chinese peers of the time. Since most of the important information that we have on Xie family history was written as encomia by Chinese contemporaries, we see in these stories not only the facts of the lives and careers of those Uyghurs, but also their portrayal as members of the social elite, who were just as powerful in the realm of culture as they were in politics.

Finally, in Chapter Seven we see the completion of this transformation. Members of the Xie family were now viewed as a part of the Chinese social elite, capable of using Chinese culture to their own ends. The six Xie family men who obtained the *jinshi* degree within a thirty-three year period really were a new generation of *Semuren*, equally at home in the realms of politics and culture. Their stories reflect larger shifts in the dynamics of Mongol rule in China, which are also touched upon in this chapter.

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Some Caveats

In examination of Uyghurs in China, it must, of course, be kept in mind that the Mongol empire spanned most of Eurasia; China was but one portion of a much larger empire. Thus, while the *Semuren* in China may have in some ways shared the experiences of diaspora elites in other parts of the empire, the case studies presented in this book are not necessarily representative of the experience and history of all displaced elites throughout the Mongol empire. Nor will it be possible in a book of this size to do any real justice to any single social or ethnic group in Mongol China, either to

the *Semuren* as a whole, nor even to all the Uyghur constituents of this group. This book attempts only to take a close look at a few examples of Uyghur *Semuren*. It is, however, my hope that the few case studies presented here will shed new light on some aspects of the history of the *Semuren* status group and the Uyghurs in China, and that this study will encourage others to follow up with similar studies on the Uyghurs and other *Semuren* constituents.

It is also tempting in a study of this kind to dismiss the attraction of the Uyghur *Semuren* to Chinese culture as nothing more than a calculated strategy to enhance their social power in China. I would, however, argue that we need to take their interest seriously. Such involvement does, in fact, make sense in the light of their background; many *Semuren* personnel came from aristocratic, highly cultured stock in their native lands, and they were undoubtedly already familiar with Chinese culture before they were moved to China by the Mongols. Strategy and genuine interest can go hand in hand.

Finally, while this book focuses on Uyghurs who became part of the Chinese social fabric, the reader should remember that there are just as many examples of Uyghurs and other *Semuren* who chose to remain distinct from the Chinese world during the Yuan period. Their histories are just as important as the Uyghurs portrayed in this book in reconstructing the history of the *Semuren* as a status group in China. That part of the story has still to be told.[17]

[17] Some *Semuren* individuals who remained apart from the Chinese sphere have been portrayed in Igor de Rachewiltz, Hok-lam Chan, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing and Peter W. Geier, eds., *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200-1300)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993).

Chapter 1

Mongol Social Order

The social and administrative category of *Semuren* in China was part of a new social order that was formed in the long process of confederation and consolidation of the Mongol tribes around Chinggis Qan's leadership. We must, therefore, understand Mongol taxonomies of social power in order to understand the role and status of the *Semuren* in China. After all, the same social values and hierarchies or networks of power that informed life on the steppe for the Mongol confederation certainly shaped the ways that the Mongols administered and organized the societies they conquered, the ways they ranked people and the kinds of skills they deemed most important.

This chapter examines the cultural influences that operated in the early Mongol administration. Put in terms of the sources of social power, we ask what networks of social interaction and power were salient in the construction and organization of Mongol nomadic society in the steppe, and then in China.[1] We begin with a brief

[1] A note on sources is in order here. The only extant source that purports to have come down directly from the Mongols of Chinggis Qan's era is the *Secret History of the Mongols* (C. *Yuanchao bishi* 元朝秘史), now in several translations. For authoritative translations, see Francis Woodman Cleaves, *The Secret History of the Mongols: For the First Time done into English out of the Original Tongue and Provided with an Exegetical Commentary* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); and Igor de Rachewiltz, tr., *The Secret History of the Mongols: a Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003). For discussion of the problems associated with the Secret History as a historical text, as well as studies of that text, see Rachewiltz, "Introduction," in *The Secret History of the Mongols*, xxv–cxiii; Frederick W. Mote, "A Note on Traditional Sources for Yüan History," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 6,

overview of the history of the formation of the Mongol confederation and early steppe empire, and conclude with an assessment of Mongol perspectives revealed in Chinese sources written after the Mongols had begun to rule China.

Early Mongol History

Temüjin's rise to power among the contending Turco-Mongol tribes and chiefs, which culminated in his appropriating the title of grand qan and epithet Chinggis Qan in 1206, is a well-known story that need only be briefly recounted here.[2] The "Mongols," in the sense that

Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368, ed. Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 693–94; and Michael A. K. Halliday, *The Language of the Chinese "Secret History of the Mongols"* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1959). See also David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1986), for discussion of the sources on Mongol history. Of course, there are also accounts written by Chinese, Persian, and Western writers who traveled to or were associated with the early Mongol empire that are important contemporaneous secondary sources for that history, and will be discussed in more detail below.

[2] The enormous body of scholarship on Mongol history is too long to list here. For a list of studies of Mongol history in western languages, see Thomas T. Allsen, "The Mongols in East Asia, Twelfth–Fourteenth Centuries: A Preliminary Bibliography of Books and Articles in Western Languages," *Sung Studies Research Aids*, no. 1 (Philadelphia: Sung Studies Newsletter, 1976), 7–14. Useful general histories of the Mongols include Peter Brent, *Genghis Khan* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976); René Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, tr. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970); Morgan, *The Mongols*; Tamura Jitsuzo, "The Legend of the Origin of the Mongols and problems concerning their Migration," *Acta Asiatica* 24 (1973): 1–19; and the essays in Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran, eds., *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). For specific studies of the elevation of Temüjin to Chinggis Qan and the rise of the Mongol confederation, see especially René Grousset, *Conqueror of the World*, tr. Marian McKellar and Denis Sinor (New York: Orion Press, 1966); Leo de Hartog, *Genghis Khan: Conqueror of the World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989); H. D. Martin, *The Rise of Chingis*

we know them, really only emerged as a distinct group of tribes (M. *ulus*) in the twelfth century, living in the area of present-day northwest Outer Mongolia where they were divided roughly into two main groups: pastoral steppe tribes, and forest dwelling hunters. The aristocrat appears to have played a more prominent role among the steppe pastoralists than the forest dwellers, serving to find good grazing lands and to make sure that there were enough clients and slaves to take care of the tribes' herds and tents. This division, argues Grousset, was manifested in the two main classes of tents used by the Mongol peoples: the *ger*, a round felt tent that relies on a large number of wood poles for its structural integrity, denotes people who live within easy reach of supplies of wood, the forest; while the *maikhan*, a low woolen tent easy to put up and transport, is consistent with nomads who live in the treeless steppe.[3] The nomadic tribes were the ones most in contact with more settled steppe peoples such as the Uyghurs, the Qitans and the Jurchens, and it was from this group of Mongol tribes that Chinggis Qan would arise.

The future Chinggis Qan was born about 1167 to Yesügei, a chieftain (M. *ba'atur*) of the Kiyat clan, one of the sub-clans in the aristocratic Borjigin tribe, on the banks of the Onon River in present-day Outer Mongolia.[4] Yesügei was killed when Temüjin was only about twelve, by hereditary enemies of the Mongols, the Tatars. The Tatars were perhaps the most powerful of the steppe tribes of the time; they lived in the eastern part of the steppe region and

Khan and his Conquest of North China (Baltimore, 1950); and Paul Ratchnevsky, *Genghis Khan: His Life and Legacy*, trans. Thomas N. Haining (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).

[3] Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes*, 196.

[4] See Bat-Ochir Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society: a Reconstruction of the 'Medieval' History of Mongolia* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001), for descriptions of these Mongol tribes and a map showing their locations in the steppe.

had support from the Jurchen Jin dynasty. This left Temüjin and his family to fend for themselves in their tribal area in the Kentei Mountains (also known as the Burqan Qaldun), by the headwaters of the Onon River.

Eventually, the young Temüjin allied himself with Toghril, qan of the Kerait tribe. Temüjin's acceptance by Toghril Qan was made easier by the fact that Toghril had earlier been an *anda* ("sworn brother") to Yesügei. In 1196 Toghril Qan and Temüjin defeated the Tatars on behalf of the Jurchen Jin court, and as a reward Toghril Qan was granted the title *ong-qan* ("prince-qan"; in the Chinese sources as *wang* 王*-qan*). Temüjin was also rewarded by the Jin court, and as Buell has shown, this alliance effectively put Temüjin in association with Jin frontier organizations, which aided considerably his own efforts to organize the disparate Mongol tribes into a confederation.[5]

The alliance between Toghril Qan and Temüjin eventually broke apart, and by 1206, the year he was elected qan of all the Mongol tribes, Temüjin, now known by his imperial title Chinggis Qan, had eliminated all of his rivals in the northern frontier region. This made possible his first assault on the Tangut Xixia kingdom in 1209, and then his first attacks on the Jin empire itself in 1211. Chinggis Qan's gradual consolidation of power over the Mongol tribes was thus made possible by his advantageous alliance with Toghril Qan and the fact that he was coming into his own just as the Jin was losing control over the steppe and northern China. But the consolidation of the Mongol tribes into a confederation led by Chinggis Qan, and the gradual "bureaucratization" of this confederation, was also made possible by a long association of the

[5] See Paul D. Buell, "The Role of the Sino-Mongolian Frontier Zone in the Rise of Cinggis-Qan," in *Studies on Mongolia: Proceedings of the First North American Conference on Mongolian Studies*, ed. Henry G. Schwarz (Bellingham: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 1979), 63–76.

Mongols with tribal and settled neighbors from whom they adopted administrative models.[6]

The Mongol tribes, especially the more nomadic ones in the steppe, had absorbed significant Turkic and Persian social and political ideas through neighboring nomadic groups. Ancient Turkic imperial ideology had been known and shared for centuries among a host of steppe tribes, while Mesopotamian-Persian religious influences from further west, transmitted via the Sogdians, were passed on to the Mongols by tribes such as the Naiman and Uyghurs. Temüjin drew freely from these various traditions as he refashioned the traditional Mongol tribal system into a confederation.[7] These ideas would

[6] This consolidation of the Mongol tribes into a bureaucratized confederation may also be seen as a natural outgrowth of the essentially political purpose of any nomadic tribe, which "served, first and foremost ... the protection and enhancement of the position of its tribesmen in the face of the wider world." See Rudi Paul Lindner, "What Was a Nomadic Tribe?," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24.4 (1982): 689–711.

[7] Peter Golden argues that the Mongols owed a great deal of their early social and political hierarchy to Turkic and Persian influences in the region. See Peter B. Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity Amongst the Pre-Cinggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982): 37–76. For discussion of sources of imperial ideology upon which Temüjin drew, see also Thomas T. Allsen, "Spiritual Geography and Political Legitimacy in the Eastern Steppe," in *Ideology and the Formation of Early States*, ed. Henri J. M. Claessen and Jarich G. Oosten (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 116–35; Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), especially Chapter 9; Igor de Rachewiltz, "Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundations of Chingis Khan's Empire," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 7 (1973): 21–36; and Klaus Sagaster, "Herrschaftsideologie und Friedensgedanke bei den Mongolen," *Central Asiatic Journal* 17.2–4 (1973): 223–42. I have drawn from all of these works for the following discussion.

become the ideological and functional basis for bureaucratization of the Mongol confederation.

Since the Mongol confederation drew so much from ancient Turkic ideas, it is worth revisiting these before we proceed on. First, the ancient Turk tribal union was organized around a hierarchy of clans, at the top of which was the leading qaghanal clan.[8] The qaghanal clan developed its political power by force: the authority of a clan chieftain could be usurped by a contender who based his claim to leadership on the evidence of his success in battle and leadership, which was also seen as proof of divine sanction of the leader's position. The qaghanal clan, in turn, maintained its leadership position over other clans by demonstrating its ability to lead successful raids, to provide booty and secure resources from sedentary sources for subordinate clans, and to organize the economic activities of the other clans.

In addition to their abilities, the Turkic qaghanal clan also related to subordinate clans on the basis of familial and voluntary relations. Just below the leading clan were the so-called "inner clans," which had married into the leading clan or allied themselves to it by a voluntary pact of loyalty. Perhaps the most important voluntary relationship at this level was the comrade or companion (M. *nöker*).[9] A companion was a person who transferred his loyalty away from his blood relatives to another clan and

[8] On the meaning of the term *qaghan*, see Igor De Rachewiltz, "The Title Činggis Qan/Qaran Re-examined," in *Gedanke und Wirkung: Festschrift zum 90. Geburtstag von Nikolaus Poppe*, ed. Walther Heissig and Klaus Sagaster (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1989), 281–98.

[9] For discussion of the role of the companion, the *nöker*, in Mongol social order generally, and as key members of Chinggis Qan's early administration, see B. Vladimirtsov, *Le Régime Social des Mongols: le Féodalisme Nomade*, tr. Michel Carsow (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1948), esp. 110–18; and Bold, *Mongolian Nomadic Society*, 110.

chief. Well below the chief's kin and allied inner clans in the social hierarchy came the "outer clans," forced into alliance with a dominant clan because of defeat in battle or economic marginalization. At the very bottom of the nomadic social scale were tribute-paying vassals and slave tribes.

Temüjin's genius, and the reason for his success in organizing the Mongol clans where earlier chieftains had failed, lay in his ability to reorient the loyalties of the several competing Mongol clan chiefs to himself as the grand qan. He accomplished this by rewarding other Mongol leaders who had been faithful to him with the title of companion and vesting them with considerable power. By doing so he effectively redirected the primary loyalties of those various chiefs to himself as the supreme qan, which overrode or displaced pre-existing kin loyalties. Of course, the forced biological absorption of other nomadic steppe peoples into the Mongol ranks by giving their wives and children to Mongol males also disrupted traditional tribal affiliations in favor of a supreme qan. In any event, the strategy united the many fractious Mongol clans as a powerful force against their common enemies.

Reorienting the loyalties of those Mongol elites required, in turn, that the leading clan legitimate its authority on the basis of something more potent than mere ability to rule by force. Here, Temüjin skillfully adapted aspects of earlier steppe nomadic ideology by promoting the notion of the ruling, charismatic clan that was ordained by heaven to universal rule, an idea that had its origins in Eurasian shamanic practices and the worship of three key deities, the sky-god (*Tängri*), the mother-goddess (*Umay*), and the elements of earth and water (*yir-sub*).[10] He also

[10] See especially Allsen's discussion of these issues in his "Spiritual Geography." For reflections of nomadic altaic ideology in other steppe societies, see Tang Chi, "The Religious and Lay Symbolism of the T'u-Chüeh as Recorded in Chinese History," in *Religious and Lay*

proved his spiritual authority by his ability to gather around him wise men from afar.

Once he had legitimized his authority (and that of his clan) as leader over the Mongol tribes, Temüjin needed to maintain the loyalties of his companions. He accomplished this by forming a corps of personal advisors and bodyguards that served as the principal administrative apparatus for the early Mongol empire. It was that group into which prominent *Semuren* would be placed as a first stage in their service careers.

The system of imperial bodyguards (C. *suwei*, M. *keshig*) was based on ancient nomadic customs of demanding loyalty of the companions to the chief. As Hsiao points out, the *keshig* was "a product of the Mongolian society and can only be understood in the social context of the Mongols around the turn of the thirteenth century."[11] Initially made up of his closest companions (his *nököd*), the qan's personal bodyguards eventually included eldest sons and brothers of those same companions, and their formation into a discrete group served two purposes. Admission into his bodyguard troop translated into elevated social status and real power for the enlistees, since guards performed the gamut of household and guard duties and thus had personal daily access to the qan and his family. It also ensured the loyalty of those men whose sons or brothers were members of the guard, since they were also

Symbolism in the Altaic World and Other Papers, ed. Klaus Sagaster and Helmut Eimer (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1989), 386–98; and István Zimonyi, "The Concept of Nomadic Polity in the Hungarian Chapter of Constatine Porphyrogenitus' De administrando imperio," in *Historical and Linguistic Interaction Between Inner-Asia and Europe*, ed. Árpád Berta (Szeged: University of Szeged Department of Altaic Studies, 1997), 459–71.

[11] Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 34. I have drawn freely from Hsiao's exhaustive study of the imperial guard for the following discussion.

effectively the qan's hostage. As the number of tribes and peoples absorbed into the Mongol confederation grew, the qan's bodyguard also grew, and soon evolved into an administrative organ where guards began to take on specialized administrative duties such as secretaries, etc., all while also performing their household duties. They eventually became the core of the Mongol administration.[12]

The *keshig* was first organized as an official unit around 1189, sometime after Temüjin's companions selected him as leader of the Mongol tribes. The Mongol sources make clear that Temüjin carefully selected the most suitable men from among the various tribes and clans to be members of his personal guard, which effectively redirected the loyalties of these companions to him as the grand qan.[13] Eventually, the companions were organized into ten groups, or offices, each of which performed a specific function that ranged from household, kitchen and camp service duties directed specifically towards the qan and his immediate family, to guarding the qan and the entire camp, herding the camp's animals, and acting as envoys and messengers for the qan.[14]

[12] For a description of this evolution, see Thomas T. Allsen, "Guard and Government in the Reign of the Grand Qan Möngke, 1251–59," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46.2 (1986): 495–521

[13] See Denis Sinor, "The Making of a Great Khan," in *Studies in Medieval Inner Asia* (Ashgate: Variorum, 1997), Ch. 14 (rpt. from *Asiatische Forschungen* 126, Wiesbaden, 1993). Those men were loyal both to Temüjin the man and to him as holder of this title.

[14] See relevant passages in *Secret History of the Mongols*, §§123 and 124, Cleaves, tr., 54–57; Rachewiltz, tr., 49–51, and commentary at 453–66. These entries are undated. Hsiao dates these developments to 1189 in his discussion of the development of the imperial guard. See his *Military Establishment*, 33–35. Barthold supplies the names of each of these 10 divisions of the imperial guard in his discussion of the Mongol imperial guard. See W. Barthold, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, 3rd ed. (Taibei: Southern Materials Center, 1988), 382–83. See also Christopher I. Beckwith, "Aspects of the Early History of the Central Asian Guard Corps in Islam," *Archivum*

By 1203 the future Chinggis Qan had expanded his leadership over most of the Mongol tribes, and he expanded the number of guards to a total of seventy dayguards (*turγay*), eighty nightguards (*kebtegül*), and one thousand braves (*bayatud*). As the empire grew so did the need for more administrative staff, and the guard was eventually divided into four groups, or shifts, each of which was headed by a general who had proved his loyalty to Temüjin in past struggles. Leadership of these four shifts was passed hereditarily within the families of these Mongol generals.[15] It was this reorganization that was crucial to Temüjin's consolidation of power over the Mongol tribes.

By 1206, Temüjin had defeated his old rival, Jamuqa, and had consolidated his leadership over all the Mongol tribes. At a meeting of the tribes (a *quriltai*) he was proclaimed Grand Qan and took the name Chinggis Qan, at which point he raised the total number of imperial guards to 10,000 and issued a decree (or series of decrees) that established the process of recruiting new members into the guards units.[16] Prospective members were to be chosen from among the sons and younger brothers of Mongol military leaders or from among the common people. Each enlistee also had to bring with him a specified number of

Eurasiae Medii Aevi 4 (1984): 29–43; and Allsen, "Guard and Government," for discussions of the early history of the guards units.

[15] Hsiao, *Military Establishment*, 36; and *Secret History of the Mongols*, §§191 and 192, Cleaves, tr., 119–20; and de Rachewiltz, tr., 113–14 and commentary, 689–94. See also David Farquhar, *The Government of China Under Mongolian Rule* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990), 245–46.

[16] See *Secret History of the Mongols*, §§224–234, Cleaves, tr., 161–71; Rachewiltz, tr., 152–62 and commentary, 817–42. These appear to be a series of decrees issued by Chinggis in 1206, presumably after his claim to title of grand qan. The title Chinggis Qan has generally been translated to mean "Universal Ruler," but for an alternate rendering as "The Fierce Ruler," see Rachewiltz, "The Title Činggis Qan/Qaan Re-examined," 288.

relatives and companions, and the sponsoring military unit supplied the required horses. Thus, Temüjin secured his leadership over the Mongol tribes by an adroit realignment of the traditional social hierarchies within the Mongol tribes, since traditional kin loyalties were superseded by new political loyalties focused on the grand qan.[17]

This mechanism of recruitment into the *keshig* enabled Chinggis Qan to maintain a loyal body of retainers in two ways. First, his imperial guard served as a means to extend imperial favor (and accompanying perquisites) to family members and friends of leaders who had already proven their loyalty. This meant that induction into the guards opened up access to the ranks of the elite for inductees. As other tribes and states were conquered or submitted to the Mongols, sons of their leaders were also inducted into the qan's bodyguard, and the *keshig* became the most important route of upward mobility for sons of Mongol and *Semuren* political elites. This continued to be the case in Yuan China even after the civil service exams were reinstituted in 1315.[18]

[17] Isenbike Togan has described the realignment of Mongol tribes as having resulted from large-scale changes in Central Asian society, which she characterizes as a combination of tribalization and dissolution of tribal formations. Temüjin was able to capitalize on the fluidity of the situation by drawing to himself companions who were attracted to his character and abilities. But this was not an anomaly, and "it was the *nökers* themselves who made the first choice.... In a way they came to gather around Temüjin to escape from tribal loyalties." Isenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation in Steppe Formations: The Kerait Khanate and Chinggis Khan* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), 131–32.

[18] It is unclear the extent to which Yuan qans after Qubilai drew from their personal bodyguard corps to staff positions in their central administrations, but we know that such imperial guards were maintained throughout the dynasty. As Thomas Allsen has shown, this patrimonial style of governance was in operation during Möngke's reign. He drew heavily from his and his father's personal guards troops for personnel for his central government. See Allsen, "Guard and Government."

Second, the imperial bodyguard served as a holding area for hostages, whose presence near the qan insured the continued loyalty of commanders and leaders out in the field. In fact, the Mongol term for a member of the imperial guard, a *turγay*, could mean either a guard or a hostage.[19] This second function was to prove indispensable once Chinggis Qan began his campaigns of conquest in north China and Central Asia, since the imperial guard also served as the natural focus for the disposition of family members of conquered royalty and other political and social elites, and guaranteed the loyalty of these newly conquered peoples to the Mongols.[20] The qan's bodyguard also retained the tradition of fusing civil and military spheres of power typical of nomadic societies throughout the period of Mongol rule in China, and had an important part in shaping the identity and roles of the first generation of *Semuren* in China.

All Mongol princes of the royal clan were allowed to maintain their own personal bodyguard troops, and all of the Mongol qaghans who ruled in China also maintained

[19] Lien-sheng Yang discusses the use of internal hostages by the Mongols, and the organization of the sons and younger brothers of Mongol lords and military officers into hostage armies. See his "Hostages in Chinese History," in *Studies in Chinese Institutional History* (*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, n.d.; rpt. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 43–57. Yang cites a 1263 decree made by Qubilai Qan, in which the Mongol system of hostages was reiterated. See pp. 53–54.

[20] Yang calls these "external hostages" in contrast to the internal hostages demanded by Chinggis of his Mongol subordinates. See his "Hostages in Chinese History," 48, where Yang cites a decree issued by Qubilai Qan in 1268 to Korea that demonstrates this policy in action in Yuan China. At least in some cases, these external hostages appear to have been required in numbers proportional to the population of the surrendered state. The practice of demanding external hostages was not, however, unique to the Mongols. Yang demonstrates that the practice of demanding external hostages was used by Chinese emperors at least as far back as the Han dynasty.

the institution. While the imperial bodyguard did begin to lose its military function from the time that Qubilai began his reign as Qaghan (1260-1294), it continued to act as the most important conduit for upward social mobility for Mongol and *Semuren* individuals, and people inducted into the imperial bodyguard continued to receive official titles that had originated in the earlier steppe period. At the same time, those individuals were also granted titles and duties that reflected the traditional Chinese administrative bureaucracy, the result of the growing importance of native Chinese social and political institutions by the mid-Yuan. One example of this phenomenon is the office of Mongol scribe of the second class (C. *bishechi*, M. *bichigechi*).[21] The Mongol *bichigechi* was originally a secretary or a person who handled documents for the qan, but the title does not adequately convey to the modern reader the amount of real power that a scribe wielded, especially during the reign of the first three qaghans. Scribes were used by the qans of many nomadic tribal societies, and since a scribe was also a member of the qan's personal bodyguard who served as a personal retainer and handled all day-to-day matters that concerned the qan or his immediate family, that person had routine access to the innermost circles of power. As the empire grew, the scribal unit evolved into an important office within the administration, but it continued to be staffed by members of the qaghan's personal bodyguard.

Earlier Chinese dynasties, especially the Song, had experienced similar discontinuities between office title and

[21] See Farquhar, *Government of China*, 31, 64 n. 139, and 246. See also Igor de Rachewiltz, "Personnel and Personalities in North China in the Early Mongol Period," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 9 (1966): 100–01, n. 3 and 5. Curiously, this title is not listed in any of the *Secret History* entries that describe the constituents of the *keshig*. It is, however, listed in *Yuanshi* 99 as a constituent of the imperial guard (*suwei*).

function. In the Song period, administrative titles from the Tang period were used to indicate an official's pay and rank but did not indicate, or correlate with, the actual function of the post to which that official was assigned.[22] As in the Song, the discontinuity in official titles indicates the meeting of two different bureaucratic models and hierarchies of power. In the Yuan period, we can characterize this problem as the persistence or overlay of the traditional Mongol nomadic "patrimonial" system in the context of the Chinese bureaucratic model.[23]

In addition to restructuring the traditional Chinese routes of upward social mobility by maintaining the qaghan's imperial bodyguard as one of the main sources from which men were drawn for service in the civil bureaucracy, the recruitment process was also qualitatively different from earlier periods of Chinese history (with the exception of the Liao and Jin dynasties), because all of those methods of recruitment were based on a new social classification scheme imposed on China by the Mongols.

[22] See Kracke, *Civil Service in Early Sung China,* for a discussion of this problem in the Song period.

[23] Several scholars have described the early Mongol imperial government as "patrimonial" in the sense that the qan's household establishment is indistinguishable from the state administrative organization. For discussion of this issue, see Hsiao, *Mililtary Establishment*; Allsen, "Guard and Government in the Reign of the Grand Qan Möngke"; and Jack L. Dull, "The Evolution of Government in China," in *Heritage of China*, ed. Paul S. Ropp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 55–85. According to Dull, a "patrimonial" form of government is one in which the essential power relationships are defined in terms of kin or associated type relationships. The Mongols continued to use the guards corps in such places as Central Asia. See, for example, Paul D. Buell, "Sino-Khitan Administration in Mongol Bukhara," *Journal of Asian History* 13.2 (1979): 121–51.

Mongol Social Order in China

One of the most intriguing aspects of Mongol rule of China is the classification system they imposed on the entire population. After they consolidated their conquest of North China, the Mongols organized society into four discrete status groups in order to maintain a separation between themselves and their subjects, and to facilitate extraction of resources from the sedentary population. That system, which was probably adapted from a similar one used by the Jurchen to maintain their hold on power in north China during their Jin Dynasty, consisted of a hierarchy of four distinct groups that included, in descending order of social status, Mongols (*Mengguren*), Central and West Asians (*Semuren*), Northern Chinese (*Hanren*), and Southerners (*Nanren*).[24] This classification system is described or alluded to in a wide variety of sources from the Yuan period, but only one source, the description by the fourteenth century writer Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (fl. 1335-1402), purports to list all of the constituents of the four groups.

Tao Zongyi's list of clans and peoples is contained in his collection of miscellanea entitled *Notes Made While Resting from the Plow.*[25] It is an invaluable source of

[24] The administrative mechanisms deployed by the Mongols probably had their origins in ancient China, and had been adopted by other steppe polities like the Türk and Uyghur empires, as well as the Jin Dynasty and its later rejuvenation further west under the Qara Khitai. For discussion of this history, see Donald Ostrowski, "The *tamma* and the dual-administrative structure of the Mongol empire," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61.2 (1998): 262–77.

[25] Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, (*Nancun*) *Chogeng lu* (南村) 輟耕錄 [Notes made while resting from the plow] (1366; rpt. Taibei: Shijie shuju, 1987). For summaries of Tao's personal and professional history, and an extensive bibliography of relevant scholarship on Tao, see Frederick W. Mote, "Notes on the Life of T'ao Tsung-i," *Silver Jubilee Volume of the Zinbun-Kagaku-Kenkyusyo Kyoto University* (Kyoto, 1954), 279–93; and Peter Chang and Chaoying Fang, "T'ao Tsung-i," in *Dictionary*

information about social conditions in Yuan China because Tao commented on all sorts of problems and conditions that would never have been included in official records from the period. Tao's description is titled simply "Clans and Peoples" (*shizu*) and in it he lists four separate groups: Mongols, *Semuren*, Chinese, and Jin Dynasty Jurchens.

He lists seventy-two different types (*zhong*), presumably tribes, of Mongols, thirty-one different types of *Semuren*, eight types of Chinese, and thirty-two Jurchen names and their Chinese equivalents.[26] This is a curious list for several reasons. Since he lists the Mongols first, Tao presumably reflects the relative status and power of each group in Yuan society. One glaring inconsistency between Tao's list and other Yuan sources is the omission of the group *Nanren* (southerners) from his list of Yuan social-status groups. The peoples Tao lists as *Hanren* follow the general custom of the period by including all peoples who lived in northern China at the time of the Mongol conquest, since he includes Koreans, Jurchen, and Qitan peoples in that category. Presumably, then, the Jurchen clans or lineages with their Chinese surnames that Tao listed under his fourth and last category, "Surnames and Clans of the Jin" (金人姓氏), were subjects of the former Jin who may or may not have lived in northern China proper. They seem to have constituted (at least for Tao) a separate social status group.

Tao's list of *Semuren* constituents is particularly interesting because of its duplications and omissions of the names of certain groups that appear in different contemporaneous sources. More important, Tao does not seem to

of Ming Biography, 1368–1644, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 1268–72.

[26] Tao, *Chogeng lu*, 24–28. On the other end of the Mongol empire, the Il-khan official and writer Rashid al-Din also compiled such a list. Thomas Allsen, personal communication.

be cognizant of or to care about differences between ethnicity, placename and religion, since names that represent both types of groups (in other contemporaneous sources) are thrown in the list without differentiation. Other contemporaneous sources that explain, delineate, or otherwise comment on the *Semuren* in Yuan society, such as the Yuan legal code, do differentiate among the various constituent groups in ways that Tao does not, if even only partially or sporadically. Thus, while Tao's list of Yuan social groups is the most comprehensive of its kind from that era, it should be read with due caution. By the early twentieth century, Yanai Watari 箭內亙 in Japan and Meng Siming 蒙思明 in China had both recognized the importance of Tao's descriptions to understanding Yuan social history.[27] It is worthwhile revisiting their findings because, while problematic in some respects, they both reached important conclusions that still influence our views of Yuan China.

Yanai Watari published his study of Tao's list in 1930. He followed Tao's list quite strictly, and concluded that the Mongols divided Yuan society into three main classes, Mongol, *Semuren* and *Han*, based on socio-economic and ethnic considerations. Like Tao, Yanai does not differentiate between northern and southern Chinese, but includes all people who could be considered ethnically Chinese as members of the Han group. Nor does he comment on Tao's curious omission from his list of the group known as *Nanren*. He does, however, take the time to point out other errors in Tao's lists, including

[27] Yanai Watari 箭內亙, *Yuandai Meng Han Semu daiyu kao* 元代蒙漢色目待遇考 [Study on the treatment of Yuan Dynasty Mongols, Han and Semu], tr. Chen Jie and Chen Qingquan (Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1963); and Meng Siming 蒙思明, *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu* 元代社會階級制度 [The social class system of the Yuan Dynasty] (1938; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980).

duplications and other problems in the 31 different *Semuren* provided. He argues that only twenty of these thirty-one groups should be considered true *Semuren*.

One of the most useful parts of Yanai's work is his exhaustive study of the history and use of the term *Semu* in China prior to the Mongol period. Yanai goes back to Tang dynasty sources to show early usage of both *Semu* and its two constituent characters, *se* 色 and *mu* 目, to denote other types of people, especially foreigners. In the Chinese sources Yanai cites, these terms were used to indicate the "other," often but not exclusively foreigners. In its classical usage, *Semuren* were usually people from areas immediately west and north of China proper, the "western regions" (*xiyu*).[28] *Semu* could also mean someone who was different, or somehow strange to the Chinese, without a specific ethnic or geographic designation in mind. Yanai concludes that it was not until the Yuan dynasty that the term *Semu* was used to specifically denote a Western or Central Asian. But Yanai also admits that even in the Yuan sources it is used interchangeably with specific place names to denote a person's foreign identity.

Meng Siming, who published his study in 1938, built on but also went well beyond Yanai's conclusions in some important ways. He agreed with Yanai's basic argument that there was a good deal of interaction among the various status groups in Yuan society, but parts ways with Yanai in his Marxist-oriented economic analysis of the *Semuren* group, and in his more exhaustive treatment of the Yuan sources.

First, Meng argues that the Mongols organized China into four, not three, distinct social groups, Mongols, *Semuren*, *Hanren* ("Northerners," which included Chinese

[28] The Chinese understanding of the west, or the "Western Regions" was always hazy and imprecise; it could mean the regions immediately to the west of China (now known as Turkestan or Central Asia), or perhaps areas even farther to the west.

and other subjects of the former Jin Dynasty), and *Nanren* (Chinese and other subjects of the southern Song Dynasty, and aboriginal peoples in frontier areas). Meng also argues that these groups were distinguished by economic criteria first, and then in terms of ethnicity.

Meng was clearly a man of his time in using a Marxist economic approach to analyze class in Yuan China. He argues that China had a well-entrenched class system long before the Mongol conquest, and that the Mongol conquest did not really disturb this economically defined class system. Thus established, he then argues that the *Semuren* group, as with all of the Yuan status groups, was viewed as a separate class by the Mongol elites and by the Chinese cultural elites on the basis of economic factors, such as land ownership and ability to participate in traditional China's socio-economic order. One of the most interesting parts of Meng's monograph, and in some senses the most useful for students of Yuan social history, is the extensive data on employment of people of all four classes that he mined from a wide array of Yuan sources to support his economic class analysis.[29]

One point that especially pertains to my discussion here is Meng's assertion that the various social classes in Yuan China had frequent and sustained interactions in economic, social and cultural arenas. He makes this point when he discusses the fundamentally economic character of Yuan class structure, which echoes Yanai's argument that the supposedly hard boundaries between classes were, in fact, permeated quite frequently. For example, both Yanai and Meng point out that a good many "Han" people (anyone in the "Hanren" category, not necessarily ethnic

[29] See Meng, *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu*, Chapter 4, in which he describes in detail the economic status of people in upper, middle and lower classes, and how economic status was related to ethnicity. Of course, this type of Marxist analysis of Chinese social history had preceded Meng's work, as early as the 1920s.

Chinese) were appointed to offices that were, in theory, to be held only by Mongols or *Semuren*. This conclusion certainly rings true with my own findings on the activities of Uyghur elites in Yuan China.

Both Yanai and Meng conclude that Mongols and *Semuren* occupied the top rungs of administrative hierarchies in China, and that very few ethnic Chinese were included in the ranks of officialdom. They also interpret Tao's categories as ethnic categories, but point out that the theoretically strict hierarchy of his population groups was not, in practice, always followed in Yuan society. Meng departs most radically from Yanai in his conclusion that Mongol ethnic categories were influenced by longstanding economic hierarchies: shifts that occurred in economic hierarchies as a result of the Mongol invasion, especially the increasing wealth and influence of Chinese from the mid-Yuan onwards, had an impact on the Mongol ethnic social class system. This conclusion reflects Meng's Marxist interpretation by which economic issues override all other divisions in any society.[30]

There is no doubt that ethnicity factored in the systematic classification of the population in China starting in the 1230s. However, as both Yanai and Meng indicate, it is not apparent that the Mongol classifications were based primarily or solely on ethnic considerations. In fact, a close reading of Yuan-era sources shows that the Mongols were interested in administrative efficiency and protecting their ruling interests, and that they classified people according to

[30] For an assessment of Meng's work in this regard, see Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing 蕭啓慶, "Yuandai de ruhu: rushi diwei yanjin shishang de yizhang" 元代的儒戶：儒士地位演進史上的一章 [Yuan Dynasty Confucian households: a chapter on the evolution of Confucian scholars in Chinese history], *Dongfang Wenhua* 16.1–2 (1978): 151–70; rpt. in his *Yuandaishi xintan* 元代史新探 [New studies on Yuan Dynasty history] (Taibei: Xinwenshuang chubanshe, 1983), 1–58.

a combination of race, religion, occupation, and location of residence.

Both Yanai and Meng assume that ethnicity was a category that was naturally part of the social discourse in Yuan times and which the Mongols used to classify people in China. This is evident by their consistent use of the term *minzu* (translated variously as "nationality," "race," or "ethnic group") to describe the Yuan status groups (their "classes"). But the term *minzu* was part of the discourse of nationalism that was imported into China only in the late nineteenth century from Japan (*minzoku*).[31] In order to construct an alternative to the Qing imperial project, it was essential to include different ethnic groups as equal members of the new nation-state of China. *Minzu* may be an adequate expression for ethnicity in modern Chinese society, and *zu* had already by the end of the Tang been broadened beyond its original meaning of "lineage group" to describe different ethnic groups. However, the use of this modern category *minzu* by Yanai and Meng to describe the Yuan social groups and the thinking that informed that classification system is problematic, and reveals more

[31] Stevan Harrell, in a personal communication, has pointed out the origins of this term in Sun Yatsen's efforts to construct a new identity for China as a modern nation-state composed of five main ethnic groups. Frank Dikötter traces a "racialisation of lineage discourse" to the late 19th century reformers such as Kang Youwei, who viewed race and population as scientific categories that could be investigated, and who fashioned a "racialized identity called *huangzhong*, meaning both 'lineage of the Yellow Emperor' and 'yellow race'." See his "Racial Discourse in China: Continuities and Permutations," in *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan*, ed. Frank Dikötter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 14–16. For a discussion of race in Japan and its relationship to ideas in China in the same period, see in that same volume Michael Weiner, "The Invention of Identity: Race and Nation in Pre-war Japan," ibid., 96–117. For general discussion of race and national identity in China and Japan see other essays in that same volume, and the essays in Jonathan Unger, ed., *Chinese Nationalism* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996).

about their early twentieth century worldview than it does about Mongol concerns and views of proper social order.

Did the Mongols define people in terms of their ethnicity? They were certainly aware of tribal differences, both among themselves and other nomadic groups, but more important for the Mongols than ethnicity seems to have been the distinction between nomadic and sedentary lifestyles. Neither Yanai nor Meng raise the issue of Mongol values, perhaps because they were active at a time when race and ethnicity were powerful attributes of national and personal identity.[32]

Yanai and Meng also both describe the Yuan social groups as economic classes, which reflects the Marxist presuppositional framework of their time. Since both Yanai and Meng were working in the 1920s and 1930s, their approach is easy to understand. However, it is doubtful whether the Mongols would have been concerned about organizing people within their empire according to strict economic criteria. And it is highly questionable whether the kind of class analysis invoked by Yanai and Meng can be applied back to premodern periods at all. Even if class analysis is useful in a study of premodern societies, a hierarchical ordering of people according to economic criteria would have been more important and relevant to sedentary societies than to nomadic groups like the Mongols. Moreover, while it is true that the Mongols adapted somewhat to the societies they conquered, for the most part they remained focused on keeping their power over and extracting resources from the people and areas they conquered and ruled.

Many types of Yuan-era sources reveal how social order was conceptualized and constructed at that time, such as the imperial chronicles, essays and biographies that

[32] Hon-ming Yip, "The Class System of Yuan Society – A Critique of Meng Siming's Yuandai Shehui Jieji Zhidu," *Journal of Asian Culture*, 4 (Spring, 1980): 82–106.

appear in the dynastic history, and the Yuan legal code. These materials show quite clearly that the Mongol social classification system was not nearly as rigid as has usually been portrayed, and there was considerable crossover among the various groups. Yet, it must also be admitted that it was effective in keeping real power in the hands of the Mongols and their Central Asian allies, and for this reason it was maintained through the end of the Yuan Dynasty.

Mongol Social Order in Chinese Sources

It is difficult to determine precisely when the four groups – Mongol, *Semuren*, *Hanren* and *Nanren* – came into common usage as fixed categories in Mongol China. The earliest reference to specific status groups is an entry in the basic annals (*benji*) section of the *Yuanshi* 元史 (the Standard History of the Yuan Dynasty) dated 1229, the first year of Ögödei's reign (r. 1229-1241), concerning taxation rates for Mongols (*Menggumin*), northern Chinese (*Hebei Hanmin*), and westerners (*Xiyuren*).[33] An entry in the chronicles dated the 12th month of the year 1247 appears to be the first mention in the chronicles of the term *Semu* as a social category. In this case, a certain Peiluhe (from somewhere in Central Asia) was appointed by imperial edict to the post of secretary (*bishechi*) and he was to govern alongside other "*Semu* officials" (*semuguan* 色目官).[34]

The next references in the *Yuanshi* chronicles that include a description of or reference to specific status groups are found in entries during Qubilai's reign. In 1265 an entry describes administrative offices that were to be

[33] Song Lian 宋濂, ed., *Yuanshi* 元史 [History of the Yuan Dynasty] (1370; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976) 2.29–30. All subsequent references to the *Yuanshi* refer to this edition.
[34] *Yuanshi* 3.46.

reserved for Mongols (*Mengguren*), Chinese (*Hanren*), and Muslims (*Huihui*).[35] Yet in the same chapter, in an entry dated 1268, we also find references to specific tribal or state entities, rather than the more inclusive social groups used by the Mongols. Thus, in an imperial edict concerning personnel assigned to the powerful office of agent (M. *darughachi*), the order went out "to dismiss all Jurchen, Qitan, and Chinese (*Hanren*) who are agents in the circuits, and to let all Moslems (*Huihui*), Uyghurs (*Weiwu*), Naiman and Tanguts remain as they were previously."[36] Non-Mongol foreigners in China probably found it useful to invoke different identity markers as a way to situate themselves within the power structure in China, and that ambiguity is reflected in the sources from the time. Thus, in the terminology used to describe Central Asian peoples, we see a tendency to invoke either their religion or their native place.

[35] *Yuanshi* 6.106. By Qubilai's reign the term *Huihui* was used to describe Moslems, a significant development from the pre-Yuan practice of using *Huihui* as a general designation for Central Asians, without regard to religious affiliation.

[36] *Yuanshi* 6.118. *Darughachi* has been translated variously as governor or agent. This office was originally intended to function as a military overlord who was sent out to maintain control for the Mongols in newly conquered areas. After Qubilai's accession to the throne, *darughachi* were paired with administrators down through the county level, and neither could act independently of the other. Thus, they continued to function as agents of Mongol authority at all levels of administration. See Francis W. Cleaves, "Daruγa and Gerege," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 16.2 (1953): 237–46; Elizabeth Endicott-West, "Imperial Governance in Yüan Times," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46.2 (1986): 541–45; idem., *Mongolian Rule in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); and Farquhar, *Government of China*, 23. For a later iteration of this office in another part of the Mongol Empire, see Beatrice Forbes Manz, "The Office of *Darugha* under Tamerlane," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 9 (1985): 59–69.

The label *Huihui* is a good example of the conflation of religious and native place identity. As Huang Shijian has pointed out, the category retained a religious meaning even as it was used to describe very different groups of people in Yuan China. "Broadly speaking, 'Huihui' was a vague and changing concept during the Yuan dynasty. We can only say that it generally referred to Türks…, Persians and Arabs, who were from Central and Western Asia and who followed Islam…. Some nations or tribes, such as the Arghuns who also believed in Islam, were not called Huihui for a long time…[and] Jews were sometimes called Huihui."[37] Detailed evidence on the inconsistencies that applied to the registration of peoples in Yuan China can be found by perusing Bai Shouyi's compendium of *Hui* peoples in the Yuan dynasty.[38] It is clear from Bai's records that the designation *Huihui* or *Hui* denoted a person's religious affiliation and had nothing to do with ethnicity or place of origin. People from different ethnic groups or widely scattered areas in Central and West Asia all were called *Huihui* at some point in the Yuan.[39]

[37] Shijian Huang, "The Persian Language in China During the Yuan Dynasty," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 34 (September, 1986): 84. I am indebted to Professor David O. Morgan for this reference.

[38] Bai Shouyi 白寿彝, ed., *Huizu Renwu Zhi* 回族人物志 [Records of Hui persons], 2 vols. (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1985, 2000).

[39] The same confusion over application of the term *Huihui* can also be seen in the Yuan household registration system. The Mongols developed a fairly comprehensive system of registering the population of China according to household occupation to aid their tax collecting. The local Chinese population was divided into four types of households: ordinary farming households (*minhu* 民戶), households subject to military duty (*junhu* 軍戶), households subject to service in the transport system, such as the postal system and relay stations, waterways, and porters (*zhanhu* 站戶), and artisan households (*jianghu* 匠戶). This system, unlike the larger-order classification system, was based on occupation, not ethnic or political criteria. Both systems had

This four-fold system was certainly in use by the time that Chinese-style civil service exams were reinstituted by the Mongols in the early fourteenth century. The *Yuanshi* contains detailed descriptions of discussions and imperial edicts that dealt with the ways in which the exams were to be conducted, including the types of questions submitted to each social group and the various grades and types of offices and quotas of examinees available to each of the four groups.[40] It is clear from this

in common the need of the conquering elite to determine numbers and occupational groups in their newly-conquered territories so they could impose and collect taxes and extract labor and other resources from the subject population. On the Yuan household classification system, see Huang Qinglian 黃清連, *Yuandai huji zhidu yanjiu* 元代戶計制度研究 [Research on the Yuan Dynasty household system] (Taibei: Guoli Taiwan Daxue Wenxueyuan, 1977); Ōshima Ritsuko 大島立子, "Gendai no kokei to yokei" [Categories of households and their labor duties in Yuan China], *Rekishigaku Kenkyu* 484 (1980); and *idem*, "The Chiang-hu in the Yüan," *Acta Asiatica* 45 (1983): 69–95.

[40] *Yuanshi* 81.2017–27. For general studies of the Chinese civil service examination system, see Benjamin A. Elman, "Political, Social, and Cultural Reproduction via Civil Service Examinations in Late Imperial China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 50.1 (Feb. 1991), 7–28; and his more lengthy study of the Chinese exam system, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and Wing-tsit Chan, "Chu Hsi and Yüan Neo-Confucianism," in *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion Under the Mongols*, ed. Hok-lam Chan and Wm. Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 197–231. For studies of the Yuan examination system, see Yao Dali 姚大力, "Yuanchao keju zhidu de xingfei ji qi shehui beijing" 元朝科举制度的行废及其社会背景 [The social background and promotion of the civil examination system in the Yuan period], *Yuanshi ji beifang minzushi yanjiu jikan* 元史及北方民族史研究集刊 5 (1982): 26–59; John W. Dardess, "Confucianism, Local Reform, and Centralization in Late Yüan Chekiang, 1342–1359," in Hok-lam Chan and Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *Yuan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion under the Mongols* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 327–74; Yan-shuan Lao, "Southern Chinese Scholars and Educational Institutions in Early

text, and from extant lists of successful examinees who were granted imperial degrees, that Mongol and *Semu* individuals were placed in different tracks from the Chinese and other "southerners."[41]

In fact, the questions put to Mongol and *Semuren* candidates were both qualitatively and quantitatively easier than those that the Chinese candidates had to answer, which further reinforced the fact that recommendation and hereditary privilege continued to function to keep Mongols and *Semuren* in their dominant positions in government.[42]

Yuan China: Some Preliminary Remarks," in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 107–33; Yang Shufan 楊樹藩, "Yuandai keju zhidu" 元代科舉制度 [The Yuan Dynasty civil examination system], *Songshi yanjiuji* 宋史研究集 14 (1983): 191–219; Yuan-chu Lam, "On Yüan Exam System: The Role of Northern Ch'eng-Chu Pioneering Scholars," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 9 (1985): 15–20; and Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Yuandai keju yu jingying liudong" 元代科舉與菁英流動 [Yuan Dynasty civil examinations and elite mobility], *Hanxue yanjiu* 5.1 (1987): 129–60.

[41] For an extant list of successful *jinshi* degree examinees in the 1333 examinations, see *Yuantong yuannian jinshilu* 元統元年進士錄 [*Jinshi* holders list from Yuantong era first year examination], rpt. in Wang Ting 王頲, comp., *Miaoxue Dianli. Yuan hunli gongju kao. Yuantong yuannian jinshilu* 廟學典禮。元婚禮貢舉考。元統元年進士錄 [Temple and Academy ceremonies. Study of Yuan marriage ceremonies and civil examinations. *Jinshi* list from 1333 civil examination] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1992), 171–226. For studies of this examination, see Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Yuantong yuannian jinshilu jiaozhu" 元統元年進士錄校注 [Critical annotation of the 1333 civil examination *jinshi* list], *Shihuo yuekan* 食貨月刊 13 (1983): 72–90, 147–62. For *jinshi* degree holders throughout the Yuan period, see Gui Qipeng 桂栖鹏, *Yuandai jinshi yanjiu* 元代进士研究 [Research on Yuan Dynasty *jinshi*] (Lanzhou: Lanzhou Daxue chubanshe, 2001).

[42] Benjamin A. Elman, "An Early Ming Perspective on Song-Jin-Yuan Civil Examinations," unpublished paper presented at the *Conference on the Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, Lake Arrowhead, CA, June 5–11, 1997, esp. pp. 40–49.

Thus, the Mongols continued to privilege themselves and the *Semuren* group by continued reliance on old nomadic hierarchies of power, as formalized in the four-fold social classification system. Some northern and southern Chinese were admitted to office, but most of these through other avenues, and into relatively low-level offices, such as clerks. Even after the exams were restarted in 1315, Chinese remained the minority in positions of real power throughout the dynasty.

Official biographies of eminent persons in the *Yuanshi* also reflect the ambiguities of the Mongol social classification system. One example is the interesting biographical entry of a Chinese general, Guo Baoyu 郭寶玉 (fl. 1215), which contains a description of the way in which military households were organized and the number of males required for compulsory military service from each type of social group: "Every male in Mongol and *Semu* military households must register, and is liable for service, while only one male in Chinese households with at least three males that hold four *qing* [equal to 400 *mou*] must register for military service."[43] Naturally the Mongols were concerned to maintain dominance over the military, and so privileged themselves and *Semuren* personnel over the Chinese population, but this information probably also reflects the concern that the local population continue to produce food and other resources for the Mongols. This was an activity that the Mongol military elites were certainly not going to take up, but which was necessary for their survival.

The Yuan legal system also reflects the ethnic complexity of that society. As Paul Ch'en has observed in his work on the development of the Yuan legal code, Mongolian legal and customary practice had a large impact on the overall structure of the Yuan legal code, and both

[43] *Yuanshi* 149.3521.

Mongol and Central Asian customs persisted in the justice system that evolved.[44] This can be seen in the complex system of courts and judges that had jurisdiction over different segments of the population, as well as in customary laws that the Mongols tried to enforce from time to time.[45]

For example, entries in the chapters on civil officials in the *Yuanshi* describe the special judicial bureaus that had jurisdiction over Mongols and Uyghurs in China. The High Court for Mongols (*da zongzhengfu*) decided criminal cases that involved Mongols, *Semuren* and even some Northern Chinese who lived at the northern capital Shangdu.[46] This office originated with the Mongol system

[44] Paul Heng-chao Ch'en, *Chinese Legal Tradition under the Mongols: The Code of 1291 as Reconstructed* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

[45] Several entries in the Yuan legal code, *Yuan Dianzhang*, demonstrate the application of the four social group classification system in China. For example, a 1285 entry in the *Yuan Dianzhang* concerning agents differentiated between Uyghurs, Muslims and other peoples from Central Asia: "*... darughachi weiwuer, huihui, semu guanren ...*" See *Da Yuan Shengzheng Guochao Dianzhang* 大元聖政國朝典章 [Statutes of the Great Yuan Dynasty] (1323; rpt. Taibei: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1972) 35.1b. For examples of the ways that different legal jurisdictions applied to the various status groups in criminal matters in the Yuan, see Iwamura Shinobu 岩村忍, "Gen tensho keibu no kenkyu" 元典章刑部の研究 [Criminal procedure in the Yuan Dynasty], *Tōhō Gakuhō* 東方學報 24 (1954): 1–114. For translation into French of parts of the Yuan legal code, see Paul Ratchnevsky, *Un code des Yuan*, 4 vols. (Paris: E. Leroux, 1937–1985).

[46] *Yuanshi* 87.2187–88. For the history and personnel of that office, see Farquhar, *Government of China*, 244. Curiously, Ch'en does not mention the wide jurisdiction of this office over all three groups, Mongols, *Semuren* and northern Chinese. While Ch'en makes a point of emphasizing the impact of Mongol customs and the Mongol legal system on Yuan laws and judicial system, for some reason he ignores the central role of the Mongol "judge" (*chaluhuchi*) in this bureau, as Farquhar points out. Ch'en, *Chinese Legal Tradition*, 82; Farquhar, *Government of China*, 244, 284 n. 18.

of judges (*jarghuchi*), who had wide-ranging authority as administrators in the early decades of the empire. There was also a separate Court of Justice for Uyghurs (*duhufu*), which had more limited jurisdiction over Uyghurs who remained in their native Uyghuristan or who moved to and settled in north China.[47] This court was probably intended to serve those members of the Uyghur aristocracy associated with the Uyghur *idiqut* after 1209, and it certainly reflects the high status enjoyed by the Uyghurs in Yuan China, who were understood as first-among-equals among the various *Semuren* because of their proximity to the Mongol ruling elites. No similar judicial office is listed for any other group of *Semuren*.

Another interesting example of the complex social system in Yuan China is integration into the Yuan legal code of various nomadic customary practices, and their implementation in society. One such practice was the custom of levirate marriage, whereby a man's brothers could (and were expected to) marry that man's wife if he predeceased her.[48] The practice was intended to retain the husband's property with the patriline, and was apparently

[47] *Yuanshi* 89.2273; and *Yuan Dianzhang* 53.34 (entry titled 都護府公事, dated 1313). See Farquhar, *Government of China*, 245, for the history of this office. Ch'en states that this bureau served "Central Asians" (*Semuren*?) in general, and was not limited to Uyghurs. See Ch'en, *Chinese Legal Tradition*, 82.

[48] On levirate marriage in Yuan China, see Paul Ratchnevsky, "The Levirate in the Legislation of the Yuan Dynasty," in *Tamura hakushi shōju tōyōshi ronsō* 田博士頌壽東洋史論叢 [Asiatic studies in honor of Professor Tamura] (Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1968), 45–62; Jennifer Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage and Inheritance Practices in Early Mongol and Yuan Society, with Particular Reference to the Levirate," *Journal of Asian History* 20.2 (1986): 127–92; Bettine Birge, "Levirate Marriage and the Revival of Widow Chastity in Yüan China," *Asia Major*, 3d ser., 8.2 (1995): 107–46; and her later expanded study, *Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction in Sung and Yüan China (960–1368)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

widely practiced among the Mongols and other nomadic groups. The institution was incorporated into the Yuan legal code and was enforced from time to time. However, it was virtually never universally enforced throughout the population, and seems to have been relegated to people of the lower classes in families that practiced it. It is interesting to note, however, that levirate marriage came to be accepted among the Han Chinese after the Song legal code was officially abolished by the Mongols in 1271.

Conclusion

The four categories Mongol, *Semuren*, Hanren and Nanren, were not "classes" in the Marxist sense of being a unique group defined or identified in terms of their proximity to the means of production. They encompassed aspects of social status that included but went beyond mere economic power, and they became the main ways that social mobility was defined in Mongol China. This system reflected steppe culture's emphasis on controlling people, rather than land, as was the case in sedentary societies, and also the patriarchal, hierarchical social structure that the nomadic Mongols were used to. People were classified according to several criteria, including their ethnicity or place of origin, the order and way in which they had become Mongol subjects (voluntary versus forced), and their usefulness to the Mongols. Economic status was but one aspect of categorization (with, perhaps, the exception of the Muslim merchants whom the Mongols used in great number as their agents in international trade).[49]

The *Semuren* status group occupied a unique position in Yuan China's social structure, since members of

[49] The Muslim merchant in the Mongol empire is a subject beyond the scope of this book. For discussion of that history see Thomas T. Allsen, "Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners," *Asia Major* 2.2 (1989): 83–126; and Elizabeth Endicott-West, "Merchant Associations in Yüan China: The *Ortoy*," *Asia Major* 2.2 (1989): 127–54.

that group could be perceived both as part of the conquering elite and as subjects of the Mongols not too dissimilar from their Chinese contemporaries. Obviously, the *Semuren* had some distinct advantages over their Chinese peers, but they were also ultimately subjects of that same Mongol political elite. They were people in the middle, and in spite of, or perhaps because of, the sense of alterity that must have developed among *Semuren* personnel as a result of that intermediate position, many spanned that divide by becoming political and social elites.[50] That strategy ultimately worked to their advantage, as many *Semuren* remained in China long after the Mongols lost power and returned to the steppe. Their stories in post-Mongol China remain to be told, but it is clear that the Mongols had an enormous impact on social and political institutions in China long after they were deposed.

Just as important as it is to see the *Semuren* as a distinctive group apart from the Mongols, we must also remember that many different peoples were thrown together into this category *Semuren*, and it would be just as problematic to ignore this as it is to think of all foreigners in China as essentially the same. In fact, not all *Semuren* were equal, and to do justice to this group's role in Yuan China we really must look at the stories of the *Semuren* constituents, each of whom brought their own unique talents to bear in the Mongol empire. This was certainly the case for the Uyghurs.

The Uyghurs were the first Central Asian state to submit voluntarily to Chinggis Qan, and their entrance into the Mongol camp had a profound impact on the structure of the Mongol empire, and on the ability of the Mongols to effectively administer sedentary populations they

[50] On the notion of alterity within the *Semuren* status group, see Brose, "Central Asians in Mongol China."

conquered. They brought with them substantial knowledge and skills that were immediately drawn on by the Mongol imperial clan, and their submission also insured their survival long after their independent state was subsumed into the growing Mongol empire. In an attempt to rescue the history of the Uyghurs as one of the *Semuren* constituents, the rest of this book follows the stories of some of the Uyghur aristocrats who, after being dispersed to China, utilized their intellectual and social resources to integrate smoothly into the Mongol administration as political elites, and eventually into communities in China as social elites.

Chapter 2

The Gaochang Uyghurs and their Steppe Ancestors

The Gaochang Uyghur Kingdom, which spanned both sides of the eastern Tianshan Mountain range down into the Tarim Basin and Turfan Depression, was home to one of the most important groups of subject peoples who served the Mongols as administrators and advisors in their new empire (see Map 2). They were the first Central Asian kingdom to submit voluntarily to Chinggis Qan (in 1209), and their submission provided Chinggis Qan with important military and psychological capital in his quest to dominate wider areas of Central and Eastern Asia. Their submission had enormous consequences for the fate of the Uyghur people long after the Mongols had disappeared as a Eurasian empire.

The Gaochang Uyghur kingdom occupied important strategic and cultural space in early thirteenth century Central Asia. It straddled the most important overland east-west trade routes that ran along the northern edges of the Taklamakan Desert and Tarim Basin, and it was situated between several powerful regional kingdoms that eventually included the Qitan Liao and Jurchen Jin empires to the east, and the Qara Khitai and Xixia kingdoms to the west and south, respectively. Uyghuristan was thus a "pivot of Asia," (borrowing from Lattimore's description of this same area in the modern period), control of which provided the Mongols with a great strategic advantage.

Culturally, Uyghuristan was much more sedentary than most of its neighbors, and the Uyghur elite who formed this state after their deposition from the steppe brought long experience of managing a complex society

that combined urban settled groups alongside nomadic tribes. They provided excellent models for Chinggis Qan's imperial ambitions. Their submission also provided Chinggis Qan with important ideological and spiritual legitimacy, since he was able to marshal into his service these highly cultured people who possessed the very administrative and cultural skills and knowledge that the Mongols themselves lacked. In other words, the skills that the Uyghurs possessed were associated with spiritual force and power that then accrued to Chinggis Qan. Thus, even though they were near neighbors to the Mongol tribes, the fact that Chinggis Qan could count them among the first people to join him was an important event.

But the fact that they had submitted of their own accord did not mean that the Uyghurs' status as subjects was in any way minimized. It is true that many Uyghur personnel were valued for their skills and knowledge, and that they were treated favorably by the Mongol nobility. But the fact remains that most members of the Uyghur aristocracy were still dispersed from their homeland throughout the Mongol empire in order to serve their new masters. Some of the highest placed members of that group, including the Uyghur king (*idiqut*), accompanied the Mongols on military campaigns. Others were sent to serve Chinggis Qan's brothers and sons as tutors, advisors, and administrators of appanage lands. Sons and other family members of these prominent Uyghurs were inducted into Chinggis Qan's personal bodyguard as servitors and hostages. Thus, a significant part of the Gaochang aristocracy became a unique diaspora group.

Diaspora has traditionally been defined as a group of victims who have been displaced from their native place, usually by foreign conquerors, and who are destined to live as aliens thereafter. This typology of diaspora is inevitably framed as a negative experience, taking on a sense of homelessness, loss of identity and oppression. In the past

three decades, however, the term diaspora has been used by a growing number of groups to describe their situations and identities in positive ways. They do not see themselves as victims of an unwilling dispersal, but as members of a voluntary diaspora who moved to improve their lives.[1] It is clear that Chinggis Qan's expansion of his confederation by conquering neighboring tribes and states in the early thirteenth century posed a very real threat to the Gaochang Uyghur kingdom, and that they really did not have a lot of choice when they transferred their allegiance from the decrepit Qara Khitai to the Mongols. The Uyghurs probably also knew that once they submitted their best craftsmen, specialists, and members of the higher levels of the aristocracy would naturally be requisitioned or allotted to the Mongol imperial clan as booty, dispersed to serve on their appanage lands or in military campaigns. Thus, in this respect, the Uyghurs were not a voluntary diaspora group into the Mongol Empire.

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[1] This trend has been summarized by Robin Cohen, who makes a convincing argument for the need to expand our definition of diaspora beyond the traditional negative evaluation. See Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997). Cohen's typology of diaspora groups can be applied to pre-modern groups of migrants, such as the Gaochang Uyghurs, as well as modern labor, trade, and imperial diasporas. Among the criteria he lists for identification as a diaspora group, the following appear especially relevant to the 13th century Uyghurs:

> (1) Dispersal from an original homeland… to two or more foreign regions; (3) a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements; (4) an idealization of the putative ancestral home…; (6) a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness…; (9) the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism. (Cohen, 26)

Cohen's descriptions of the ways in which diaspora groups are created emphasize voluntary movement and a much more positive view of that identity than is traditionally associated with the term.

Yet their status as a diaspora group was also not simply that of unwilling victims. First, members of the Uyghur aristocracy actively worked to overthrow their existing tributary status under the Qara Khitai in favor of the Mongols. As we shall discuss below, that voluntary submission not only guaranteed the Uyghurs preferential status in the emerging Mongol imperial administration. Some of the Gaochang aristocracy were also allowed to retain their positions and power in their homeland, ruling now on behalf of their new masters. Others were distributed throughout the expanding Mongol empire.

Since the Gaochang Uyghur kingdom straddled the most important overland east-west trade routes (the so-called Silk Road), the Uyghur nobility who submitted to the Mongols may have done so not least to try to maintain some level of involvement in (and thus profit from) international trade and diplomacy in the new era of Mongol power. We know that these Uyghurs had great experience as cultural middlemen, and they also certainly knew what resources they could provide to the Mongol ruling elite.

Most of this book focuses on the descendants of the very first Uyghurs who served Chinggis Qan in China, and argues that those people used strategies that derived in some sense from their identity as a diaspora group to consciously construct new identities for themselves and their families as cultural and political elites in China. Since that diaspora identity was tied to the ways in which their ancestors became part of the Mongol imperial project, this chapter introduces the history of the Uyghur peoples as heirs to a long tradition of imperial rule and high culture. The Uyghurs whose stories are examined in the following chapters did not necessarily see themselves as a "diaspora" people *per se*. They did, however, use an implied identity as a diaspora people, that influenced the ways that they were integrated into the highest levels of power in the Mongol imperial project. John Armstrong's category

"mobilized diaspora," as people who took advantage of their unique intellectual resources to retain some power for themselves in their new home, well describes these Uyghurs.[2]

Armstrong's premodern mobilized diaspora were aristocratic elites who commanded certain resources, especially linguistic and other intellectual skills, not available to the dominant ethnic group in their new, adopted land. Members of a diaspora group who could mobilize those resources were able to obtain important advantages in their new home by accommodating the needs of the new dominant elites. The Gaochang Uyghurs mobilized these kinds of intellectual resources after they submitted to the Mongols. As I discuss below, their prominent position in the growing Mongol administration resulted, at least in part, from the unique linguistic and technical skills that they offered in service to the Mongols.

But Armstrong's typology is also pertinent to the Uyghur case because he questions how diaspora elites interacted with the dominant ethnic group in the new multiethnic polity in which they moved. He proposes six characteristics that may describe the interactions of the mobilized diaspora with the dominant ethnic group (in our case the Uyghur subjects and the dominant Mongols). The first of these is that "within the multiethnic polity, the mobilized diaspora is temporarily indispensable for the dominant ethnic elite."[3] The stress here is on the paucity of skills that the dominant elites possess, and the fact that the mobilized diaspora group can fill those needs. If the dominant ethnic elite group consists mainly of "warriors, landlords and priests," then diaspora groups that possess desired, highly transferable skills or knowledge will benefit. And the fact that the dominant group is able to gather those

[2] Armstrong, "Diasporas," 395.
[3] Armstrong, "Diasporas," 397.

skilled people unto itself also brings a certain legitimacy and prestige to the dominant group.

Literacy was one of the most highly valued skills or types of knowledge in most premodern societies, which literate diaspora aristocrats were able to exploit for their own benefit. "In addition to their technical role specialization, the diasporas' communications skills have been especially prized by dominant elites who rarely possess either the multilingual ability or the more subtle understanding of diverse communication patterns required to deal effectively with a multi-ethnic population. Thus the first Arab caliphs found it necessary to employ Christian secretaries for civil administration...."[4] This could easily describe the roles of Uyghurs in the early Mongol empire.

As important as their skills were to long-term survival, however, the dependency of any diaspora group on their new hosts is also an important consideration. "Within the multiethnic polity, the mobilized diaspora depends for security on the dominant ethnic elite."[5] The Mongols were clearly the dominant power in the Central Asian steppe area by the early 1200s, a fact not lost on the Gaochang Uyghurs. Their subordination to the Mongol ruling elites remained a fact of life in their new home in China when Uyghurs and all other non-Mongol, non-Chinese personnel were classified as *Semuren*. But subordination did not mean loss of importance. In Armstrong's case studies, as well as in the Mongol empire, mobilized diaspora groups were always key players in internal structures of power and in state-state relations.

For example, members of literate diaspora groups were essential to successful foreign policy because they were employed as interpreters and envoys, and as agents in international commerce, all because of their multi-linguistic

[4] Armstrong, "Diasporas," 395.
[5] Armstrong, "Diasporas," 398

talents and their familiarity with the customs of different peoples and states. Interpreters and translators were almost ubiquitous in Mongol China, and many *Semuren* performed vital services to the Mongol nobility in their roles as *ortogh* (T. *ortaq*, C. *wotuo*) merchants in international trade.[6]

In thinking about the movement of any group of dispersed people into the Mongol empire, we also need to take into account how the role and status of the diaspora group in their new home influenced group identity. Probably the vast majority of the *Semuren* who ended up in some part of the Mongol empire were moved there as a group, selected on the basis of their skills and usefulness to the Mongol nobility. As such, those groups undoubtedly maintained at least some of their preexisting networks of social power in their new home. The migration of social networks and the impact of those networks on the long-term social status and power of diaspora groups in their new land is a topic that few historians of the premodern period have explored, but seems relevant to explaining the history of the *Semuren* in Mongol China.[7] As I shall discuss

[6] On interpreters and translators in Mongol China, see Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Yuandai de tongshi he yishi: duo Yuan minzu guojia zhongde goutong renwu" 元代的通事和譯史: 多元民族國家中的溝通人物 [Translators and interpreters in Yuan China: the several nationalities groups in Yuan China who were communications personnel], in *Qingzhu Zhaqisiqin jiaoshou bashi shouchen xueshu lunwenji* 慶祝 札奇斯欽教授 八十壽辰學術論文集 [Festschrift in honor of the eightieth birthday of Professor Jagchid Sechin] (Taibei: Lianhebao Wenhua Jijinhui guoxue wenxianguan bianyin, 1995), 199–267. On international merchants in Yuan China, see Allsen, "Mongolian Princes and their Merchant Partners"; and Endicott-West, "Merchant Associations in Yuan China: The *Ortoγ*." Some examples of Uyghurs who acted as interpreters and translators will be discussed below. However, the commercial activities of the *Semuren*, while fascinating, are beyond the scope of my discussion.
[7] Michael Chamberlain's study of the Damascene elites is one of the few exceptions, and I have used his work as a model for my own

in more detail below, members of the Uyghur aristocracy who were removed from their homeland to serve the Mongols seem to have had a sense of group identity from the moment they submitted to Chinggis Qan in 1209. This is alluded to in various ways in the sources of the period, especially in their specific identification with the Uyghur *idiqut* and the marriage alliances that prominent Uyghur clans continued throughout the Yuan dynasty. Their Uyghur identity was rooted in their long history as imperial elite, both in the steppe and at Gaochang.

We begin with a brief review of the history of their steppe empire, also known as the Uyghur qaghanate, and then describe the Gaochang kingdom that developed in the mid-ninth century. This will lay the basis for examination in the next chapter of the stories of the first group of Uyghur aristocrats who accompanied their leader in turning to the Mongols in 1209.

Who Were the Uyghurs?

The Uyghurs first appear in the historical records in the sixth century of the common era, as the leading tribe in a confederation of nine Turkic tribes known as the Toquz Oghuz confederation.[8] The confederation of Turkic tribes

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research. See his *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Charles Tilly has examined this topic with regard to migration in the modern period. See his "Transplanted Networks," in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, ed. Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 79–95.

[8] On the Toquz Oghuz confederation, see Edwin G. Pulleyblank, "Some Remarks on the Toquz Oghuz Problem," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 28 (1956): 35–42. For discussion of the complex history of the Türk ethnos, led by the Ashina clan, and how that specific term was eventually applied to many of the Turkic-speaking peoples, see Peter B. Golden, *Ethnicity and State Formation in Pre-Chinggisid Turkic Eurasia* (Bloomington: Indiana University, Department of Central Eurasian Studies, 2001).

later split into western and eastern halves, and the Uyghurs came under Chinese protection. They eventually defeated the last ruler of the Eastern Türk empire, with the help of other Turkic tribes, and established their own Uyghur empire in 744.[9] The second Uyghur leader, Bilgä Köl Qaghan (aka Bilgä kül, or Moyanchuo 磨延啜, r. 747–759), added territory and prestige to the fledgling empire, most especially by extending Uyghur control over a wide area, especially to the west, and by building a capital city, Qarabalghasun (located on the Orkhon river in the central Mongolian steppe) (see Map 1). He also came to the aid of Tang China during the An Lushan rebellion (755–63), reaping generous rewards and important ties to China. It is because of their involvement in China's internal affairs that we know so much about the Uyghur empire. The continuing reliance of the Tang court on Uyghur military

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[9] For the history of the Uyghur steppe empire, see especially: Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Barthold, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*; Feng Jiasheng 冯家昇, Cheng Suluo 程溯洛 and Mu Guangwen 穆广文, *Weiwuerzu shiliao jianbian* 维吾尔族史料简编 [Concise compilation of historical materials on the Uyghur nationality] (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1958; rpt. 1981); Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*; Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes*; James Russell Hamilton, *Les Ouïghours a l'epoque des cinq dynasties d'apres les documents chionis* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955); Ablet Kamalov, *Drevnie Uigury VIII–IX CC* [The ancient Uyghurs, 8th–9th centuries] (Almaty: Nash Mir Publishing House, 2001); Colin Mackerras, *The Uighur Empire: According to the T'ang Dynastic Histories* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1972); and his later essay "The Uighurs," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 317–42; Denis Sinor, "The Uighur Empire of Mongolia," in *Studies in Medieval Inner Asia* (Ashgate: Variorum, 1997); *Weiwuerzu jianshi* 维吾尔族简史 [Simplified history of the Uyghur people] (Urumqi: Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1991). I have drawn freely from all of these sources for the following brief discussion of Uyghur history.

strength meant that the Uyghurs could largely dictate their own terms, and the subsequent history of the Uyghurs in Tang China up to the time of their own conquest by the nomadic Kirgiz in 840 was one of raw exploitation of the land and people by a series of Uyghur qaghans.

From the point of view of the Uyghurs themselves, undoubtedly the most important aspect of their empire was that they controlled the ancient Türk homeland in the sacred Orkhon area centered around Mt. Ötüken and the Selenge River valley, with all of the cultural and religious symbolism embodied therein.[10] But the Uyghurs were also open to other religious traditions. The most important change in that arena occurred when the third Uyghur qaghan, Tängri Qaghan (also known as Mouyu 牟羽, r. 759–779), converted to Manichaeism, a Persian religion favored by the East Iranian Sogdian peoples.[11]

Mouyu initially met Sogdians in China when he was there to help suppress the An Lushan rebellion, and after

[10] The Uyghurs used essentially the same language and runiform script and imperial titles as the Türks and have been seen by some as merely a third Türk Empire. See, for example, S. G. Kliashtornyi, who argues that the Uyghurs saw themselves as having established three kingdoms in the Mt. Ötüken area: the first was created just after the creation of the world and lasted some 200–300 years. After a period of some 100 years of decline this was followed by another kingdom established by the Yaghlaqar clan, also in this same area, lasting a mere eighty years, which was eventually followed by the third revival of their steppe kingdom in 744. See his "Nadpis' uigurskogo Begiu-kagana," *Tsentral'saia Aziia. Novye pamiatniki pis'mennosti I isskustva* (Moscow: Nauka, 1987), 19–37. I am indebted to Peter Golden for this information.

[11] While Manichaeism was based on Persian Zoroastrian dualism, it also included characteristics of Babylonian Gnosticism, Christianity, Judaism and even Buddhism. See the several works of Samuel N. C. Lieu, especially his *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China: a Historical Survey* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); and *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998).

conversion imposed that religion on the Uyghur people. Acceptance of Manichaeism also paved the way for Sogdian advisors to wield a large amount of power at Mouyu's court. Ultimately, however, reliance on these same Sogdian advisors proved the qaghan's undoing, as he was wrongly advised to attack Tang China, his erstwhile ally. Mouyu was murdered by his first minister and cousin, Dun Bagha Darqan (also known as Dun mohe 頓莫賀, r. 779–789). This transition also marked the beginning of the decline of the Uyghur steppe empire.

As a result of this history, the Uyghurs adopted a range of Turkic, Sogdian and Chinese administrative models for their own use.[12] Though countered by a substantial element within the Uyghur aristocracy, Sogdian influence also contributed much to Uyghur steppe society and its later manifestation in the Tianshan-Tarim Basin area. Manichaeism continued to be followed by many Uyghurs, and Sogdians were responsible for transcribing many of the rare Buddhist, Christian and Manichaean religious texts that have been found in Turfan and other parts of the

[12] On Uyghur imperial titles, see Hilda Ecsedy, "Old Turkic Titles of Chinese Origin," *Acta Orientalia Hungaricae* 18 (1965): 83–91; Hamilton, "Appendice," in *Les Ouighours*, 145–70; Omeljan Pritsak, "Old Turkic Regnal Names in the Chinese Sources," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 9 (1985): 205–11; R. Rahmet, "Der Herrschertitel *Iduq-qut*," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbucher* 35 (1964): 150–57; Han Rulin 韓儒林, "Tujue gonghao kaoshi" 突厥宮号考释 [Elucidation of Turkic official titles] in *Qionglu ji* 穹庐集 [Collected works of Han Rulin], *Ershi shiji Zhongguo shixue mingzhe* 二十世纪中国史学 名著 [Famous twentieth century Chinese historians] (Shijiazhuang: Hebei Jiaoyi chubanshe, 2000), 355–78; Volker Rybatzki, "Titles of Türk and Uigur Rulers in the Old Turkic Inscriptions," *Central Asiatic Journal* 44.2 (2000): 205–92; Mori Masao, "The T'u-chüeh Concept of Sovereign," *Acta Asiatica* 41 (1981): esp. 69ff. For a study of a Uyghur stele text commemorating the Gaochang *idiquts*, see Geng Shimin and James Hamilton, "L'inscription Ouïgoure de la stèle commémorative des iduq qut de Qočo," *Turcica* 13 (1981): 10–54.

Uyghur Gaochang kingdom.[13] The Sogdians, in fact, developed three different writing systems to be used for different purposes, roughly divided according to religious or secular needs. At least one of these scripts, the kind used for Buddhist religious literature, had been introduced to the Uyghurs by the sixth century, and eventually became the basis for one of the writing systems taught to Chinggis Qan's sons and brothers by a Uyghur.[14] In addition to this, Sogdian influence can be seen in many of the ruins of Qarabalghasun, while Sogdians worked closely with the

[13] See Takao Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus an der Seidenstrasse* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2004); and Xavier Tremblay, *Pour une histoire de la Sérinde: Le manichéisme parmi les peuples et religions d'Asie Centrale d'après les sources primairies* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001).

[14] There are two early stone inscriptions that show the prominence of Sogdian language and writing among the Uyghurs. The earliest inscription, mostly in Sogdian and erected by the Türks, is from Bugut in the central Mongolian steppe, dated to 582. A second inscription is the trilingual Sogdian, Chinese and Uyghur Turkish one that was found at the Uyghur capital of Qarabalghasun, dated to 810 or 821. On these inscriptions, see S. G. Kliashtornyi and V. A. Livshiz, "The Sogdian Inscription of Bugut Revised," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 16 (1972): 69–102; Olaf Hansen, "Zur soghdischen Inschrift auf dem dreisprachigen Denkmal von Karabalgasun," *Journal de la Société Finno-ougrienne* 44.3 (1930): 3–39; and articles (including photos and line drawings) in Takao Moriyasu 森安孝夫 and Aiuudain Ochir, eds., *Mongorukoku genson iseki, hibun chōsa kenkyū hōkoku* モンゴル国現存遺跡。碑文調査研究報告 [Provisional report on researches of historical sites and Inscriptions in Mongolia from 1996 to 1998] (Toyonaka: Central Eurasian Studies Society, 1999). I thank Peter Golden for providing this information. On Turkic stone inscriptions, see also Geng Shimin 耿世民, "Gudai Tujue wen zhuyao beiming jiqi jiedu yanjiu qingkuang" 古代突厥文主要碑铭及其解读研究情况 [The major Old Turkic stone inscriptions, their decipherment and study], in his collected works, *Xinjiang wenshilun ji* 新疆文史论集 [Collected works on language, literature, and history of Xinjiang] (Beijing: Zhongyang Minzu Daxue chubanshe, 2001), 28–42.

Uyghurs to develop their respective roles in international trade, something that later generations of Uyghurs at Gaochang would also use.[15]

The Uyghurs developed a thriving urban culture in their steppe empire, centered in their capital cities, and this undoubtedly owed a great deal to their ongoing relationship with Tang China, as well. By the mid-eighth century, the Uyghurs had a lucrative trade relationship with China, where they supplied China with horses in exchange for luxury goods, especially silk and tea. Many Uyghurs became quite wealthy as a result of that trade and wielded enormous economic power within China itself as landowners and money lenders. Five Chinese princesses were also sent north to be married to Uyghur qaghans. The Chinese court often used these kind of marriage alliances as a way to maintain friendly relations with their northern neighbors, and the fact that three of these five Chinese princesses were actual daughters of Tang emperors reveals

[15] In fact, some Tang-era Uyghurs followed the Sogdian pattern when they settled in China to engage in trade. On premodern trade diasporas, see Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). On the Sogdians and their roles in the early international silk trade and as advisors to the Uyghurs, see Richard N. Frye, *The Heritage of Central Asia from Antiquity to the Turkish Expansion* (Princeton: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 1996); A. K. Narain, "Indo-Europeans in Inner Asia," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; rpt. Taibei: Southern Materials Center, 1991), 151–76; Edwin G. Pulleyblank, "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia," *T'oung Pao* 41 (1952): 317–56; Nicholas Sims-Williams, "The Sogdian Merchants in China and India," in *Cina e Iran da Alessandro Magno alla Dinastia Tang*, ed. Alfredo Cadonna and Lionello Lanciotti (Firenze: Olschki Press, 1996), 45–67; Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner, *Monks and Merchants: Silk Road Treasures from Northwest China* (New York: Harry N. Abrams and The Asia Society, 2001); and Étienne de la Vaissière, *Histoire des marchands sogdiens* (Paris: Collège de France, Bibliothéque de l'Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 2002).

the power of the Uyghur qaghanate at the time as well as their importance to China.

The Uyghur empire was not, however, as strong as their record in China made them appear, and they were unable to withstand the centrifugal forces that had torn apart other earlier nomadic confederations.[16] First, after reasserting its presence there, the Tang court evicted the Uyghurs from China, a result of the looting and brigandage they had pursued. More important, the Uyghur empire was torn apart by a highly contentious succession dispute, and warfare with two powerful enemies, the Tibetans and the Kirgiz. Qarabalghasun fell to the Kirgiz tribes in 840, and the great Uyghur empire ceased to exist.

After the capture of Qarabalghasun, the Uyghur elite fled south and west from the Orkhon area to avoid capture, and two groups eventually emerged out of that diaspora. One group of Uyghurs settled in present-day Gansu province, where they succeeded in establishing a semi-independent kingdom that was eventually absorbed into China proper.[17] A second group migrated further west, where they eventually settled in two cities that spanned the eastern end of the Tianshan Mountain range, Beiting (Beshbaliq) and Gaochang (Kocho), and which became the two capital cities of this new western Uyghur kingdom

[16] Michael R. Drompp has developed this concept of centrifugal forces in nomadic societies in his "Centrifugal Forces in the Inner Asian 'Heartland': History versus Geography," *Journal of Asian History* 23.2 (1989): 134–68.

[17] On the Gansu Uyghurs, see Elizabeth Pinks, *Die Uiguren von Kan-chou in der frühen Sung-zeit (960–1028)* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1968); and Lu Qingfu 陆庆夫, "Lun Ganzhou Huihu yu Zhongyuan wangchao de gongshi guanxi" 论甘州回鹘与中原王朝的贡使关系 [Discussion of tribute-envoy relations between the Ganzhou Uyghurs and China], *Minzu yanjiu* 1999.3: 62–70. On the fate of the Uyghur remnant who first sought accommodation in China, see Michael R. Drompp, *Tang China and the Collapse of the Uighur Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

(referred to hereafter as the Uyghur Gaochang kingdom; see Maps 2 and 3).[18] Of all the offshoots of the original Uyghur empire, only the Gaochang kingdom managed to resurrect Uyghur imperial ambitions and mechanisms sufficiently to continue to play important roles in international trade and steppe political and military affairs.[19] The Gaochang Uyghur kingdom remained rela-

[18] Beiting, which lay on the north slope of the Tianshan Mountains near present-day Urumqi, was formerly a Tang protectorate where Uyghurs had had a strong presence at the time of their steppe empire. After the Uyghurs migrated there in the 840s it was also known by its Uyghur name, Beshbaliq. Gaochang, on the south side of the Tianshan Mountains and near to present-day Turfan, was the site of an ancient kingdom, and became known by its Uyghur name Kocho. For descriptions of the various renderings of the names of these two important cities in all of the relevant languages, see Liu Yitang 劉義堂, "Hanyi Tu Hui yu 'Bieshibali'" 漢譯突回語 '別失八里' [Chinese translations of the Turkic Uyghur name 'Beshbaliq'], in his *Tu Hui yanjiu* 突回研究 [Research on the Turkic Uyghurs] (Taibei: Jingshi shuju, 1990), 393–413. Although I shall refer to the western Uyghur kindgom as the Gaochang kingdom, the Uyghurs who settled and lived there may have thought of themselves as natives or residents of a particular city or oasis settlement, and not necessarily or even primarily as members of a united Uyghur kingdom, because of the relatively large distances that separated oases and the relatively distinct cultures that developed in each oasis settlement. It must be acknowledged that we know very little about how Uyghurs from that period identified themselves, and it seems likely that localized forms of identity really developed in the sixteenth century after the ethnonym "Uyghur" had faded. But if these urban-oriented Uyghurs drew on the social customs of their Chinese neighbors, then place name, toponym, was a part of their identity. For examples of this from modern Uyghurs, where a person from Turfan will identify himself first as a "Turpanlik," see Justin Jon Rudelson, *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism Along China's Silk Road* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); and Cuiyi Wei and Karl W. Luckert, *Uighur Stories from Along the Silk Road* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998).

[19] For the history of the Uyghur Gaochang kingdom, see especially Abe Takeo 安部健夫, *Nishi Uiguru kokushi no kenkyū* 西ウイグル國史の研究 [Study of the history of the western Uyghur kingdom] (Kyoto:

tively independent and important from the 870s until the 1280s.

The Gaochang Uyghurs

Sometime after 840 a Uyghur prince named Menglig Tegin (C. Mangli) led a group of Uyghurs to Beiting where he was recognized by the Tang court as the Uyghur *qaghan* in 857.[20] The Uyghurs themselves called their leader the

Ibundo Shoten, 1955); translated into Chinese by Song Suying 宋肃瀛, Liu Meisong 刘美崧, and Xu Bofu 徐伯夫, *Xi Huihu guoshi de yanjiu* 西回鹘国史的研究 (Urumqi: Xinjiang Renmin chubanshe, 1985); Akira Haneda, "Introduction," *Acta Asiatica* 34 (1978): 1–21; Juten Ota, "Part I. Uighuristan," *Acta Asiatica* 34 (1978): 22–45; Annemarie von Gabain, *Das Leben im uigurischen Königreich von Qočo (850–1250)* (Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, 1973), 18–33; Annamarie von Gabain, *Das uigurische Königreich von Chotscho, 850–1250* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964); Geng Shimin, "Gaochang Huihu wangguo" 高昌回鹘王国 [The Gaochang Uyghur kingdom], in *Xinjiang wenshilun ji*, 229–38; Khamit Khamraev, *Uigury* [The Uyghurs], tr. Turghun Almas, 2 vols. (Almaty: private publication by Zainaudin Bosakov Fund, 1994); and Golden, *Introduction to the History of the Turkic People*, 163 ff. Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), Ch. 6; and *Weiwuerzu jianshi*, Ch. 3, describe the military and political aspects that led to the formation of the Tianshan-Tarim Basin Uyghur kingdom. For early Arabic and Chinese accounts of visits to Uyghuristan, see Vladimir Minorsky, "Tamīm ibn Bahr's Journey to the Uyghurs," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 12.2 (1948): 275–305; and the official account of the Song emissary Wang Yande 王延德 to Gaochang in 981–983, *Gaochang xingji* 高昌行記 [Record of travel to Gaochang], tr. and analyzed by Stanislas Julien, "Kao-Tch'ang-hing-ki, ou Relation d'un voyage (officiel) dans le pays des Oïgours (de 981 à 983), par Wang-Yen-Té," *Journal Asiatique* 4 (1847): 50–66.

[20] On the role of Beiting/Beshbaliq for the Uyghurs, both before and after their steppe empire collapsed, see Hilda Ecsedy, "Uigurs and Tibetans in Pei-T'ing (790–791 A.D.)," *Acta Orientalia Hungaricae* 17 (1964): 83–112; Takao Moriyasu, "Qui des Ouigours ou des Tibétains ont gagné en 789-792 à Beš-balïq?" *Journal Asiatique* 169 (1981): 193-205; and Nancy S. Steinhardt, "The Uighur Ritual Complex in Beiting," *Orientations* 30.4 (1999): 28–37.

idiqut, a term used previously by the Turkic Basmïl tribe, one of the Toquz Oghuz tribes, which means "Sacred Majesty."[21] He then forced the Tibetans out of Gaochang, which had been under their control since the 790s, and occupied it as his second capital in 866. He formed his new Uyghur kingdom around those two cities sometime between 866 and 872.[22] While the functions of the two

[21] The Uyghurs actually used a variety of imperial titles that came from their ancient Türk heritage, including *qan*, *Elig qan*, *Tengriken* and *idiqut*. See Gabain, *Das Leben im uigurischen Königreich von Qočo*, 68. Since *idiqut* predominates in the sources used for this book, I use only that term hereafter. See Moriyasu, *Die Geschichte des uigurischen Manichäismus an der Seidenstrasse*, Appendix 1, for a list of the Uyghur *idiquts* at Gaochang from 954 through 1067.

[22] The administrative structure of this state, including the relative importance of the two capital cities, has been the focus of debate for some time. For some of the early scholarship on this issue, see Paul Pelliot, "Kao-Tch'ang, Qočo, Houo-Tcheou et Qarâ-Khodja," *Journal Asiatique* ser. 10, 19 (1912): 579–603; Walter Fuchs, "Das Turfangebiet: seine äußeren Geschicke bis in die T'angzeit," *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, new series, 2 (1926): 124–66; Friederich W. K. Müller, "Der hofstaat eines Uiguren-königs," in *Festschrift Vilhelm Thomsen zur vollendung des siebzigsten lebensjahres am 25. januar 1912* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1912), 207–13; Abe Takeo, "Where was the Capital of the West Uighurs?", in *Silver Jubilee Volume of the Zinbun Kagaku Kenkyusyo* (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1954), 435–50; Akira Shimazaki, "On Pei-t'ing 北庭 (Bišbalïq) and K'o-han Fu-t'u-ch'êng 可汗浮圖城," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 32 (1974): 99–117; Emil Bretschneider, *Medieval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Resources*, 2 vols. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1910), Vol. 2, 27–31. Abe argues that the Uyghur capital was located at Beiting/Beshbaliq (the northern capital) and not Gaochang/Kocho, and that this was the seat of a "fifth qanate" in the early decades of the Mongol empire. Since Beiting/Beshbaliq is located on the northern side of the Tianshan Mountains, it was apparently the summer residence of the Uyghur Qan, while Gaochang/Kocho, which has a milder climate than Beshbaliq, was the qan's winter residence. The Persian historian Juvaini, on the other hand, states that Beiting/Beshbaliq was the main Uyghur capital. See 'Ala-ad-Din 'Ata-

capitals are still debated, both places were important to the identity of the new Uyghur state, since the Uyghurs had had a longstanding presence at both places.

The new Uyghur kingdom also inherited strong political and cultural traditions from other earlier inhabitants of the Tianshan-Tarim Basin ecology. Since this area was strategically situated along the major east-west trade routes (the so-called "Silk Road") it has long been a natural meeting place for peoples of diverse cultures, including Xiongnu, Kushans, Hephthalites, Tokharians, Chinese, and Sogdians.[23] Indo-Iranian peoples are the first recorded groups in the area. Buddhism entered the area probably in the first century of the common era, and Manichaean and Christian missionaries and believers were there by the fifth century.[24] By the ninth century the local population consisted of a mixture of Uyghur, Iranian and Tokharian urban and semi-sedentary peoples and nomadic non-Uyghur Turkic peoples such as the Basmil and Toquz Oguz tribes. A mixture of Indo-European, Turkic, and Chinese cultural traditions all thrived in the Uyghur Gaochang kingdom, as can be seen in its rich complexity of artistic styles.[25] Religious diversity flourished as well, with

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Malik Juvaini, *The History of the World Conqueror*, tr. John Andrew Boyle (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1958), 47.

[23] See William Samolin, *East Turkestan to the Twelfth Century: A Brief Political Survey* (The Hague: Mouton, 1964); J. P. Mallory and Victor H. Mair, *The Tarim Mummies: Ancient China and the Mystery of the Earliest Peoples from the West* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000); and Jianjun Mei and Colin Shell, "The Iron Age Cultures in Xinjiang and their Steppe Connections," in *Ancient Interactions: East and West in Eurasia*, ed. Katie Boyle, Colin Renfrew and Marsha Levine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 213–34.

[24] See especially Steinhardt, "The Uighur Ritual Complex in Beiting"; and Albert E. Dien, "Turfan Funereal Documents," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 30 (2002): 23–48.

[25] For more information on the artistic remains that document the complex Uyghur culture that prevailed throughout their Gaochang kingdom, see especially Albert Grünwedel, *Albuddhistische*

Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity, and three different Buddhist cultures (Sogdian and Khotanese in the south and west, Tokharian in the north, and Chinese in the northeast).[26]

The abundant cultural exchange that took place over time in the area that these western Uyghurs now inhabited had a profound impact on them. After they entered the Tianshan-Tarim Basin area, the Uyghur diaspora quickly

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Kultstaaten in Chinesisch-Turkestan (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1912); Albert von Le Coq, *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan* (1928; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Mario Bussagli, "The Turfan Group," in *Central Asian Painting: From Afghanistan to Sinkiang* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1979), Ch. 6; Monique Maillard, "Essai sur la vie materielle dans l'oasis de Tourfan pendant le haut moyen age," *Arts Asiatique* 29 (1973): 3–185; William Samolin, "Ethnographic Aspects of the Archaeology of the Tarim Basin," *Central Asiatic Journal* 4 (1958): 45–67, who divides the Tarim Basin area into three distinct culture areas, a far eastern Lop area, a northern zone from Aksu to Turfan, and a southern zone centered at Khotan; and Annemarie von Gabain, *Die Formensprache der uigurischen Malerei* (Wiesbaden: In Kommission bei Otto Harrassowitz, 1987).

[26] Buddhism, however, appears to have dominated the area. By the time the Song envoy, Wang Yande 王延德, visited Gaochang in 982, he found only one Manichaean temple and fifty Buddhist monasteries and a library of Buddhist literature; see Johan Elverskog, *Uygur Buddhist Literature* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 7. A large portion of the extant Uyghur literary corpus produced in the Gaochang kingdom was religious, consisting of Buddhist sutras and commentaries, and Manichaean and Christian texts, written in several different writing systems, including Brahmanic, Tibetan, Pahlavi, and Sogdian. There is a long history of scholarship on this subject too numerous to list here. For some descriptions of the corpus of Uyghur religious literature, in addition to Elverskog, see Ronald E. Emmerick, *A Guide to the Literature of Khotan*, 2nd ed. (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1992); several of the essays by Geng Shimin in *Xinjiang wenshilun ji*; Berthold Laufer, "Zur buddhistischen Literatur der Uiguren," *T'oung Pao* 8 (1907): 391–409; and Peter Zieme, *Religion und Gesellschaft im Uigurischen Königreich von Qočo* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1992).

established their dominance over the native population, and built a civilization that reached its height in the tenth century. One of the distinctive cultural elements that set the Uyghur Gaochang kingdom apart from their neighbors was the multiplicity of writing systems used there. I have already commented on the fact that Sogdians introduced at least one of their writing systems to the Uyghurs when they were still masters of their steppe empire at Qarabalghasun. That cursive writing system was one of many used by the Uyghurs to create a body of religious and secular literature for which they became well known. It was also that Sogdian cursive script that a Uyghur introduced to Chinggis Qan in the early thirteenth century and which became known as the "Uyghur script."[27] But a number of

[27] Gabain, *Das Leben im uigurischen Königreich von Qočo*, Ch. 16, discusses the full spectrum of languages and writing systems used by the Gaochang Uyghurs. For more general discussion of the Uyghur languages and writing systems, see Thomas F. Carter, "The Printing of the Uigur Turks," in *The Invention of Printing in China and its Spread Westward*, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1925, 1955), 140–49; Larry V. Clark, "Introduction to the Uyghur Civil Documents of East Turkestan (13th–14th cent.)," Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University, 1975, esp. pp. 6–7, and 35–38, n. 15 and 16; Gerard Clauson, "The Diffusion of Writing in the Altaic World," in *Aspects of Altaic Civilization*. Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference held at Indiana University, June 4–9, 1962, ed. Denis Sinor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), 139–44; A. Rona-Tas, "Some Notes on the Terminology of Mongolian Writing," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 18 (1965): 119–47; György Kara, "Aramaic Scripts for Altaic Languages," in *The World's Writing Systems*, ed. Peter T. Daniels and William Bright (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 536–58; S. Robert Ramsey, *The Languages of China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), Ch. 10; and Nicholas Sims-Williams, "The Sogdian Sound-System and the Origins of the Uyghur Script," *Journal Asiatique* 269 (1981): 347–60. The earliest form of writing of a Turkic language was a runic script, used to write several inscriptions detailing events in early Türk history found in the Mongol steppe. This runic script has no relationship to the Sogdian syllabary used by the Uyghurs.

other writing systems were also used at Gaochang and other oasis settlements in the area, and the Uyghurs became well known for their multicultural society and their multilingual abilities. It was because they were familiar with such a wide range of languages that many Uyghurs were eventually used as tutors to the Mongol nobility, and as translators and interpreters in Mongol China.[28]

Drawing on their prior experience at running a steppe empire, and on relationships established in the area while they were still in power at Qarabalghasun, the Uyghurs maintained their own kingdom at Gaochang from approximately 866 to about 1131, when they became vassals to the Qara Khitai to their west, a remnant state of the old Qitan Liao confederation.

The Qitan, a confederation of forest tribes that originated in northeast Asia, began their conquest of north

For a detailed study of the grammar of old Turkic and Uyghur languages, as well as examples of the various scripts, see Annemarie von Gabain, *Alttürkische Grammatik* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1950).

[28] One measure of the richness of the Gaochang Uyghur society is the number of languages that were used there. The Uyghurs have left texts in several alphabets. The most common written language appears to have been a Semitic script system, which probably originated among Manichaean or Christian followers (it was this system that the Uyghurs eventually taught to Chinggis Qan). A runic alphabet was also used; said to have derived from Indic Brahmi scripts, it may be a cultural residue of Tocharian peoples who lived in the area. Finally, texts written in a Tibetan script have also been found. Most of these extant texts are religious in nature, primarily representing Manichaean, Nestorian Christian, and Buddhist teachings. It is also likely that as much as a quarter to a third of the Uyghur population were literate in one or another of these languages as well as their own native Uyghur. Thus, Uyghur social and religious elites, and perhaps some sectors of the lower classes as well, seem to have been widely literate.

China in the early 900s.[29] Their Liao dynasty ended in 1125 when they were expelled from north China by the Jurchen, who then established their own Jin dynasty in north China. One member of the Liao imperial house, a certain Yelü Dashi 耶律大石 (?–1143) refused to submit to the Jurchen and in 1124 fled west to Kedun in southwest Mongolia, the Liao's westernmost outpost, with some 10,000 horsemen. Dashi and his followers eventually moved further west, and in 1130 was granted permission to travel through Uyghur territory by the *idiqut* Bilge, who entertained Dashi, presented him with six hundred horses, a hundred camels, and three thousand sheep, gave some of his own sons and grandsons as hostages, and then declared himself a subject of Dashi. Yelü Dashi eventually conquered a wide swath of territory from the Qarakhanids and settled in their old

[29] On the history of the Qitan Liao and Qara Khitai states, see Toghto 脫脫, et al., *Liaoshi* 遼史 [History of the Liao Dynasty], 5 vols. (1344; rpt. Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1974), Ch. 30; Karl Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907–1125)* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1946), especially the appendix, pp. 619–74; Wei Liangtao 魏良弢, *Xi Liao shi yanjiu* 西辽史研究 [Research on Western Liao history] (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin chubanshe, 1987), and his later *Xi Liao shigang* 西辽史纲 [Outline history of the Western Liao] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1991); Denis Sinor, "The Kitan and the Kara Khitay," in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia,* Volume 4: *The Age of Achievement: A.D. 750 to the end of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. M. S. Asimov and C. E. Bosworth (Paris: UNESCO, 1998), 227–59; Michal Biran, "China, Nomads and Islam: The Qara Khitai (Western Liao) Dynasty 1124–1218," Ph.D. thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2000, her later article "'Like a Mighty Wall': the Armies of the Qara Khitai," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 44–91, and more recent book, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History: Between China and the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); and Denis Twitchett and Klaus-Peter Tietze, "The Liao," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 6, ed. Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 43–153. See Biran, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai*, Appendix 2, for maps of the Qara Khitai kingom.

capital city Balasaghun, in the Chu valley of present-day Kirgizstan.

Yelü Dashi took for himself the title of *gürkhan* ("universal qan"), as well as Chinese imperial and reign titles, and his empire, known in Muslim sources as the Qara Khitai (lit. "Black Qitans," where the color black probably referred to the geographical direction north) and by the Chinese as the Western Liao, *Xiliao*, eventually controlled an area that stretched from the Oxus river in the west to the Altai mountains in the east, and from Lake Balqash in the north to Balkh and Khotan in the south (most of present-day Xinjiang, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and southern Kazakstan). (See Map 4.) Strategic thinking must have played some part in the *idiqut*'s decision, since the Uyghurs would act in similar manner again within eighty years when they voluntarily submitted to the new center of gravity in the region, the Mongols.

We know very little about the relationship between the Qara Khitai and the Gaochang Uyghurs in the first decades of their alliance, and it seems that the Qara Khitai were content to collect an annual tribute payment from the *idiqut* with little overall interference. The Qara Khitai *were undoubtedly* secure in their power over the Uyghurs because members of the *idiqut*'s own family were residing at the Qara Khitai capital as hostages, and because the Uyghurs did not pose a military threat to them. Over time, the relationship between the Qara Khitai and the Uyghurs worsened. We know that the Uyghur *idiqut* offered tribute to the Jin in 1138 and again in 1144 after Dashi's death a year earlier.[30] At the same time, the Qara Khitai became more onerous in their demands on the Uyghurs. Their worsening relations seem to have reached a low point in the early 1200s, when the Qara Khitai sent a Buddhist monk, described in the sources as arrogant and ruthless, as

[30] *Jinshi* 4.73, 121.2637.

overseer at the Uyghur court.[31]

Thus, by the time Barchuq el-Tegin 巴而术阿而忒的斤 (fl. 1209–1230s) became *idiqut*, the Uyghurs' relationship with the Qara Khitai had declined considerably. The Buddhist monk overseer (*Seng shaojian* 僧少監) was killed in 1209 in a plot organized by Barchuq el-Tegin and his top officials. Shortly thereafter, the Uyghur *idiqut* submitted to Chinggis Qan, accompanied by the most prominent members of the Uyghur aristocratic elite. These men thus formed the first generation of Uyghur subjects to the Mongols. In the next chapter we shall look at members of that first group, since they constituted an important precedent for their descendants, as a group and as individuals.

The Uyghurs provided the Mongols with much needed military manpower and expertise in technical matters of empire that included the use of writing, the mechanics of administration and management of sedentary populations, as well as specialists in higher cultural matters such as the arts and religion. Once they came over to the Mongol camp, most of the Uyghuristan elites were dispersed throughout the Mongol empire. The *idiqut* himself, as well as several other members of the Uyghuristan aristocracy, led Uyghur troops alongside the Mongols in military campaigns while others were sent to serve members of the Mongol imperial clan, usually at their appanage lands, as advisors, tutors, and administrators. Sons and younger brothers of most of the prominent Uyghur elites were inducted into Chinggis Qan's personal

[31] The fact that a Buddhist monk was a high official for the Qara Khitai is not surprising since, unlike most of their neighbors, they never converted to Islam. See 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. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 175-199. Biran, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai*, 120-23, discusses the functions of the *shaojian* overseer.

bodyguard troop, where they were both hostages and journeyman members of the Mongol administrative system. Thus, their early submission enabled the Uyghurs to be given highly desirable positions as advisors and administrators in the upper echelons of the Mongol imperial clan. That legacy was a long-term source of power for Uyghurs in Mongol service; in China, the Uyghurs became arguably the single most important sub-group of the *Semuren* administrators, and many also established reputations as cultural literati acceptable to their Chinese counterparts.

Conclusion

The Uyghur Gaochang kingdom was in many ways quite different from its earlier incarnation as a steppe empire. For one thing, the Gaochang Uyghurs had become much more sedentary and urban-based than their ancestors. Moreover, Uyghur society in the Tianshan-Tarim Basin area was, if anything, even more richly multicultural than their empire centered at Qarabalghasun. This was due not least to the fact that the earlier Indo-Iranian influence the Uyghurs had absorbed from the Sogdians was bolstered by other Indo-European, Tibetan and Chinese cultural influences that had infiltrated into the Tianshan-Tarim Basin area over several centuries, as people came and went and competed for control of the overland trade routes that ran through the area and depended for their survival on the various oasis settlements like Gaochang that the Uyghurs now controlled.

It is especially striking that the Gaochang Uyghurs continued to follow the traditions of Turkic nomadic states that had, from very early times, used sedentary non-Turkic specialists in a symbiotic relationship by which the nomads could gain skills to deal with sedentary states. Just as the Sogdians provided the semi-nomadic Uyghur steppe qaghanate expertise and advice in trade, diplomacy, and culture, now the Uyghur aristocracy at Gaochang were

positioned to act in similar roles as advisors and specialists for the nomadic Mongols. As I shall discuss in the following chapters, the Gaochang Uyghurs were able to act in these roles because of the rich cultural and intellectual resources that they brought with them into the Mongol imperial project.

The Gaochang Uyghurs also continued to play important roles in international affairs after migrating to Beiting and Gaochang. They maintained official relations with a waning Tang China, and afterwards with the Song empire, as well as with the Liao and Jin courts to the east. Uyghuristan's political role in the Eurasian steppe was informed by its location astride the major trade routes. Encountering and welcoming as they did a wide mix of peoples and cultures allowed the Uyghurs to become practiced statesmen in their own land and skilled envoys at neighboring courts. One thing, however, was not welcomed or accepted in this unique poly-religious urban culture; the Uyghur *idiqut* continually rebuffed attempts by the Muslim Qarakhanid state centered in Kashgar to convert the northern Uyghurs at Gaochang and Beiting to Islam. This was undoubtedly due to religious and cultural differences between the Buddhist and Muslim traditions. The southern Uyghurs (living in the oasis settlements along the southern and far western end of the Tarim Basin) were among the earliest converts to Islam in the area (they converted in the tenth century), while Islam did not penetrate the northern oases and Beiting until at least the late fourteenth century.[32]

The Uyghurs at Gaochang had a large reserve of

[32] Geng Shimin quotes the 16th century historian Mirza Haidar in asserting that "it was only after Khizir Khoja Khan of the eastern Chagatai kingdom (ruled about 1389–1399) waged a holy war against the Turfan region several times that the Turfan area Uyghurs were forced to accept Islam"; Geng Shimin, "On the Fusion of Nationalities in the Tarim Basin and the Formation of the Modern Uyghur Nationality," *Central Asian Survey* 3.4 (1984): 12.

resources to draw on when they submitted to the Mongols in 1209, including their own earlier diaspora experience, their experience at administering a mixed population of nomadic and settled peoples of a variety of cultures and histories, the appreciation of and functionality in different cultural and linguistic traditions, and their more recent history as a kingdom in an intermediate frontier zone. But did their submission entail or create a sense of group identification among those members of the Uyghur aristocracy who were close to the *idiqut* at the time? The Chinese sources of the time imply that such was the case, by stating that they accompanied the Uyghur *idiqut* in submitting to the Mongols. While some may argue that this is simply idiomatic literary Chinese, it should perhaps not be so easily dismissed without comment.

We know from research on diaspora groups in the modern period that when a group migrates to another place, a sense of common ethnic identity may develop where there was not a strong sense of that unique identity before their diaspora experience.[33] This is an important point to make when we are considering the history of the Uyghurs as a diaspora group in the Mongol empire, since much of the scholarship on the *Semuren* in Mongol China adopts the view that that social classification scheme merely expressed the natural, pre-determined ethnic solidarities of these subject peoples. The Uyghur elite who were brought into China undoubtedly already had a clear sense of their own unique cultural identity. Subsuming them into the larger group of *Semuren* must have heightened that shared identity. Moreover, while the Mongols were certainly cognizant of tribal or ethnic differences, not least among themselves, other factors such as a state's form of

[33] See especially Cohen, *Global Diasporas*; and Tilly, "Transplanted Networks." Both scholars agree that a specific ethnic identity may naturally arise after a group has migrated to a new place, in contrast to the group importing an already-formed identity.

submission (voluntary or forced) and resources also informed the ways in which they organized their new subjects. We know that one of the more brilliant moves that Chinggis Qan made in the first years of his imperial project was to undercut traditional tribal affiliations in favor of a person's proximity to and favor with the qan. Similar logic was at the heart of the four-fold classification system in China.

In the premodern world one's identity also revolved primarily around one's native place, and it is often difficult to tell the difference between a toponym and an ethnonym. For example, the Uyghurs whose stories we shall take up below are almost always described in terms of their perceived place of origin, as in "so-and-so, a native of Gaochang". In some cases the text also describes the person in question as a *Semuren* or as a "Uyghur" (variants of the term *Weiwuer*, or *Weiwuerren*), only the last of which invokes ethnicity. But native place would immediately imply for the contemporaneous reader a person's ethnic identity. A native of Gaochang would thus without doubt be a Uyghur. By the time Uyghurs had been living in China for two or three generations, that reference also indicated a person's political and social status, as the case studies in the following chapters will demonstrate.

We would like to know whether the Uyghurs in Mongol China thought of themselves first as a distinct ethnic group (as "Uyghurs") or as members of an administrative status group (as *Semuren*), and how their peers viewed them. The sources imply that both loci of identity were equally important. My research on the Yuan Uyghurs began by trying to answer this difficult question. At a minimum, what the sources do reveal, and what I hope this book conveys, is that the Uyghur elites from the Gaochang Kingdom who were moved into China after 1209 defined themselves in terms of sets of lineages that had been displaced from their native place and were maintained

over time in their new home by marriage alliances and other professional and personal ties. Those ties were probably formed by a sense of group identity that developed among the first generation of Uyghur elites who were directly associated with their *idiqut* in 1209. Those Uyghurs most likely saw themselves as the first among peers in the larger *Semuren* social status group.

Chapter 3

Diaspora Uyghurs in the Early Mongol Empire

Once the Uyghur *idiqut* threw off his vassal relationship with the Qara Khitai and went over to the Mongols in 1209, he and other members of the Uyghuristan aristocracy were obliged to contribute to the Mongol imperial cause by participating in military campaigns alongside the Mongol troops and by serving as officials and advisors in the civilian sphere. While it is certainly true that the Uyghur *idiqut* was the prime mover in the transfer of allegiance from the Qara Khitai to the Mongols, pulling off the deed required the active participation of other members of the Uyghur aristocracy. The Mongols recognized the involvement of that group in disposing of the Qara Khitai yoke, and as a result, they shared in the glory, honors, and positions of real power showered on the *idiqut* by Chinggis Qan. And like the *idiqut*'s descendants, the exalted status of these men continued to serve as a base of power for their descendants in Mongol China for generations to come. As we shall see, they parleyed their experience and resources into new forms of "capital" that they used to situate themselves as indispensable service personnel in the new empire.

This chapter focuses on the Uyghurs who entered into Mongol service alongside, or as close contemporaries, of the Uyghur *idiqut* Barchuq el-Tegin. In typical nomadic fashion, their service spanned a wide array of civil and military duties. In fact, it is often difficult to differentiate the civilian and military activities that these men carried out as Mongol subjects. This lack of functional specificity in titles and duties, or overlap between spheres, is

consistent with traditional nomadic organization, and can be seen in the kinds of duties and titles given to the men in Chinggis Qan's personal bodyguard. Certainly in 1209 the Mongols had no concept of civil as distinct from military authority, and none of the *Semuren* in the early decades of Mongol rule can be classified as primarily civil as opposed to military officials. As Frederick Mote has suggested, it is probably more accurate to characterize the first generation of *Semuren* as filling military support roles, as aides in the essentially military government imposed by the Mongols on north China and other areas.[1]

Yet even if these men provided mainly military service, it is interesting that the sources highlight the administrative and cultural skills of many of these Uyghurs, underlining the multitude of talents that were required of them. More specifically, these sources make clear that the Uyghurs who were placed in the highest levels of authority were lauded because they knew their native written language well. These Uyghurs should thus be understood as "technicians of writing and literacy," since they wielded a particular kind of technological knowledge, of systems of literacy and administration, that were especially valuable to the nomadic and mainly non-literate Mongols. Defining technology to include types of knowledge is not a new idea, but it does run counter to traditional conceptualizations of technology as merely things or materials, and not knowledge or ideas.[2] As the examples below will

[1] Frederick Mote, personal communication, Aug., 2003. Igor de Rachewiltz also comments on the lack of distinction between civil and military spheres of authority in the early Mongol empire. See his "Turks in China under the Mongols: A Preliminary Investigation of Turco-Mongol Relations in the 13th and 14th Centuries," in *China Among Equals*, ed. Morris Rossabi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 303–04 n. 46.

[2] For discussion of this broader definition of technology, see especially Edwin T. Layton, Jr., "Technology as Knowledge," *Technology and Culture* 15 (1974): 31–41; and Rachel Laudan, "Introduction," in *The*

demonstrate, it is clear that many of the first generation of Uyghurs in Mongol service were seen as technicians of literacy. Since an effective writing system was equally important in organizing civil and military matters, these personnel were particularly valuable at this stage of the Mongol imperial project.

As has been noted already, the Uyghur aristocracy had brought linguistic and cultural skills to bear in ruling their polyethnic and polycultural kingdom in the Tianshan-Tarim Basin area. Not only were they intimately familiar with their own oral and written language, they were also undoubtedly familiar with Chinese, Persian, Mongol, Tibetan, other Turkic, and Western languages, and knew the cultures and administrative systems of those societies as well. The Uyghur socio-political elites were shaped by these experiences, earning a reputation as adroit statesmen and diplomats within a highly cultured, literate and tolerant society. By the time the future Chinggis Qan was consolidating his power among the Mongol tribes and looking to conquer his old steppe rivals, the administrative and linguistic skills and the cultural knowledge the Uyghurs possessed were precisely what he most needed for his nomadic empire. He was quick to recruit Uyghur aristocrats as tutors and administrators even before the Gaochang kingdom submitted to him in 1209.

There is no better example of the value of the intellectual resources of the Uyghurs to the early Mongol empire than the story of Tatar Tongga 塔塔統阿 (fl. 1190s– early 1200s). In 1204, two years before Temüjin's election as grand qan, while he was still consolidating the Mongol tribes around his leadership, he conquered the Naiman, a rival steppe tribe. Along with the strategic and

Nature of Technological Knowledge, ed. Rachel Laudan (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1984), 1–26. I am also indebted to my colleague, Nina Lerman, for helping me develop this analysis of technologists of literacy in the early stages of my research.

psychological benefits that he gained from that victory, the future Chinggis Qan also gained access to an important set of tools that would be essential to the long-term fate of his empire. Those tools consisted of a set of imperial seals and a writing system, made available to him by the capture of an important Uyghur advisor to the Naiman qan.

Tatar Tongga's story is now well known, but bears repeating here because it demonstrates the activities of Uyghur elites as advisors to foreign courts on matters and techniques of administration and the high regard in which those skills were held by Chinggis Qan.[3] Tatar Tongga was serving the Naiman Tayang Qaghan as a secretary in charge of the imperial seals at the time of their conquest by the Mongols. Tatar Tongga tried to flee with those seals, but was captured and brought before Temüjin. The meeting is reported in Tatar Tongga's biography, and reveals a good deal about the values and goals of the future Chinggis Qan.

> He was brought before Taizu [Chinggis Qan] ... who said [about Tatar Tongga] "A loyal and filial man!" and then asked him about the seals in his possession and how they were used. Tatar Tongga replied saying "the seals are used when someone is sent out to collect taxes; in each case the official will use it as an official stamp of approval." [Chinggis Qan] was pleased with this, and ordered [Tatar Tongga] to join the ranks of his officials. Later, whenever there was an official edict [he] used seals on them, and he was ordered to be in charge of that.... [Chinggis Qan also] asked him "are you thoroughy familiar with your own written language?" Tatar Tongga replied telling him that he was thoroughly familiar with it, and then

[3] Historians have long recognized the importance of Tatar Tongga to Mongol and Yuan history. For the earliest western scholarship on this man, see Jean Pierre Abel-Rémusat, "Tha-Tha-Toung-'O," *Nouveaux Mélanges Asiatiques* 2 (1829): 61–63. For an exhaustive bibliography of sources and scholarship on Tatar Tongga, see Rachewiltz, "Turks in China Under the Mongols," 283–84, 298 n. 9. Tatar Tongga's official biography is located in *Yuanshi* 124.3048–49.

> he was ordered to teach the imperial sons and princes to use the Uyghur script to write Mongolian.[4]

The Gaochang court must have had good working relations with neighboring nomadic tribes like the Naiman, since despite the fact that they were subjects of the Qara Khitai a member of the Uyghur aristocracy was put in charge of the imperial seals for the Naiman qaghan. It is unclear whether Tatar Tongga introduced the technology of seals to the Naiman from Gaochang, or whether they came from other sources, possibly China. In any event, it was a tool that Chinggis Qan knew he needed in his emerging empire. Tatar Tongga also filled an urgent need of the Mongol imperial clan by providing a writing system they could adapt to represent their own spoken language.[5] Finally, Tatar Tongga's loyalty to his deposed Naiman master was a quality that was honored and respected by Chinggis Qan, as we see in his exclamation about Tatar Tongga's moral character ("A loyal and filial man!" 忠孝人也). As a result, Tatar Tongga served both Chinggis Qan and Ögödei Qan as a treasury official, and his sons and grandson held high offices in China as *Semuren*.

Tatar Tongga heralds a trend that began a few years later when his own *idiqut* and fellow countrymen submitted to the Mongols. Like Tatar Tongga, they were experienced in the full gamut of military and civil administration, which served as important forms of cultural capital that helped situate them and their descendants as powerful political elites in the Mongol administration. The stories of this group of Uyghurs reveals a great deal about the ways in which elite status and identity was maintained and

[4] *Yuanshi* 124.3048.

[5] For further discussion of Tatar Tongga and his fellow Uyghurs in spreading literacy among the early Mongols, see my article "Uyghur Technologists of Writing and Literacy in Mongol China," *T'oung Pao* 91.4-5 (2005): 396-435.

reproduced by one diaspora group in the Mongol empire.

The sources identify several prominent fellows of the Uyghur *idiqut* when he submitted to Chinggis Qan in 1209, and who were among the first wave of Uyghur diaspora elites in the Mongol empire. These men actively supported the *idiqut*'s decision to throw off his tributary relationship with the Qara Khitai; some were ringleaders in the actual assassination of the Qara Khitai overseer at the Uyghur court, others served as initial ambassadors to the Mongols, and all of them are reported to have accompanied their leader in turning to the Mongols as subjects. At least one scholar has identified them as a close circle of the *idiqut*'s supporters.[6] Their affiliation with the *idiqut*, Barchuq el-Tegin, was crucial to their identity and standing as members of the new Mongol administration.[7] All were

[6] Li Futong 李符桐, "Weiwuerren duiyu Yuanchao jianguo zhi gongxian" 畏兀兒人對於元朝建國之貢獻 [The contributions of the Uyghurs in the founding of the Yuan Dynasty], in *Shixue lunji* 史學論集 (Taibei: Huagang chubanshe, 1977), 328–98, identifies ten individuals who were explicitly associated with the Uyghur *idiqut* in 1209 and who submitted along with him. I follow Li's assertion of a group identity for these individuals because of this association. Rachewiltz, "Turks in China," identifies thirty-seven Uyghurs who were active in the first decades of Mongol rule of China, from 1200 to 1259, many of whom were also among the group I classify as the first generation of Uyghur service officials. See also Shang Yanbin 尚衍斌, "Yuandai neiqian Weiwuerren de fenbu ji qi dui Han wenhua de xishou 元代内遣畏兀儿人的分布及其對漢文化的吸收 [Distribution of Uighurs in Yuan China and their integration into Han culture]," *Minzu yanjiu* 1997.1: 64–71. Incidentally, I rely on Rachewiltz's rendering of Uyghur names for many of the individuals I examine here.

[7] I do not discuss the *idiqut* Barchuq el-Tegin or his family here since he occupied a position more akin to a member of the Mongol royal clan, quite different from other members of the Uyghur aristocracy. The *idiqut* retained his position as head of Uyghuristan after he submitted to the Mongols. His descendants inherited the title and perquisites of that office, and remained in Uyghuristan until Qubilai lost control of the region to the rival Chagadaid Mongols in the 1280s. The *idiqut* was

given high positions in the Mongol administration under Chinggis Qan. Just as important for our story, however, the honors did not stop with that first generation of the Uyghur diaspora elite in Mongol China. Their descendants inherited high status to continue to enjoy power and prestige as prominent *Semuren* officials through the rest of the time the Mongols ruled China, and even beyond. The following chapters focus on the descendants of the Uyghur elites portrayed in this chapter, and the strategies those families employed to maintain dual identities. We begin with the first generation of Uyghurs in Mongol China.

The First Wave of Uyghur Migrants

We can identify several individuals who were part of the so-called first wave of Uyghur aristocrats inducted into the Mongol empire. There were undoubtedly more men involved in that transition than the sources document, and the individuals discussed here are also just a representative sampling of those whom we do know about. It should also be kept in mind that, while this book focuses on Uyghurs who ended up serving the Mongols in China, others had

more akin to a Mongol prince in other ways as well; Uyghuristan was considered his appanage, he was given a woman from Chinggis's family in marriage, and he was adopted by Chinggis Qan as a "fifth son." For information on Barchuq and following *idiqut*s in Mongol China, see Thomas T. Allsen, "The Yuan Dynasty and the Uyghurs of Turfan in the 13th Century," in *China Among Equals*, ed. Morris Rossabi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 243–80; and Luo Xianyou 罗贤佑, "Yuandai Weiwuer yiduhu puxi jiqi diwei bianqian" 元代畏兀儿亦都护谱系及其地位变迁 [Change in status and pedigree of the Uyghur *idiqut* in the Yuan Dynasty], *Minzu yanjiu* 1997.2: 70–80; and Dang Baohai 党宝海, "13, 14 shiji Weiwu'er yiduhu shixi kao" 13，14 世纪畏兀儿亦都护世系考 [Research on the genealogy of the 13th and 14th century Uyghur Idiquts], *Xibei minzu yanjiu* 1998.1: 27–35. Dang's article is especially interesting because he focuses on the *idiqut*s who were brought into China proper after Qubilai Qan lost control of Uyghuristan.

been dispersed elsewhere in the Mongol empire where they played similar roles to their counterparts in the Chinese territories.

The primary sources specifically comment on their association with the *idiqut*, and the fact that with the *idiqut* they had turned to follow Chinggis Qan in 1209.[8] In most cases that meant a literal as well as symbolic following, since the *idiqut* and his cohorts were expected to accompany the Mongols on their various military campaigns as subjects who would render the service that the Mongol imperial clan had come to expect from any outer clan or conquered people. While they led troops in battle and were assigned powerful positions over other conquered people, such as judge (C. *duanshiguan*) or agent (*darughachi*), they were also subjects.

One of the first emissaries from the Uyghur court to the Mongols was a man by the name of Dashi 達釋. He is a good example of the role that the cohort of Uyghur aristocrats played in submitting to the Mongols.[9] What

[8] This sense of following or turning to the Mongols is expressed by the consistent use of *gui* 歸 (to turn to, follow, return), as in "along with the *idiqut* they followed Taizu [Chinggis Qan]" 與亦都護歸太祖 (*yu Iduhu gui Taizu*). Underlining my argument that these men were a cohort, this phrase is limited to the biographies of individuals who had some immediate connection with the *idiqut* and his act of submission, and was not a stock phrase common to the biographies of all the important Uyghur *Semuren* in China. It is an important clue to the identity of these individuals and also to their group identity that should not be overlooked.

[9] Information about Dashi is contained in the official biography of his grandson, Tiegeshu. See *Yuanshi* 135.3271–72; and a genealogical diagram of this family in Qian Daxin 錢大昕, "Yuanshi shizu biao" 元史氏族表 [Table of clans in the Yuan Dynastic History]," in *Ershiwu shi bubian* 二十五史補篇 [Supplements to the Twenty-five Dynastic Histories], 14 vols. (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2005), Vol. 14, 581. See also the later recapitulation of their biography by Tu Ji 屠寄, *Mengwuer shiji* 蒙兀兒史記 [History of the Mongols]

information we have on Dashi is mainly communicated in the official biography of his grandson, Tiegeshu 鐵哥术 (Tekechuq, or "little goat"?), the most famous member of the family.

> Dashi had a plan to make his fellow countrymen submit [to the Mongols]. [When] Chinggis Qan went west to subdue the Naiman, the *idiqut* was afraid and he gave Dashi some embroidered cloth and a hat trimmed with white sable and commanded him to take them [to Chinggis Qan]. [Then] Dashi knew the Mandate of Heaven had been turned over [to the Mongols], and he urged the *idiqut* to declare himself a vassal in order to preserve the peace in his country. Thus Dashi was given the title of Grand Minister (*shangshu*).[10]

This is an interesting account not least because we would expect someone as important as Dashi is portrayed here to show up in other contemporaneous accounts. In fact, we know little about Dashi apart from this brief account. His son, Yelishu 野里术 (fl. 1219–1230s), was singled out by the Mongols as a military commander of great courage who commanded the loyalty of a large group of warriors. Chinggis Qan, in a bid to win his support, ordered that Yelishu and his men be given 500 horses, and he welcomed Yelishu and his men into his service. This family's story is a good example of the dual civil/military nature of the Mongol administrative system since Yelishu also served as a secretary to a certain Mongol Prince Anzhitai, and led troops in battle in 1219 and 1232 against the Jurchen Jin dynasty.

Yelishu's eldest son, Tiegeshu, continued the family

(Taibei: Shijie shuju, 1962), 119. I will comment on these sources below.

[10] *Yuanshi* 135.3271. Was Dashi's prescience real or supplied later by his descendants to the writers of this account? It is impossible to know.

tradition of distinguished military and civilian service to the Mongols. In 1277 a rebellion occurred in Shandong and troops were assembled in a great hurry. Tiegeshu achieved prominence because he was able to keep an exact accounting of the numbers of troops and supplies mustered for this campaign by using the Uyghur writing system. Qubilai Qan was impressed with his abilities and assigned Tiegeshu the position of agent (*darughachi*) in north China. He was eventually awarded the honorary civil title of Grandee of the Thirteenth Class (*jiayi dafu*) by the Yuan court, and died in 1299 at an unspecified age.[11]

By the time the fourth generation of this family had served the Mongols, exemplified in the career of Tiegeshu's grandson, Qaishou 海壽, most of them had lost their identification with the military life and taken on civilian roles as *Semuren* officials.[12] They had also come to be identified as Chinese-style literati. Qaishou is best known as an agent (*darughachi*) in Hangzhou. When his grandfather died in 1299, in good Chinese fashion Qaishou retired from official position to mourn his grandfather's death. And after his own death the Yuan court awarded him the important posthumous titles Hanlin Auxiliary Academician (*Hanlin zhi xueshi*), Marquis of Fanyang Prefecture (*Fanyang junhou*), and the posthumous style name Kind and Intelligent (*Hui Min*).[13]

Another example of a Uyghur aristocrat who entered Mongol service alongside his *idiqut* is Sevinch

[11] For a complete list of the 42 levels of honorary official civil titles granted to persons of outstanding merit during the period of Mongol rule of China, see Farquhar, *Government of China Under Mongolian Rule*, 24–26.

[12] It would be interesting to know the eventual fate of the military troops attached to this family, and whether they were hereditarily attached to Dashi's clan, but the sources do not comment on this issue.

[13] *Yuanshi* 135.3272.

Toghrïl 小雲石脫忽憐 (fl. 1200–1230s).[14] Before submission to the Mongols, he had been an *uluγ ayγuchi* in his native Uyghuristan, the equivalent of the Chinese term grand minister (*dachen*).[15] This was apparently a hereditary position, since his father, Tegin Bilge Qutï 的斤必里傑忽提, was also an *uluγ ayγuchi* there.[16] Sevinch Toghrïl is another example of the hybrid civil-military nature of the early Mongol administration since he is noted for leading troops alongside Chinggis Qan on military campaign in the west against the Khwarazm kingdom, and for his role as a judge (*duanshiguan*) at Tolui's wife's appanage lands in Zhending, north China, after his return from that campaign.[17] As a judge, he would have had wide-ranging authority over the local population who were now part of

[14] Yuan era sources that document the history of this individual and his family include official biographies in *Yuanshi* 134.3262–63; a tomb inscription for Sevinch's great-great-grandson, Erincin 亦輦真 (1296–1347), written by the famous Chinese writer Huang Jin 黃溍, "Liaoyang dengchu xing Zhongshusheng zuocheng Yinianzhen gong shendaobei" 遼陽等處行中書省左承亦輦真公神道碑 [Spirit way inscription for Master Erincin, Minister on the Left of Liaoyang and other Branch Secretariats], *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 金華黃先生文集 [Collected works of Huang Jin] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1922) 24.15a–18b; and later versions of family biographies in *Xin Yuanshi* 136.15b–17a; and *Mengwuer shiji* 37.7, 45.10ff. On the rendering of the name Xiaoyunshi as Sevinch, see Francis Woodman Cleaves, "A Chancellery Practice of the Mongols in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 14 (1951): 514–15.

[15] I am indebted to Thomas Allsen for providing a rendering of Sevinch Toghrïl's name and transliteration of his Uyghur title. On the term *ayγuchi*, see Volker Rybatzki, *Die Toñuquq-Inschrift* (Szeged: University of Szeged, 1997), 92 n. 243.

[16] His father's name is given by Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang Xiansheng wenji* 24.15a.

[17] Ögödei Qan gave the territories of Zhending 真定 Prefecture in modern Hebei to Tolui's widow, Sorqaqtani Beki (d. 1256), in 1236, to honor his late brother.

that appanage, dispensing justice, collecting taxes, and maintaining order in the name of Tolui. His descendants lived in China for at least four generations after him, where they occupied relatively high-level positions as *Semuren* officials in the Yuan central secretariat and various branch secretariats.

Orun Arslan Duda 玉龍阿思蘭都大 is another Uyghur who was involved in the *idiqut*'s submission to the Mongols as an envoy.[18]

> In 1209 Orun accepted the *idiqut*'s order and went to meet Chalahuotchi and others [Mongols] to proclaim [the *idiqut*'s] victory over the Merkid Qutuq, whom he had defeated in battle at Jiaohe. [Chinggis Qan] said to him, "since this is the case, you should return to the *idiqut* and tell him [of my favorable decree] and then return with a gift of local items." Orun replied "may the qan prosper and have pity on my king. As for me, how can I dare to present anything to you." Then he returned to the *idiqut* with the decree and the *idiqut* sent Qara Arslan Duda [Orun's son] to offer valuable items and a bundle of woven gold brocade. Thus Uyghuristan turned to and allied with [the Mongols]. Then Qara Arslan Duda managed affairs for Chinggis Qan, he was inducted into the qan's bodyguard, and accompanied the qan on a military campaign against the Jin where he died.[19]

[18] The only Yuan-era source that documents this individual is a post-mortem inscription written for his grandson Ata Qaya. See Xu Youren 許有壬, "Da Yuan guzeng Guanglu dafu Jiangzhe dengchu xing zhongshusheng pingzhang zhengshi zhuguo zhuifeng Zhaoguogong Aduhayagong shendao beiming" 大元故贈光祿大夫江浙等處行中書省平章政事柱國追封趙國公阿都哈雅公神道碑銘 [Spirit way inscription for Master Adu Qaya, who was posthumously bestowed the titles Grandee of the Third Class, Grand Councilor of Jiangzhe and other branch secretariats, the dignitary title Pillar of the State, and the posthumous enfeoffment of Duke of Zhao in the Great Yuan Dynasty], *Guitang xiaogao* 圭塘小稿 [Collected works of Xu Youren] (Siku quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1983) 10.10a–13a. The same inscription, but with slightly different renderings of personal names, including Aleitanhaya 阿勒坦哈雅 instead of Aduhaya, is in Xu Youren, *Zhi Zheng ji* 49.5. Later renditions of this family's biography can be found in *Xin Yuanshi* 136.8b–9a; and Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shiji* 45.8b–9a. The first part of his name, Orun, means "high place" or "throne" in Turkic.

It is not clear why Orun was not himself sent back to the Mongol camp with the Uyghur *idiqut*'s gifts to seal the transfer of Uyghur loyalties to the Mongols, but the fate of his son, Qara Arslan Duda 哈剌阿思蘭都大, was typical for family members of prominent men of subject states. He was kept in the Mongol camp as a member of the qan's personal bodyguard, where he served the qan in both civil and military affairs. The family continued to serve the Mongols in this vein for several generations. For example, Qara Arslan Duda's son, Ata Qaya 阿塔海牙, began his career also as a member of the qan's personal bodyguard, and then was sent as an officer in charge of a military colony. Ata Qaya's son, Arslan Qaya 阿思蘭海牙, on the other hand, does not seem to have been a military man, but served most of his career as an official in the censorate, one of the civilian bureaus of Yuan government. Family members for two more generations are recorded in the Yuan sources, most continuing the pattern of prominent *Semuren* officials, where they were inducted into the qan's personal bodyguard and then moved on into rather high level administrative positions in China.

Another member of this cohort, Mengsus 孟速思 (1206–1267), caught the attention of the Mongols because of his intellectual abilities.[20] He came from a prominent

[19] *Xin Yuanshi* 136.8b.

[20] This name is an odd form for Uyghur, and may be rendered as Mengsüz, "without eyebrows," or Mengisüz, "without joy." Peter Golden, personal communication. Sources for the history of this family include two funerary inscriptions for a son of Mengsus – see Cheng

Uyghur clan that lived in the capital city Beshbaliq, where his father was a governor (*dutong* 都統) of his region. Mengsus was admitted into the Mongol administration because he was skilled in the Uyghur writing system. Known in his youth for precocious abilities, Mengsus was just the kind of individual that Chinggis Qan needed in his emerging empire. After 1209 he was put in charge of collecting taxes on the appanage lands of one of the Mongol princes:

> By age 15 he was thoroughly familiar with his native written script [*jintong benguo shu* 盡通本國書]. Chinggis Qan heard about him and commanded him to appear before him. Upon first seeing him he was pleased. He [Chinggis Qan] said "This young man is full of energy [lit. 'has fire in his eyes'], and he will be of great use [to us]." Chinggis Qan ordered him to go and serve the Prince Tolui [and] he was put in charge of annual taxation at Zhending.[21]

Appanage holdings were important sources of revenue for the Mongol imperial princes, and Mengsus's appointment as manager of tax income on the appanage holdings of Tolui's wife, Sorqaqtani Beki, put him in

Jufu 程鉅夫 (1249–1318), "Wudu Zhiminwang shude zhi bei" 武都智敏王述德之碑 [Inscription for transmitting the virtue of the Prince of Wudu, Zhimin], *Xuelou ji* 雪樓集 [Collected works of Cheng Jufu] (rpt. Taibei: National Central Library, 1970) 6.9a–12b; and "Wudu Zhongjianwang shendaobei" 武都忠簡王神道碑 [Spirit way inscription for Prince of Wudu, Zhongjian], *Xuelou ji* 7.4a–7a; and Mengsus's official biography in *Yuanshi* 124.3059. Later versions are found in *Xin Yuanshi* 136; and Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shiji* 45. See also Herbert Franke's article on Mengsus based on the two above-mentioned funerary inscriptions, "A Sino-Uighur Family Portrait: Notes on a Woodcut from Turfan," *The Canada-Mongolia Review* 4.1 (1978): 33–40.

[21] *Yuanshi* 124.3059.

contact with the highest level of Mongol princes.[22] Mengsus became an informal advisor to Qubilai while still under Tolui's employment, and his first wife, Ketelün 怯牒倫, was a younger sister to Qubilai Qan's wife, Čabi. He was thus very well connected with the Mongol imperial house. After his elevation to grand qan, Qubilai wanted to promote Mengsus to the office of chancellor but he declined the offer. When Mengsus died, Čabi herself donated money for Mengsus's burial site!

Mengsus had eleven sons and four daughters by two wives and a concubine, and his descendants continued the pattern he had set by serving in positions that utilized their high level of literacy.[23] For example, several of his sons and grandsons were appointed officials in the prestigious Hanlin Academy. The career of one of his sons, Ašigh Temür 阿失帖木兒 (1249–1309), provides an especially vivid example of the ways in which Uyghurs served the Mongols in a wide variety of capacities, in both civil and military spheres.

[22] Uyghurs such as Mengsus were often assigned as officials in charge of Mongol appanage holdings, since they were literate and could make sure that tax and other incomes were collected on a regular basis. As the official in charge of annual taxation at Tolui's appanage, Mengsus would also, presumably, have had real power over the local population who resided on the appanage lands, and may also have been able to suggest, if not arrange, how that income would be used by the prince's household. On the Mongol appanage system (C. *touxia*, M. *ayimagh*), see Paul Ratchnevsky, "Zum Ausdruck 't'ouhsia' in der Mongolenzeit," in *Collectanea Mongolica: Festschrift für Professor Dr. Rintchen zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Walther Heissig (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1966), 173–91; and Farquhar, *Government of China*, 17–18, 59 n. 6.

[23] For a summary of this family's genealogy, see Qian, "Yuanshi shizubiao," in *Ershiwu shi bubian*, Vol. 14, 571. We are also fortunate to have a visual representation of several members of this family in a type of family portrait. See Annemarie von Gabain, "Ein Chinesisch-Uigurischer Blockdruck," in *Tractata Altaica*, ed. Walther Heissig, John R. Krueger, F. J. Oines and E. Schütz (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976), 203–10.

Ašigh Temür began his career with induction into the personal bodyguard of Qubilai's son, Prince Jingim, and accompanied him on the military campaign against southern Song in 1278. Because of his meritorious service in that campaign, Ašigh Temür was made a secretary in the Yuan Military Affairs Bureau (*shumiyuan dushi*). Prince Jingim's wife then summoned him to teach her sons, Temür and Kamala, the Uyghur script, a significant achievement since Temür would succeed Qubilai as emperor in 1294. In 1298 Ašigh Temür was appointed to his first position in the Hanlin Academy and ordered to teach Prince Qaišan the Uyghur script. When Qaišan was made emperor in 1308, he promoted Ašigh Temür to the position of chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, concurrent with the position of a recipient of edicts, or director, in the Hanlin and Historiography Academy (*Hanlin Guoshiyuan chengzhi*). Thus, he taught two Yuan emperors his native Uyghur script![24]

Mengsus and his family are good examples of the breadth of resources and skills that Uyghurs possessed and used as diaspora people within the Mongol empire. Their story also reveals the slow evolution of separate civil and military spheres of authority, which only really started during the reigns of Möngke and Qubilai and was still far from complete even by the end of Qubilai's reign. There was no inconsistency in calling on Ašigh Temür, essentially a military man, to teach members of the Mongol imperial clan his native Uyghur writing system. In keeping with nomadic tradition, any member of the qan's bodyguard could be asked to perform tasks that were either civil or military in nature. His duties were based on his skills, not on his functional title as a civil or military official. It is also interesting to note that the Uyghur script was still important long after it had been replaced by the

[24] See Franke, "Sino-Uighur Family Portrait," 38, for Ašigh Temür.

Tibetan 'Phags-pa script as the official writing system.

Finally, this family is also a good example of the multicultural leanings of many Uyghurs who came to live in China as *Semuren*. On the basis of unusual visual documentation, we know that Mengsus and his family were devout Buddhists. At the same time, the names of members of this family combine Chinese, Turkic, Tibetan and Mongolian elements, no doubt a result of the wide-ranging marriage alliances established by this family. For example, Mengsus's first wife was a Mongolian princess and his second wife a Uyghur. Admittedly, those marriages were as much about fostering and cementing political and social ties with the Mongol political elite and other prominent *Semuren* (such as the link between Mengsus's line and the Uyghur Lian family, described below) as they were about cultural interest or attraction. But they do show the acceptance by this Uyghur family of persons of other ethnic origins and religious persuasions.

The next members of this group of aristocrats who were associated with the Uyghur *idiqut*, Qara Ïghach Buyruq, Buyruq Qaya, and Bilge Buqa, show the same career patterns as the men we have just described. They differ from those cases, however, because we have a wider variety of sources that provide a window onto the larger scale process of elite production in Yuan China. This allows us to see not only how this cohort of Uyghur elite integrated into the nascent Mongol administration, but also how later generations of Uyghur *Semuren* adapted their strategies of survival to fit the changes that took place as the Mongols incorporated south China into their empire, and gradually isolated China away from the rest of the Mongol empire. These examples also illustrate concomitant changes in the Mongol administration of China, especially the growing distinction between civil and military spheres of authority, and how the Uyghur *Semuren* adapted to that change. The rest of this chapter examines the lives and

careers of Qara Ïghach Buyruq, Buyruq Qaya, and Bilge Buqa, while studies of their descendants, all of whom were part of the important *Semuren* status group, follow.

Qara Ïghach Buyruq (*Halayihachibeilu* 哈剌亦哈赤北魯, fl. 1190s–1220s) is a good example of the kind of Uyghur aristocrat who went over to the Mongols. His story also sheds some light on the relationships the Uyghur court had with its near neighbors.[25] Qara Ïghach first appears in Chinese records during the reign of the Uyghur *idiqut* Esen Temür (月仙帖木兒, fl. 1190s, father of Barchuq el-Tegin), where he is described as being very intelligent and versed in all customs and affairs of his state and his people. He was assigned by Esen Temür to be a judge (*duanshiguan*) in the state of Sayram, a tributary of Gaochang located in present-day Xinjiang, between Kucha and Aksu.[26] Duties included acting as a general overseer and representative of the Uyghur court, with wide-ranging authority in matters of state. While Sayram was not a major power in Central Asia, Qara Ïghach's stationing there indicates the Uyghurs continued to hold some authority over areas that had presumably been subsumed into the Qara Khitai kingdom.

Sometime after his assignment to Sayram, the last

[25] Sources for this individual and his family include his official biography in *Yuanshi* 124.3046–48; entries in Yang Yu 楊瑀, *Shanju xinhua* 山居新話 [Collected works of Yang Yu] (rpt. Taibei: Yiwen Press, 1966), 7b–8a, translated into German by Herbert Franke, *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte Chinas under der Mongolenherrschaft: Das Shan-kü sin-hua des Yang Yü* (Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1956), 66; Tao Zongyi, *Chuogeng lu* 2; and Li Chong 李翀, *Riwen lu* 日聞錄 [Collected works of Li Chong] (Taibei: Yiwen Press, 1968).

[26] On Sayram, see Peter B. Golden, "Sayrām," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, new edition, 11 vols. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), Vol. 9, 114–15; Feng Chengjun 馮承鈞, *Xiyu Diming* 西域地名 [Placenames of Western Regions] (Taiwan: Huashi chubanshe, 1976), 62; and Bretschneider, *Medieval Researches*, Vol. 2, 94–95.

Qara Khitai *gürkhan* Zhilugu invited Qara Ïghach to "go [to his court] and serve as a tutor to his sons," most likely teaching them the Uyghur language and script since it was an important means of communication in the area.[27] Since Qara Ïghach continued to hold the office of judge in his new posting to the Qara Khitai capital, he was undoubtedly still considered a representative of the now-subordinate Uyghur court, and he may, in fact, have been a high-level hostage. Thus, the Qara Khitai had many reasons for requisitioning him to their capital.

The sources do not tell us how long Qara Ïghach served at the Qara Khitai court, or the exact nature of his duties, but we know that his family in Uyghuristan was involved in events that led to the break with the Qara Khitai in 1209. When the next *idiqut*, Barchuq, had the Qara Khitai overseer killed, he sent Qara Ïghach's son-in-law and three other prominent Uyghurs to "serve" at the Qara Khitai court. This mission was presumably intended to allay, however temporarily, the Qara Khitai reaction to the *idiqut*'s actions while at the same time announcing his intentions to the *gürkhan*. The text then says that Qara Ïghach's son-in-law told Qara Ïghach of the events back home and that Qara Ïghach subsequently accompanied the other Uyghurs in submitting and turning to Chinggis Qan. The turn of events implies that this was a carefully staged action on the part of the *idiqut* and the Uyghur political elites.

Sometime after 1209, Chinggis Qan drafted Qara Ïghach's son, Ödüsh Inal 月朵失野訥, into his personal bodyguard, and Qara Ïghach accompanied Chinggis Qan in his military campaigns in the western regions (presumably against the Qara Khitai and the Khwarazmshah). Thus began Ödüsh Inal's impressive career as a service official. When the Mongols passed through Uyghuristan on their

[27] *Yuanshi* 124.3046. See also Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 670.

way west, Chinggis Qan left Ödüsh Inal there as an agent (*darughachi*) in charge of Dushan City 獨山城, located just east of the Uyghur capital city Beshbaliq. He was in charge of civilian and military affairs there, and his authority as a representative of the new Mongol regime was secured by the fact that he was bestowed the high Chinese and Mongol hereditary official titles *dudu* (T. *tutuq*, "commander-in-chief") and *darqan* (C. *dalahan*, "free noble"), and the prestigious Golden Tiger Tablet (*jinhufu*) to wear. Qara Ïghach's descendants continued to serve as agents for the Mongols in Uyghuristan for two more generations, moving to China proper only when Qubilai lost control of the region to his Chaghadaid rivals. We will take up the story of his *Semuren* descendants in the next chapter.

Buyruq Qaya 布鲁海牙 (1197–1265), progenitor of the well-known Lian 廉 family, came from another prominent Uyghur family in Beshbaliq.[28] His father, Qitay

[28] Sources that document the history of this family include Buyruq Qaya's official biography, *Yuanshi* 125.3070–72; official biographies of two of his sons, Lian Xixian at *Yuanshi* 126.3085–97 and Lian Qashan Qaya at *Yuanshi* 145.3447–48; and Lian Xixian's funerary inscription written by Su Tianjue 蘇天爵, "Pingzhang zhengshi Lian Wenzhengwang shendaobei" 平章政事廉文正王神道碑 [Spirit-way inscription for Prince Lian Wenzheng, Privy Councillor], *Yuan wenlei* 元文類 [Anthology of Yuan literature (also known as *Guochao wenlei* 國朝文類)] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1993) 65.1a–16b. Important secondary scholarship includes the biography of Lian Xixian by Ch'i-ch'ing Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-Hsien (1231–1280)," in *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yuan Period*, ed. Igor de Rachewiltz, Hok-lam Chan, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing and Peter W. Geier (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993), 480–99; and Wang Meitang 王梅堂, "Yuandai neiqian Weiwuerzu shijia – Lianshi jiazu kaoshu" 元代内迁维吾尔族世家 – 廉氏家族考述 [Distribution of Uyghur aristocratic families in Yuan Dynasty – a study of the Lian family] (unpublished paper for Yuan Dynasty History Conference, Hong Kong, 1997). For a complete listing of the primary sources that document the Lian family during the Yuan,

Qaya 吉臺海牙 (fl. early 1200s), and grandfather, Yarp Qaya 牙兒八海牙 (fl. 1180s?), had both served as officials at the Uyghur court. His father died when Buyruq Qaya was just a child, and we are told that "he went to stay with his uncle's family and then studied, and after awhile he became skilled in his native writing system, and even more skilled in riding horses and shooting arrows (*jishan qi guoshu, youjing qishe* 即善其國書，尤精騎射)."[29] When he was only eighteen years of age he accompanied the *idiqut* in submitting to the Mongols, and was inducted into Chinggis Qan's bodyguard right away. Buyruq then accompanied Chinggis Qan on his military campaign against the Qara Khitai, where he distinguished himself in battle. As a result, Chinggis Qan rewarded him with a felt tent and a woman from the Shimo 石抹 clan, the Qara Khitai *gürkhan*'s consort clan.

After Chinggis Qan died, Buyruq Qaya received the most important promotion of his life. He was sent to Yanjing (燕京, the old Jin capital and site of the future Yuan capital Dadu) as an official in charge of monetary affairs (*zongli caibi*), and it was while he was stationed there that Tolui's wife, Sorqaqtani Beki, heard about him and petitioned Ögödei Qan to have him sent to serve her. According to his biography, she had heard he was a careful official, but mastery of his native written language and military skills were also undoubtedly points in his favor, since he was put in charge of civil and military households in Yanjing and Zhongshan, both in present-day Hebei, and

see the listings for Lian family members in Wang Deyi, 王德毅, Li Rongcun 李榮村, and Pan Bocheng 潘柏澄, eds., *Yuanren zhuanji ziliao suoyin* 元人傳記資料索引 [Index to biographical materials of Yuan persons], 5 vols. (Taibei: Xinwenshuang chubanshe, 1980); and Rachewiltz and Wang, ed., *Repertory of Proper Names in Yüan Literary Sources*, 1247–50.

[29] *Yuanshi* 125.3070.

was subsequently elevated to the position of agent (*darughachi*) in charge of her appanage lands in Zhending. Appointed to these positions in 1229 or 1230, early in Ögödei's reign, in 1231 he was further elevated to the important positions of investigation commissioner (*lianfang shi*) and judge (*duanshiguan*) of Yannan Prefecture 燕南路. He was given the prestigious Golden Tiger Tablet to wear, and his biography makes clear that he wielded considerable power over the local population.[30] When Qubilai became qaghan in 1260 he kept Buyruq Qaya on as an official at Zhending, and in the following year was elevated to the position of director of the Bureau of Agriculture. The reader will remember that another prominent Uyghur, Mengsus, also served Sorqaqtani Beki at Zhending, and they must have overlapped since Buyruq Qaya served the Mongols at Zhending in one capacity or other for close to thirty years.

Buyruq Qaya's service in the house of Tolui put him in touch with Tolui's sons and future qans, Möngke and Qubilai, which gave a substantial boost to the careers of many of his numerous descendants, all of whom were known by the Chinese-style surname Lian (see next chapter for further discussion of this family). His ties to other prominent Uyghurs were also sustained during his long career, especially via his contacts with Mengsus, for one of his sons, Lian Xixian, married a daughter of Mengsus.

The last example of an early Uyghur aristocrat we shall consider in this chapter is the Uyghur chief minister Bilge Buqa 比俚伽普華 (also known as Bilge Temür 帖穆爾, fl. early 1200s).[31] He too came from a prominent

[30] Regarding Mongol imperial insignia such as the Golden Tiger Tablet, see Rachewiltz, "Personnel and Personalities," 90.

[31] The sources that document the history of Bilge Buqa and his descendants are, if anything, even more numerous than those pertaining to Buyruq Qaya, and will be described in more detail below. For an exhaustive list of those sources, see Michael C. Brose, "Strategies of

Uyghur family, and he, more than any other person in the *idiqut*'s inner circle, was directly involved in the Uyghur submission to the Mongols. For that reason, as well as the other intellectual resources his family commanded, he and his descendants were well treated by the Mongols.

Bilge Buqa's grandfather, Kezhipuer 克直普爾 (fl. early 1100s), is the first family member recorded in Uyghuristan. He was State Minister (*Guoxiang* 國相), a position just below the *idiqut* himself in rank and importance, and held the honorific titles of Free Noble (*Darqan* 答剌罕) and Elder Statesman (*Ata Tutuq* 阿大都督).[32] Kezhipuer also spent time at the Liao court representing the Uyghur kingdom, where "the Liao king conferred [on Kezhipuer] the titles of Grand Preceptor (*Taishi* 太師), Grand Counselor-in-Chief (*Da Chengxiang* 大丞相), and he was put in charge of the storehouses in the Capital and other Regions (*Zongguan Neiwai Zangshi* 總管內外藏事)."[33] His career provides striking evidence of the

Survival: Uyghur Elites in Yuan and Early Ming China," Ph.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2000.

[32] The latter were aristocratic titles conferred by the Uyghur *idiqut*. *Darqan* was an inherited title originally conferred for "military merit, the title gave the grantee freedom from many of the customary obligations owed to his superior"; Farquhar, *Government of China*, 30. Also see Han Rulin, "Menggu dalahan kao" 蒙古答剌罕考 [A study of the Mongol Darqan], in *Qionglu ji* 穹廬集 [Collected works of Han Rulin], Ershi shiji Zhongguo shixue mingzhe 二十世紀中国史学名著 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei Education Press, 2000), 23–53. *Dudu* (Turk. *Tutuq*) is one of the oldest examples of Chinese administrative terms borrowed by the Türks and passed on to the Uyghurs, and meant "military governor of a province, [or] leader of high rank"; Ecsedy, "Old Turkic Titles of Chinese Origin."

[33] Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄, "Gaochang Xieshi jiazhuan" 高昌偰氏家傳 [History of the Xie clan of Gaochang], in *Guizhai wenji* 圭齋文集 [Collected works of Ouyang Xuan] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1929) 11.4b. I will have more to say about this important source below. The Chinese honorary title *taishi* was adapted

important roles that Uyghur elites played in foreign, neighboring states. We know very little about the next two generations of this family other than that they continued to inherit the Uyghur offices attributed to Kezhipuer. But this family certainly distinguished itself in the later Bilge Buqa and his younger brother, Eren Temür, both contemporaries of the Uyghur *idiqut* Barchuq el-Tegin.

Bilge Buqa's father apparently died prematurely, since Bilge inherited the offices of State Minister and Free Noble at the relatively young age of sixteen. It was about this same time that the Qara Khitai sent the Buddhist monk Seng to Gaochang as their agent and representative, and the sources portray Bilge as leading the charge to get rid of him. We are told that the *idiqut* voiced his discontent about the overseer to Bilge, and that Bilge was the one who suggested he be assassinated so that the Uyghurs would be free to switch their allegiance to the Mongols. Accordingly, Bilge led soldiers to attack the agent, and then chased him up into a building, cut off the agent's head, and threw it down to the ground.[34] This occurred in 1209.

The *idiqut* rewarded Bilge for his actions with an honorific style name (*hao*) of Bilge Qutï 比俚伽忽底 ("His Highness Bilge") and the presumably honorary title

by northern nomadic confederations as early as the Liao, and the importance of the office was undoubtedly due to the power of literate personnel. See Henry Serruys, "The Office of Tayisi in Mongolia in the Fifteenth Century," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 37 (1977): 353–80.

[34] Juvaini records a slightly different account of these events, in which Bilge is not named and where Uyghur troops pulled down the house of Overseer Seng. See Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, 44-45. Also see the account by Wang Guowei cited in Wittfogel and Feng, *Liao*, 651. It is impossible to determine if Ouyang's account, in which Bilge is named as the director of this operation, is the more accurate of the two accounts, or whether Ouyang was provided this "information" by later family members.

Mingbieji 明別吉.[35] Bilge then accompanied the *idiqut* in submitting to the Mongols, and was rewarded by Chinggis Qan in turn, with numerous material gifts and symbols of Mongol imperial authority. He was "given the gold tiger tablet to wear (*jinhufu*), a silver seal with an embossed lion (*shiniu yinyin*), a gold dragon chair (*jinchiyi*), a robe of gold-embroidered cloth (*jinzhisun*), the dedicated service of four Mongol military officers (*xiaowei siren*), food and drink were set out for him almost as if he were part of the qan's family, and he was given [control over] the food resources of 23 villages and 50,000 *liang* of silver."[36] This is an impressive list of honors, and indicates the esteem in which Bilge was held.

Bilge Buqa seems to have remained in Uyghuristan after he went over to the Mongols, probably continuing to hold the same offices under the *idiqut* that he had held before 1209. Curiously, we only know about this part of his career from the Persian historian Juvaini, who reports that the same Bilge Qutï who had been one of the chief instigators of the assassination of the Qara Khitai agent to the Uyghurs was also involved in a plot in 1252 to kill all Muslims in Gaochang.[37] The Chinese sources simply state

[35] For the reconstruction and meaning of the honorific title *qutï* bestowed on Bilge, see Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, 48 n. 4. I have not been able to reconstruct a reading or meaning of *Mingbieji*.

[36] Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.6a. A similar list, minus a few items, is given in the official biography of Bilge's younger brother, Eren Temür. See *Yuanshi* 124.3050. The Golden Tiger Tablet, one of the highest symbols of Mongol imperial authority, was complemented by the silver emblem and the chair, both also important symbols of royal authority and prerogative. The robe made out of expensive gold brocade was a highly prized item in nomadic circles, and also a symbol of imperial pleasure and acceptance. See Thomas T. Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 20, for a discussion of the significance of the *zhisun* robe.

[37] Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, 48–53. Juvaini's history is an important contemporaneous source for information on the early

that he became ill and died. The Uyghur *idiqut* at the time, Salïndï, was also apparently involved in this plot, which seems to have been aimed at Möngke's authority in Uyghuristan, and the Mongols acted with characteristic swiftness in this matter. After bringing everyone involved to the court, and obtaining confessions from the *idiqut* and the other Uyghurs, they were all executed, including Bilge, in 1253.

Bilge's younger brother, Eren Temür 岳璘帖穆爾, was also part of the Uyghuristan elite who followed the *idiqut* in submitting to the Mongols. His younger cousin, Sergius (Sajisi 撒吉思), seems to have followed in Eren Temür's footsteps when he was inducted into Mongol service and so we shall consider both of these men in this chapter. Eren Temür was also the ancestor of the Xie family that will be the subject of following chapters. Their stories provide us with yet another glimpse into the politics of the Mongol imperial clan.

Eren Temür's reputation and early career in service to the Mongols indicate the trajectory that he and his extended family would follow as *Semuren* officials and Uyghur elites in Mongol China. According to one source, he was "well versed in his native Uyghur writing system [*weiwu shu* 偉兀書], he magnanimously took what he got because of his rank, calculated his wealth and gave it to his

Mongol empire. He began work on his history in 1234, much of it based on what he personally witnessed in the Mongol empire, including two trips to the Mongol steppe capital Qarakhorum. While Juvaini's history does not contain the kind of biographical detail found in the Chinese biographies, he does include some information on individuals, such as Bilge, not recorded in any Chinese source. Juvaini also paid particular attention to the Uyghurs; he includes accounts of the origins of the Uyghur people, the circumstances surrounding their submission to Chinggis Qan, and later events that involved prominent Uyghurs.

family members, and withheld nothing for himself."[38] He followed his older brother, Bilge, in swearing allegiance to the Mongols, and then was inducted into Chinggis Qan's personal bodyguard. At age 15 he accompanied Chinggis Qan on military campaigns, and according to the sources fought in many battles and won considerable merit for his bravery. When Chinggis Qan's youngest brother, Temüge Odchigin, was seeking a tutor, the qan sent Eren to him "to direct the studies of all the Prince's sons, teaching that the most important character of a man is that a filial younger brother should be cordial and friendly, virtuous and sincere, and should avoid killing."[39] This probably occurred at Temüge's appanage lands in Yidu 益都 in eastern Shandong, where Eren was not only a tutor to the prince's family but was also put in charge of his appanage when the prince was away.[40]

Eren settled in at Yidu, marrying a local woman of the Jurchen Aotun 奧屯 clan, a prominent family that had

[38] Ouyang Xuan, "Gaochang Xieshi jiazhuan," *Guizhai wenji* 11.6a. Curiously, these attributes are only reported here, and not in Eren's official *Yuanshi* biography.

[39] The text reads, 訓導諸王子以孝弟敦睦，仁厚不殺爲第一義 in both Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.6a, and *Yuanshi* 124.3050. It is interesting, and unlikely, that the Uyghur Eren, let alone Chinggis Qan, would have been urging the teaching of this strikingly Confucian doctrine. Nor would Temüge Odchigin or any other Mongol prince have had a compelling reason to adopt Confucianism, especially when north China was still not firmly under Mongol control. While we cannot discount this account out of hand, as I comment in more detail below, this story is more likely the result of reading back into the record by Eren's descendants some two generations later.

[40] As the youngest son of Yesügei and Hö'elün, Temüge Odchigin inherited his family's domain, the so-called "yurt," located in northeastern Mongolia just southeast of Lake Hulun. See Rachewiltz, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, 322–23. His appanage in northeast China was a later acquisition.

remained in the area after the Mongol conquest.[41] After Chinggis Qan's death, Ögödei Qan sent him on a military campaign in Henan, where he was first given the very powerful position of Grand Judge (*da duanshiguan*), and later made Agent over civil and military affairs there (*junmindu darughachi*). As further confirmation of his status and power, he was allowed to wear the Golden Tiger Tablet and was given four women from the qan's own harem. He had a long career in north China and after he died was eventually awarded several honorific posthumous titles by the Yuan court.

Eren's younger cousin, Sergius 撒吉思 (fl. 1260s), also possessed the kinds of linguistic and leadership skills sought after by the Mongols. He was appointed to be a tutor to the Qara Khitai *gürkhan*, and after the Uyghurs submitted to the Mongols he was sent to serve Temüge Odchigin at his appanage in Yidu as a secretary (*bishechi*) and chief tutor to the prince (*lingwangfu*).[42] The role as secretary and chief tutor put Sergius in close contact with the upper echelons of the Mongol imperial clan, a position that he used to his ultimate advantage when he was a trusted advisor to Temüge Odchigin's grandson, Tachar 塔察兒 (fl. 1260s), in a succession dispute after Temüge Odchigin's death. Sergius succeeded in having him

[41] See Toghto 脫脫, ed., *Jinshi* 金史 [History of the Jin Dynasty] (1344; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975) 122.2661, for information on this Jurchen clan.

[42] *Yuanshi* 134.3243. Sergius must have been a very young man when he served the Qara Khitai *gürkhan*, since the bulk of his career occurred in the 1250s–1260s. See *Yuanshi* 144.3431, the biography of his son, Dharma 答里麻, for information on his service at the Qara Khitai court. The only other Yuan-era source that documents Sergius's branch of this family is a preface to a family genealogy: see Cheng Jufu, *Xuelou ji* 15.17b–18a, as translated by Ch'en Yuan, *Western and Central Asians in China Under the Mongols: their Transformation into Chinese*, tr. Ch'ien Hsing-hai and L. Carrington Goodrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 1966), 238–39.

recognized by the other Mongol princes as Temüge Odchigin's legitimate successor, and as a result Sergius was put in charge of the territory south of Heishan 黑山 in northeast China.

Sergius's connection to the Mongol royal clan continued to be a source of power for him after Qubilai became grand qan; Sergius was promoted to pacification, or control officer (*xuanfu*) of Beijing prefecture, located just northeast of the Yuan capital Dadu, and was given a member of the imperial Onggirat clan (*Wengjila shi*) in marriage and gifts of a gold hat and embroidered cloth. These gifts indicate the high status in which he was held by the Mongols.

But Sergius was also more than a tutor and political advisor. He led military personnel to suppress the rebellion of Li Tan 李璮 (fl. 1231–62), a local strongman in Yidu, Shandong.[43] This rebellion was one of Qubilai Qan's first real tests as a legitimate emperor of China, since Li Tan had the material resources necessary to mount a serious rebellion and was the son-in-law of a Chinese man, Wang Wentong 王文統 (fl. 1261–62), whom Qubilai Qan had appointed as privy councillor, or manager, in the Central Secretariat (*pingzhang zhengshi zhongshusheng*). This would be the last time that Qubilai Qan would rely exclusively on Chinese personnel in the highest ranks of his government. Sergius was amply rewarded by Qubilai Qan for his efforts; he was given all of Li Tan's personal landholdings at Yidu, consisting of some five thousand *mou*, and elevated in rank to chief military commissioner of

[43] On Li Tan, see his official biography in the section on rebellious officials, *Yuanshi* 206.4591–94; Sun Kekuan 孫克寬, "Yuanchu Li Tan shibian de fenxi" 元初李璮事變的分析 [Analysis of the Li Tan rebellion in the early Yuan], *Dalu zazhi* 大陸雜誌 13.8 (1956): 7–15; and Hok-lam Chan, "Li T'an (?–1262)," in *In the Service of the Khan*, 500–19.

Mongolian troops (*da dudu*) in Shandong Province (*Shandong xingsheng* 山東行省) and agent (*darughachi*) overseeing his home area of Yidu Prefecture (*Yidulu* 益都路).[44]

Both Eren Temür and Sergius settled in Yidu, where they raised families that continued the trends of officeholding based on military and linguistic skill. Eren Temür's descendants eventually became known by the Chinese-style surname Xie 偰, and are the subjects of later chapters of this book. Sergius's descendants also established successful records of service and, like their cousins, adopted a Chinese-style surname, Li 里. Unfortunately, we know far less about Sergius's branch of this prominent family than about the Xie family. We do know that his descendants were well versed in the Chinese cultural tradition, and in medical arts. For example, the family surname was chosen in part because it appears in the Confucian classic text *Chunqiu* 春秋 [Spring and Autumn Annals].[45] One of Sergius's grandsons, Dharma, whose biography also appears in the *Yuanshi*, had appointments in the Imperial Medical Academy, the Hanlin Academy, the Muslim Medical Bureau, and in the Censorate.

Conclusion

When we examine the histories of individuals identified with the Uyghur *idiqut* at the time of submission to the Mongols, a pattern of engagement with the new political order begins to emerge. All of these men were members of

[44] Sergius's positions in Shandong are summarized in Wu Tingxie 吳廷燮, *Yuan xingsheng chengxiang pingzhang zhengshi nianbiao* 元行省承相平章政事年表 [Chronological table of chief councilors and chief administrators of branch provinces in the Yuan Dynasty], in *Ershiwu shi bubian*, 14 vols. (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2005), Vol. 13, 525.

[45] See Ch'en Yuan, *Western and Central Asians in China*, 239.

the Uyghuristan aristocracy, and most participated in the *idiqut*'s decision to transfer his allegiance from the Qara Khitai to the Mongols. This event was of signal importance to the status of the Uyghurs in the eyes of the Mongols, and had a major impact on their treatment by their new masters. The salient feature for each of those Uyghurs was their association with the Uyghur *idiqut*, who alone had the political legitimacy to make that transfer. On the basis of that relationship, each gained a position of advantage, which they used to further their own ends. Some remained in their native land as representatives of the Mongols, while others were dispersed from Uyghuristan to fill important positions in the new Mongol political order abroad.

The careers of these first generation diaspora elites also reveal the largely undifferentiated nature of the early Mongol administrative apparatus. All of the Uyghurs we have discussed participated in both civil and military matters, and their official titles or offices as service personnel were typically broad and all-inclusive, akin to the titles and duties that would be found in any nomadic qan's retinue. They accompanied the Mongols in battle, probably leading Uyghur troops, but also acted as civil administrators and advisors. Back home, these men were put in positions such as judge (*duanshiguan*), secretary (*bishechi*), or agent/overseer (*darughachi*), which also had wide-ranging authority over all kinds of affairs and groups of people. Any real distinction between civil and military spheres of authority was slow in coming, beginning only under Möngke and Qubilai. We shall see evidence of this evolution in the Mongol administrative system when we examine the careers of descendants of some of these Uyghurs in the following chapters.

These Uyghurs also brought some specific resources into the Mongol empire, not least of which was the writing system that they introduced to Chinggis Qan. In fact, while appreciated for their experience in

administration and their military resources, the literacy and cultural training of these men seem to have been most highly valued by the Mongols. As we have seen, several of these Uyghur men ended up as tutors and personal advisors to members of the Mongol imperial clan. Their status as technicians of literacy put them in very good positions at the heart of Mongol power, and they were savvy enough to use those positions for their own ends. The success of that strategy is clearly evident when we look at their descendants. In every case, the families of those first Uyghur diaspora elites successfully maintained high status within the Mongol realm. Some of those families used accrued social and cultural capital eventually to construct identities as members of the Chinese literati quite separate from their Mongol overlords.

Chapter 4

Shifting Patterns of Semuren *Elite Engagement in Mongol China*

As Mongol rule in China evolved, the mechanisms of elite production (selection of officials at the state level, and acceptance of social and cultural peers by Chinese at the local level) became more and more like those used in traditional China. The civil service examinations were eventually restarted in 1315, though on a limited basis. Recruitment of officials from schools became somewhat more regular as time went on. Inheritance of a specific office, known as *chengxi*, or by virtue of the service of one's father, grandfather or paternal uncle – the *yin* protection device – was also implemented (though inheritance had long been practiced by the Mongols). And there was a trend to reestablish Chinese administrative structures that would integrate the center with regional and local areas, and that would better distinguish between the civil and military spheres. This became more important once the Mongols conquered southern China, and implementation of these mechanisms was a genuine shift in attitude on the part of the Mongol royal clan.

Yet these changes were always modest at best, and the Mongols relied on traditional nomadic mechanisms to maintain their preeminence throughout the Yuan era. The four-fold classification scheme reinforced other nomadic traditions such as enrollment in the qan's personal bodyguard, and hereditary inheritance of duties and titles. Some official titles continued to reflect the functional non-specificity that characterized typical Mongol nomadic administrative thinking, even as the civil and military administrative mechanisms became more like those found

in traditional Chinese imperial systems. Studying the careers and lives of later generations of *Semuren* such as the Uyghurs allows us to see clearly how these changes in the administrative and social hierarchies of power in China took place over time, and the degree to which those changes were effective.

In this chapter we examine the stories of the descendants of two prominent Uyghurs who were part of that first wave of immigrants from Gaochang, Qara Ïghach Buyruq and Buyruq Qaya. Both men generated large clans that thrived in Mongol China as *Semuren* officials and as social elites in China long after their ancestors had passed on, and their stories provide us with an intriguing look into Yuan society and politics.

The histories of these families reveal a complex web of strategies used to maintain their dual identities as full-fledged political and social elites, in spite of their origins. Over time many Uyghurs added to their power as members of the *Semuren* status group by also becoming part of the Chinese literati community. They mastered and even taught the Confucian tradition, they became accomplished poets and writers in the Chinese classical style, and they sponsored local academies and performed good deeds in communities in which they lived. They only differed from their Chinese *shidafu* peers in that they were not limited to local venues to exercise their literati credentials. They naturally moved all over China while serving as *Semuren* officials, and their contacts with other prominent Semuren and Chinese enabled these "people in the middle" to form a new national *shidafu* status group not seen in China since the days of the Northern Song.

Qara Ïghach Buyruq's Family

When Qubilai Qan lost control of Uyghuristan in the 1280s, Qara Ïghach's great-grandson, Yue'ersiman 月兒思蠻, chose to remain loyal to Qubilai Qan and moved his family

to China proper, ending up in Pingliang Prefecture in Shanxi province. As a result, both he and his oldest son, Ötemish Temür (阿的迷失帖木兒), were admitted to Qubilai Qan's personal bodyguard. When Temür Qan succeeded Qubilai in 1295, Ötemish Temür had an audience with the new qan, and was eventually assigned to be an agent at Ruzhou, in Henan Province.

Yue'ersiman's grandson, Alin Temür 阿鄰帖木兒 (fl. 1320–1330), was the third generation of this family to live in China proper. A transitional figure in this family's history, he was the first family member to become involved in the Chinese side of the Yuan civil administration.[1] Reiterating a theme found in numerous other prominent Uyghurs at the Yuan court, Alin Temür is lauded in this biography as being extraordinarily learned, and appears to have begun his official career during Ayurbarwada's reign (r. 1311–1320), with a posting to the important Hanlin Academy as a compiler of the first class (*Hanlin daizhi*). Further proof of Alin Temür's learning is then revealed later in the biography:

> During Emperor Yingzong's reign [Shidebala qan, r. 1321–1323] he used his classical learning to serve officials at the court daily, explaining the good words and virtuous deeds of the ancestors and the ancient and previous wise kings. He translated various classics, recorded past events, and was given general supervision over royal princes and sons-in-law, and of matters relating to the court and meeting with [representatives of] other countries.[2]

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[1] His transitional role in the family is also, interestingly enough, indicated by the format of his family's official biography in the *Yuanshi*; his section of the biography is separated from the preceding narrative by a clear break. I am not sure how much importance we can attribute to this format issue, but it is striking. See *Yuanshi* 124.3045.

[2] *Yuanshi* 124.3047–48.

When Koshila was made emperor upon Tugh Temür's abdication in 1329 (he only reigned seven months in 1329), he retained Alin Temür as his personal tutor. He was also granted the honorary title Grandee of the Third Class (*Guanglu Dafu*, at rank 1b one of the highest honorary official titles in the Yuan bureaucracy) and was made a director of the emperor's Classics Colloquium (*jingyan*, an irregular gathering of high officials with the emperor in the palace to read and discuss various classic texts).

Some sense of Alin Temür's reputation as a literate Uyghur who approximated the Chinese ideal of the scholar-official can also be gained by reading descriptions of his appointments to office and other laudatory comments by the famous Chinese writers Yang Yu 楊瑀 (1285–1361) and Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (1316–1350s). Yang Yu reports a remark told to him by Alin Temür about a Tang Dynasty figure whom he took as a role model. According to Alin Temür, that man not only did not react when people spat on him, but let it dry by itself and considered this to be a virtuous act.[3] The implication of Yang's story is that Alin Temür was a model of Confucian virtue who, in similar vein to the patient Tang Dynasty man, would not return violence for violence. Inasmuch as Alin Temür was one of his teachers, Yang did have good reason to write such laudatory stories about the man.[4] It does, nonetheless, indicate Alin Temür's acceptance as a Chinese-style

[3] See Yang Yu, *Shanju xinhua* 8a; and Franke, *Kulturgeschichte Chinas*, 44–45. The same passage appears in slightly shorter form in Tao Zongyi, *Chuogeng lu* 2.48–49. According to Herbert Franke, some forty-three passages from Yang Yu's text were used in Tao Zongyi's *Chuogeng lu*. See Herbert Franke, "Some Remarks on Yang Yü and his Shan-chü Hsin-hua," *Journal of Oriental Studies* 2.2 (1955): 302–08; rpt. in *China under Mongol Rule* (Brookfield: Variorum, 1994).

[4] Franke, *Kulturgeschichte Chinas*, 44 n. 1, states that Alin Temür was one of Yang's teachers.

literatus among some very famous Chinese writers and thinkers of the time.

Alin Temür had four sons, of whom his eldest, Shalaban 沙剌班 (fl. 1340s), carried on his father's precedent as a prestigious *Semuren* official and a Chinese-style literatus.[5] Shalaban used the *yin* inheritance privilege accorded him by virtue of his father's high office to gain admission to the civil bureaucracy, one of the more common ways for recruitment to office during the period of Mongol rule of China.[6] When emperor Toghon Temür issued an edict ordering the writing of the Song, Liao, and Jin dynastic histories, Shalaban was assigned as one of the editors of the *Jinshi*.[7] He was eventually promoted to very high positions in the Yuan bureaucracy; he was a chancellor, or recipient of edicts, in the Hanlin Academy (*Hanlin chengzhi*), a privy councillor in the Central Secretariat (*Zhongshu pingzhang*), and a commissioner in the Bureau of Tibetan and Buddhist Affairs (*Xuanzheng yuanshi*). This last office may explain his Tibetan style name.

Shalaban was also a tutor for the last Yuan emperor, Toghon Temür (1333–1368), perhaps because of his high literary abilities. We know that he was well versed in

[5] Alternative renderings of this name may include Shalpang or Shalawan. Peter Golden, personal communication. For more detailed information on Shalaban, see *Xin Yuanshi* 136.11b–12b; and Ch'en Yuan, *Western and Central Asians in China*, 166, 190. Franke believes that Shalaban is a Chinese rendering of the Tibetan name Šes-rab-dpal. See Franke, *Kulturgeschichte Chinas*, 66.

[6] As Elizabeth Endicott-West points out, the *yin* privilege became the normal route for upward social mobility in Mongol China, and was designed specifically to favor Mongols and *Semuren* while keeping the Chinese, Qitans and Jurchens back. See her article "Hereditary Privilege in the Yüan Dynasty," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 9 (1985): 15–20.

[7] See Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 13.4a–5b, for a list of the editors of the *Jinshi*.

Chinese-style poetry and calligraphy.[8] And even though he never adopted a Chinese style surname, he did possess two Chinese-style courtesy names (*zi*), *Weizhong* 惟中 and *Jingchen* 敬臣, and a literary name (*hao*), *Shanzhai* 山齋, which indicate that he participated in some Chinese literati circles.[9] He would have been a good person to have as a tutor. We have been left an interesting glimpse into his role in the inner court in Yang Yu's record of an encounter between the emperor and his tutor, Shalaban:

> The learned Shalaban was a tutor to the Emperor and was daily in his presence. One day, because he was tired he lay down in a hall that adjoined the Emperor's private quarters, and went fast asleep. The emperor personally came and placed a square pillow on which he had been sitting under his [Shalaban's] head. He had also gotten a boil on the left side of his forehead at one point, and the Emperor personally took a gold box that contained fingered citron ointment (*foshou gao* 佛手膏), wiped some on a piece of paper and applied it to his forehead.[10]

[8] Shalaban is listed among the Yuan calligraphers of repute in Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, *Shushi huiyao* 書史會要 [Record of the history of calligraphy] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1980) 7.19. For a list of *Semuren* calligraphers included in Tao's book, see Ch'en Yuan, *Western and Central Asians in China*, 186–202.

[9] Courtesy names were usually given to a person once they had reached adulthood, and were chosen to reflect and extend the meaning of one's personal name, or *ming*. A literary name was often given to or adopted by men who were writers of some sort, and was a sure sign of membership in the literati. His first courtesy name, Weizhong, was also used by two other important Yuan-era persons, a Mongol prince Dorji Bal 朵爾直班 (1314–1353), and Li Haowen 李好文 (fl. 1321–1350s). Both men had served in the Hanlin Academy and in the central administration around the time that Shalaban would have been posted there. His second courtesy name, Jingchen, was also used by Xu Shijing 許師敬 (fl. 1320s–1340s), fourth son of the famous Yuan thinker Xu Heng 許衡 (1209–1281), who was also an official in the Central Secretariat and the Hanlin Academy. For Dorji Bal, see Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 4.2355; for Li Haowen 1.518–19; for Xu Shijing 2.1234. On the naming practice in traditional China, see Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A Manual, Revised and Enlarged* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), 98–105.

Shalaban's positions as an official in Toghon's court and as a personal tutor to the emperor indicate that he was well respected as a *Semuren* official and also as a Chinese-style literatus. Thus, he conformed to the ideal of the scholar-official. His son, Śakya-dpal 世傑班 (1319–?), followed in the father's footsteps, being appointed as an official in the Hanlin Academy and in the Bureau of Ceremonies.[11] We know little more about this man, but his name certainly implies that this family took seriously their Tibetan and Buddhist affiliation.

This family's story provides some interesting insights into the ways in which the *Semuren* elite functioned in Mongol China. They did not have to totally accommodate to Chinese modes of social behavior in order to thrive; what mattered most was a man's proximity to the center of power. Induction into the qan's personal bodyguard was the usual first step, and if a man was fortunate, he ended up serving one of the more important members of the Mongol imperial clan. In this case, the first member of this family to serve the Mongols did so under Qubilai, and this had important ramifications for the status and success of his descendants as both political and social elites. The case for their success as political elites is self-evident from the sources. Their status as cultural elites is

[10] See Yang Yu, *Shanju xinhua* 18b, translated by Franke, *Kulturgeschichte Chinas*, 66, under the title "Kaiser und Lehrer." Tu Ji's rendition of Shalaban's biography in *Mengwuer shiji* 45.2b–3a provides substantial additional information on his role in the court, none of which is attested in the Yuan-era sources.

[11] See Franke, *Kulturgeschichte Chinas*, 61 n. 4, for this rendering of his name.

more complex, and their story reveals that success in that realm was not limited to accommodating solely to Chinese culture.

Alin Temür was obviously well schooled in the Chinese cultural tradition, since he headed up the emperor's Classics Colloquium. He was also respected by some very eminent Chinese thinkers of his day who saw him as a model of Confucian virtue. His son, Shalaban, was, if anything, even more involved in Chinese culture and was respected as a peer by prominent Chinese contemporaries. Not only was he an official in the Confucian-dominated Hanlin Academy, he was also a noted calligrapher and poet, both activities that were essential hallmarks of the traditional Chinese cultural elite.

Yet at the same time, these Uyghurs were anything but the ideal Chinese type of cultural elite. Their strong affiliation with Tibetan culture can be seen in the names and religious practices of several members of this family. No member of the family ever adopted a Chinese-style surname or personal name, even though some did have Chinese-style courtesy and literary names. Nor did any of them ever participate in the civil service examinations. Nevertheless, they occupied positions in the most important ideological bureaus at the Mongol court, such as the Hanlin Academy and the Imperial History Bureau, as well as the highest levels of the political administrative apparatus. So they must have felt quite as comfortable among the most conservative Chinese as they undoubtedly did among other foreigners.

Buyruq Qaya's Family – the Lian Family

We are fortunate to have even more primary sources documenting the history of Buyruq Qaya's family than we had for the heirs of Qara Ïghach Buyruq, and the patterns that emerge from those sources are quite similar to those seen above. Buyruq Qaya's descendants also managed to

obtain prominent positions in the most influential ideological and political bureaus, and were equally at home among non-Chinese and Chinese groups. But there is also divergence from the patterns we saw in members of Qara Ïghach Buyruq's family. Buyruq Qaya's family appears to have accommodated more to Chinese cultural norms than did Qara Ïghach Buyruq's descendants, and in some important ways. The richness of the available sources also allow us to know a lot more about the kinds of marriages members of this family entered into. So they provide fascinating counterpoints and parallels to the example of Qara Ïghach Buyruq's family.

As we have already seen above, Buyruq Qaya (1197–1265) had a long, successful career that began when he was put into service in the house of Tolui. He adopted the Chinese-style surname Lian to mark two auspicious events, the birth of his second son, Hindu 忻都, on the 25th day of the fifth month of 1231, and his appointment as a surveillance commissioner (*lianfang shi*) of Yannan region (*Yannan zhulu* 燕南諸路). Henceforth, most, but not all, of his descendants would be known by that name. Buyruq Qaya also hired tutors to educate his sons in Chinese style, and several of his thirteen sons and fifty-three grandsons were known for their Confucian learning and their artistic and literary accomplishments.

It is interesting that Buyruq Qaya, the first generation of his family to live and work in China and a contemporary of the *idiqut* Barchuq, invested in a Chinese education for his sons and chose to use a Chinese-style surname. The Mongols were still consolidating their hold on north China in the early 1230s and had little reason to be interested in Chinese culture or institutions at that point. But Buyruq was drawn to Chinese culture, no doubt having already become somewhat familiar with it as a member of the Uyghuristan aristocracy. He was also undoubtedly a savvy man who understood the importance of

accommodating to his new cultural surroundings in China, to his and his family's long-term success.

Whether out of genuine interest in Chinese culture or due to the smart strategy of a prescient man, Chinese education for the sons paid off handsomely for Buyruq Qaya's family. All of his sons and most of their descendants served as *Semuren* officials in the civil bureaucracy, and several also became Chinese-style literati. Buyruq's second son, Hindu, better known by his Chinese name Lian Xixian 廉希憲 (1231–1280), best exemplifies this trend.[12]

Lian Xixian began his climb up the political ladder as a *Semuren* official by being inducted into prince

[12] Lian Xixian is the most well known member of this family and the subject of several important studies. Primary sources documenting his life that are used here include his official biography in *Yuanshi* 126.3085–98; his spirit-way inscription, written by Han Xing 韓性 (1266–1341, a.k.a. Ming Shan 明善), "Pingzhang zhengshi Lian Wenzhengwang shendaobei" 平章政事廉文正王神道碑 [The spirit-way inscription of Prince Lian Wenzheng, Privy Councillor], in Su Tianjue 蘇天爵 (1294–1352) comp., *Yuan Wenlei* 元文類 [Categorized literature of the Yuan Dynasty] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe, 1993) 65.1a–18b, pp. 848–57; and Su Tianjue, "Pingzhang Lian Wenzheng wang" 平章廉文正王 [Prince Lian Wenzheng, Privy Councillor], in *Yuanchao mingchen shilue* 元朝名臣事略 [Biographies of prominent Yuan Dynasty officials] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996) 7.124–42. The Lian clan was one of the most prominent *Semuren* clans in Mongol China, demonstrated by the fact that three family members were accorded biographical entries in the *Yuanshi*, and by the many funerary inscriptions, poems, prefaces, and other pieces in honor of members of this family by prominent Chinese writers of the time. For a detailed list of those sources, the reader should consult the entries on Lian family members compiled by Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 3.1504–11. For secondary scholarship on this family, see especially Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Lien Hsi-Hsien (1231–1280)"; Ch'en Yuan, *Westerners and Central Asians in China*, Ch. 2; and Wang Meitang, "Yuandai neiqian Weiwuerzu shijia – Lianshi jiazu kaoshu".

Qubilai's bodyguard when he was fourteen years old. One of the first qualities that his biography notes about him is his passion for learning in general and towards the Chinese Confucian tradition in particular. "Xixian was extraordinarily fond of the Chinese classics and history, such that he was never without a book" (*Xixian duhao jingshi, shou bushi juan* 希憲篤好經史，手不釋卷).[13] It was undoubtedly because of his aptitude for learning that he was allowed to study with the famous Chinese scholar Wang E 王鶚 (1190–1273), who had been summoned by Prince Qubilai to Qarakhorum in 1244 as one of his Confucian advisors.[14] It was while serving Prince Qubilai at the Mongol capital that Lian Xixian gained his famous nickname Lian Mencius (Lian Mengzi 廉孟子). According to his biography, one day when reading Mencius he was summoned by the Prince and he rushed into the Prince's quarters in a hurry with the book in his hands. Qubilai, on seeing the book, asked him to explain Mencius's teachings, and Xixian then complied, telling him about the essential correctness of Mencius's teachings on the innate goodness of man, righteousness and self interest, benevolence and violence.[15]

But Lian Xixian was not simply a scholar; he also demonstrated his skills in archery before Qubilai Qan, and accompanied Qubilai on several military campaigns, against the Dali Kingdom in 1253, against the southern

[13] *Yuanshi* 126.3085. In fact, Ch'en Yuan asserts that Lian Xixian was one of the *Semuren* who was a "pure Confucianist." See Ch'en, *Westerners and Central Asians in China*, 21.

[14] See Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 1.145–46; Hok-lam Chan, "Wang O (1190–1273)," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 12 (1975): 43–70; and his more recent "Wang E (1190–1273)," in *In the Service of the Khan*, 300–15.

[15] The text reads: "*Shizu wen qishuo, sui yi xingshan yili renbao zhizhi weidui, Shizu jiazhi, muyue Lian Mengzi*" (世祖問其說，遂以性善義利仁暴之旨爲對，世祖嘉之，目曰廉孟子); *Yuanshi* 126.3085.

Song in 1258, and against Qubilai's rival Ariq Böke in western China (Shanxi and Sichuan) in 1260. We get a better sense of Xixian's military training by looking at his actions in western China as a pacification commissioner. In 1254 he was sent as a pacification commissioner (*xuanfu shi*) to Qubilai's appanage lands in Jingzhao 京兆 (present-day Xi'an), and then subsequently went to western Shaanxi in 1254 and then to Shanxi and Sichuan in 1260 in the same capacity. [16] These were important assignments, since Qubilai's younger brother, Ariq Böke, was contesting Qubilai's claim to the position of grand qan after the death of their elder brother and grand qan, Möngke, by fomenting trouble in western China.

Lian Xixian displayed his talent for military leadership as pacification commissioner by a series of brilliant maneuvers that resulted in Qubilai's hold on the area and his victory over Ariq Böke. As a result of his decisive leadership, Xixian was promoted several times to important offices in the region until he was recalled to the Mongol court for positions in the central government in 1263.

Xixian was assigned the prestigious position of one of the privy councilors (*zhongshu pingzhang zhengshi*) in Qubilai Qan's court in 1263.[17] This position ranked just below the grand councilor of government affairs, and during his tenure Xixian participated in crafting several important policy decisions aimed at establishing a proper chain of command and a rational hierarchy of power within the Yuan bureaucracy. At the same time he also continued to act as a personal advisor to Qubilai Qan.

[16] See Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-Hsien (1231–1280)," 483–87, for a description of Xixian's duties and accomplishments as pacification commissioner in these areas.

[17] Also known as director of political affairs in the Secretarial Council. See Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-Hsien (1231–1280)," 488.

One of the policy decisions that Xixian was instrumental in enacting during Qubilai's reign was reorganization of local administrations so that they would be appointed and controlled by the central government. This was in part a response to problems connected with the old appanage system put in place in north China by Qubilai's predecessors, whereby a Mongol prince and his family ruled their appanage territory as a personal fiefdom, exercising civil, military and fiscal powers over their lands. Seeing the limitations this imposed on the power of the central government, Xixian advocated that the best way for the Yuan court to control activities (especially the all-important tasks of tax collection and organization of armies) at the local level was by central appointment of local-level officials. In order to effect this change, and to provide a way for Confucian-oriented Chinese men to serve in government, Xixian recommended establishment of a system of annual nominations of local men who were experts in Confucian studies and in clerical duties to the central government (*suigong ruli*). He also understood the need for oversight of this system and recommended that the traditional Chinese censorial system be restored to the central government, which eventually occurred in 1268.

Running just below the surface of Xixian's government reforms was his dedication to Confucian values and his determination to see that value system become part of Yuan governance.[18] We have already seen

[18] As Hsiao points out, Xixian's request that the censorial system be restored was part of a wider conflict between Confucian advisors and officials and the Muslim Ahmad, who was in charge of financial affairs under Qubilai. Xixian's personal involvement in this dispute against Ahmad ended up costing him a good portion of his career; he was probably forced to retire from office in 1270, and when he was brought back into service four years later, was given positions away from the court. See Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-Hsien (1231–1280)," 491–96. On Ahmad, see Herbert Franke, "AHMAD (?–1282)," in *In the Service of the Khan*, 539–57.

ample evidence of his early attraction to Confucianism, and Xixian's abiding concern as a member of Qubilai's central secretariat seems to have been to preserve and enlarge the role that Confucian scholar-officials played in government. To enact his program, Xixian recommended or appointed to office several prominent Chinese, all of whom were also Confucian scholars.[19] Xixian's reaction to the death of his parents also stands out as testimony to his Confucian persuasion.

> In the first year of the Chih-yüan era [1264 A.D.] his mother died. Lien led members of his family and near of kin in following ancient rites of mourning. For three days he took no food or drink. Occasionally he vomited blood and could not get up. He slept on straw and lived in a cottage beside his mother's grave. The authorities considered that as the mourning system had not yet been adopted, he should be strongly urged to emerge from retirement. Several officials went together to call on him at his hut. When they heard the sounds of his bitter lamentations, they hesitated to broach the subject. Shortly afterwards, a decree was issued ordering him into service. Though he did not dare to disobey, yet, when he appeared for duty he was clad in plain clothes, and when he went home, he changed to mourning attire. At the time of his father's death, he did likewise.[20]

This passage in Xixian's official biography paints a picture of a dedicated Confucianist who followed Chinese mourning customs well before they were instituted by the Mongol authorities as law in Yuan China in 1304. His practice is especially interesting in light of the fact that Uyghurs were specifically admonished in Yuan law to

[19] See Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-Hsien (1231–1280)," 498, for a list of the Chinese Confucianists appointed to office by Xixian.

[20] *Yuanshi* 126.3090, tr. by Ch'en Yuan, *Westerners and Central Asians in China*, 245. This passage is part of Ch'en's discussion of *Semuren* who followed Chinese mourning rituals, see pp. 241–52.

follow their own native burial customs.[21] Upon Xixian's own death at age forty-nine in 1280, Mongols and Chinese alike mourned him, and several prominent Chinese wrote elegies and poems in his honor.

Lian Xixian had twelve siblings, all of whom also served as *Semuren* officials in civil and military affairs. The striking variation in their careers underlines the multivalent skills and resources martialed by this Uyghur family. For example, Xixian's younger brother, Lian Xishu 廉希恕 (fl. 1280s–1290s; also known by his Uyghur name Bulmïsh Qaya 不魯迷失海牙), was assigned the position of Second Privy Councilor in the central government in 1284 (*zhongshu canzhi zhengshi*), where he was in charge of political affairs. In 1291 he was sent to south China with the concurrent duties as a pacification commissioner and general military commander (*xuanwei shi du yuanshuai)* over the Haibei and Hainan circuit in Huguang Province (*Haibei Hainandao* 海北海南道). The Mongols had established eight of these special military regions in China, two in Huguang Province, to maintain control over especially troublesome areas. Lian Xishu's position there highlights his military training and administrative skills.

Another of Xixian's siblings, Lian Xigong 希貢 (fl. 1290s), had quite a different career path. In 1299 he was appointed as a secretarial censor in the "southern pavilion" of the Yuan censorate (*nantai zhishu yushi*). At some point he was also appointed as a grand academician in the Institute for the Glorification of Literature (*zhaowen guan daxueshi*). Xigong must certainly have gained a reputation as a learned man who specialized in the Chinese literary and cultural arts, especially to have been appointed to the

[21] Francis Cleaves interprets this legal injunction as solicitude by the Mongols towards their Uyghur subjects, since their mourning practices were being contaminated by Chinese ways. See his "Uighuric Mourning Regulations," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1977): 65–93.

latter position; this view is confirmed by the fact that he is listed among the men who were experts in calligraphy in China.[22]

Curiously, Buyruq Qaya's youngest son never adopted a Chinese-style name. He is known to us only by his Uyghur name, Arghun Qaya 阿魯渾海牙, and all that we know of this man is that he served as an agent (*darughachi*) in Guangde Prefecture (*Guangdelu* 廣德路), in Jiangzhe Province. We would, in fact, not have heard about him at all if not for his prominent son, Lian Qashan Qaya 廉惠山海牙 (fl. 1321–1360s).[23] Unlike his father, he adopted the Lian surname but also used a distinctly Uyghur personal name. As we can see from a brief survey of his career, Qashan Qaya was known for his literary abilities, and he certainly fits the mold of a typical Chinese style scholar-official.

Qashan Qaya took and successfully passed his *jinshi* examination in 1321, whereupon he was assigned as an official in one of the provincial censorates. In 1328 he assumed duties in the Imperial Library (*mishujian cheng*), and in 1344 became one of four editors of the Liao Dynastic History (*Liaoshi* 遼史), a position that was attached to the Hanlin Academy as a chancellor and academician (*Hanlin xueshi chengzhi*).[24] In 1361 he was sent to Jiangzhe Province (*Jiangzhe xingsheng* 江浙行省) as a director in the Bureau of Tibetan and Buddhist Affairs (*xuanzheng yuanshi*).

Buyruq Qaya's descendants were numerous; he had at least eleven sons and each of them seems to have had at

[22] Tao Zongyi, *Shushi huiyao* 7.17. Also see Ch'en Yuan, *Westerners and Central Asians in China*, 187.
[23] On Lian Qashan Qaya, see his official biography, *Yuanshi* 145.3447–48; and his entry in Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 3.1509–10.
[24] Another famous Uyghur, Shalaban, was also part of this project, assigned to be an editor of the Jin Dynastic History.

least one son, and many several. Moreover, the vast majority of the Lian family members whom we know about had successful careers as prominent *Semuren* officials, and some of them were also known as Chinese-style literati. Space does not permit us to discuss each of those men here, but we can see from this brief survey that this extended family undoubtedly profited by Buyruq Qaya's association with the Uyghur *idiqut* and his own high positions as a member of the Uyghur diaspora elite under the Mongols (see the Lian genealogical chart on p. 271). Before leaving this family, however, we need to briefly highlight two specific strategies that they used to ensure their continuing status as elites in Mongol China: the selection of a Chinese style surname and marriage alliances.

We know that Buyruq Qaya adopted Lian as his family's surname to celebrate his appointment as a surveillance commissioner and the birth of his second son. But why would a powerful *Semuren* official like Buyruq Qaya have felt any need to adopt a Chinese style surname at all? After all, he was part of the first wave of Uyghurs whose power came from his relationship with the Mongol imperial family and not from any association with Chinese men or culture. Was Buyruq aware that a Chinese style surname would benefit his descendants? Perhaps he foresaw the inevitable necessity of the foreign ruling elite accommodating to Chinese institutions and personnel in order to maintain their own power in China? We know he was attracted to Chinese cultural norms to the extent that he hired Chinese tutors for his sons, and perhaps he felt that using a Chinese style surname was part of that upbringing? Whatever his motives, the surname Lian did not hurt, and may have helped the acceptance of his offspring by prominent Chinese peers. As we shall see, it was a practice taken up by other *Semuren*.

But the adoption of this surname was not simply a matter of accommodating to Chinese cultural norms. Lian

was an uncommon but not unknown Chinese surname and it appears that it was only used by members of this extended family after the Yuan era. The origin of the name in an office whose function and purpose was to provide surveillance over other officials and the local population in an area of northern China recently conquered by the Mongols could not help but remind Buyruq Qaya's descendants, as well as their Chinese acquaintances, of his prominent place within the conquering elite.[25] Thus, this name also undoubtedly continued to remind later generations of this family of their Uyghur heritage.

The personal names of various members of Buyruq Qaya's family also reveal a complex strategy of identity. Buyruq Qaya took what seems a very Chinese approach to assigning personal names to his sons; they were all given bisyllabic personal names that began with the character Xi 希 ("to desire, hope for, or excel"), similar to the Chinese tradition of using a specific character as a generational marker. Lian Xixian also adhered to this Chinese tradition, giving each of his six sons a monosyllabic personal name of auspicious meaning (Fu 孚, a.k.a. Yi 怡, Ke 恪, Xun 恂, Chen 忱, Heng 恆, and Dun 惇).[26]

[25] The name Lian was borrowed from a bureau first invented in the Northern Song era to maintain relations between the frontier zone and the Song court: Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985; rpt. Taibei: Southern Materials Center, 1988), 312. But Lian had been used in earlier eras as a surname as well. See Chen Menglei 陳夢雷, Jiang Tingxi 蔣廷錫, Yang Jialuo 楊家駱, and Long Jidong 龍繼棟, comp., "Shizu dian" 氏族典 [Records of family and clan names], in *Gujin Tushu Jicheng* 古今圖書集成 [Imperial encyclopedia], 79 vols. (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1934; rpt. Taibei: Dingwen shuju, 1977) 36.3289 for examples of earlier people in China named Lian.

[26] His first son, known by both names, was the only son from his first wife, the daughter of the Uyghur official and personal friend, Mengsus, who also bore him three daughters who married prominent officials of the day. His second wife, a Jurchen woman, gave birth to his other five

At the same time that these names reinforced close association of this Uyghur family with Chinese culture, other members of the lineage continued to use more traditional Uyghur names, as, for example, Buyruq Qaya's second youngest son, Arqun Qaya.[27] The fact that his son was given the Lian surname may indicate that Arqun Qaya had adopted a strategy of naming similar to Buyruq Qaya. But there are other examples where Lian men of subsequent generations continued to use Uyghur personal names, and these are more difficult to explain. For example, Buyruq Qaya's third son, Lian Xishu 希恕 (fl. 1280s–1290s), named his one son Lian Quduq Baqa 廉忽都八哈 (fl. 1320s), and that man's son, in turn, was named Lian Anian Baqa 廉阿年八哈 (fl. 1340s).[28] Other Lian men active as *Semuren* officials in the same time period as Xixian's sons had personal names that used the Uyghur term Qaya 海牙: e.g., Lian Shoushan Qaya 壽山海牙 (fl. 1320s), Lian Tujian Qaya 禿堅海牙 (fl. 1320s), Lian Axili Qaya 阿息力海牙 (fl. 1330s).[29] Use of this common Uyghur name as part of their personal names indicates at the very least that they continued to realize some aspects of

sons and three daughters. It is interesting to note that his sons' names all begin with the heart radical, which may have been Xixian's way of inserting a generational marker that would distinguish his sons from other Lian family members of any generation. These are also the kinds of names with lofty meanings that any good Chinese would have given to his son.

[27] Some of the sources indicate this man was adopted by Buyruq Qaya after his own father, Buyruq Qaya's brother, died prematurely. This would explain why he never took the Lian surname.

[28] See Wang Meitang, "Lianshi jiazu kaoshu," for information on these later generations of Lian men.

[29] See Wang Meitang, "Lianshi jiazu kaoshu," 12, for information on these individuals. It is impossible to verify into which branch of the Lian family these men were born. Moreover, while Wang does not argue that these men were all siblings, the naming convention is striking, and suggests generational or sibling association.

their Uyghur heritage, and while we cannot be sure, this naming convention may also have been adopted because they were all siblings.

The Lian clan history also provides good examples of the ways that marriage alliances were used to cement ties within the Uyghur diaspora community in China.[30] For example, Buyruq Qaya's eldest son, Lian Ximin 廉希閔 (fl. 1250s), married a daughter of the prominent Uyghur *Semuren*, Guan Zhige 貫只哥 (fl. 1270s).[31] We have already commented on Lian Xixian's wives; his first was a daughter of the prominent Uyghur, Mengsus. That marriage was probably arranged between fathers, since we know that Buyruq Qaya and Mengsus both served Prince Tolui and his wife as advisors and appanage managers. This would have been an excellent way for these two families to join to their mutual political benefit, as well as to maintain their Uyghur cultural identity. But these Uyghurs also married more broadly within the *Semuren* community. For example, Xixian's second wife was from an important Jurchen family.

Buyruq's third son, Lian Xishu 希恕, married a woman from another important Uyghur clan, the Gusulu clan. Further cementing the Uyghur ties of this branch of

[30] See Hong Jinfu 洪金富, "Yuandai Hanren yu fei Hanren tonghun wenti chutan" 元代漢人與非漢人通婚問題初探 [A study of the problem of marriage between Chinese and non-Chinese people in the Yuan Dynasty], *Shihuo Yuekan* 食貨月刊 6.12 (1977): 647–65, 7.1–2 (1977): 11–131; and discussion in Wang Meitang, "Lianshi jiazu kaoshu."

[31] Guan Zhige was the father of the famous Uyghur poet Sewinch Qaya 小雲石海涯 (also known by his Chinese name of Guan Yunshi 貫雲石) (1286–1324), who, in similar fashion to the Xie and Lian families, adopted a Chinese-style surname; Guan was the first syllable of his father's name. On Guan Yunshi and his family, see Yang Tsung-han, "Hsiao-Yün-Shih Khaya," *Monumenta Serica* 9 (1944): 92–100; and Richard John Lynn, *Kuan Yün-Shih* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980).

the Lian family, Lian Xishu's wife's sister was married to Xie Zhedu, one of the descendants of the Gaochang Bilge Buqa. One of Lian Xixian's grandsons, a certain Lian Yaoyao 廉咬咬 (fl. 1340s), also married into that family.[32]

Conclusion

The descendants of Qara Ïghach Buyruq and Buyruq Qaya did not all follow the same route to success, let alone define success in the same way. But the stories of both of these prominent *Semuren* clans enable us to understand how those people created simultaneous identities as political and social elites, and the benefits that accrued to them when they straddled that gap between subjects and masters. They had access to the same routes of upward mobility as the Mongols, such as induction into the qan's personal bodyguard and inheritance of hereditary office. But they also took advantage of other approaches, including the civil service exams and Confucian learning. Each approach required specific strategies and resources, and the diverse resources of some Uyghurs allowed them to advance up both political and social ladders in China.

Naming practices especially reveal the multiple strategies and agendas of the Uyghur *Semuren*. The practice of adopting a Chinese-style surname and personal name was followed by many *Semuren*, including Uyghurs. There were several different strategies that a non-Chinese person used for adopting a surname, including taking a common Chinese surname, using the first character of a personal name (a *ming*) or a term from a person's official title, or a character that evoked some other aspect of that man's family history. Of course, many *Semuren* chose to retain their original names and we have many examples of

[32] The marriages between Lian and Xie family members undoubtedly occurred due to the fact that several Lian men were officials in Liyang County, Jiangsu, where the Xie family had settled. See Chapter Seven for further discussion of this link.

foreign names persisting throughout the Yuan Dynasty (in fact the first Ming emperor required all *Semuren* to adopt Chinese style surnames). But many other *Semuren* also adopted Chinese style surnames.[33] Why?

The reasons that drove adoption of a Chinese style surname were undoubtedly as varied as the ways they were created. Some people did it ostensibly to honor their ancestors while others claimed it was done in order to keep track of their family's history. A Chinese style surname would also have helped the efforts of a non-Chinese man to interact with and be taken seriously by his Chinese *shidafu* peers, especially if he spoke mainly or only Chinese.

Buyruq Qaya's descendants survived spendidly as political and social elites in Mongol China without having to accommodate themselves to Chinese cultural norms to the extent that they adopted Chinese-style surnames and personal names. But other Uyghurs like the Lian clan took a different approach to their situation. In the end, the descendants of both of these clans circulated at the highest levels of political and social power in China, and their status in both arenas extended the prestige of the *Semuren* status group beyond narrower ethnic, social and geographic boundaries. The descendants of the Uyghur State Minister Bilge Buqa best exemplify these strategies and this evolution of the *Semuren* group, and it is to that clan that we now turn.

[33] There seems to have been no commonly accepted opinion among the important Chinese writers of the period about the permissibility or acceptance of the practice by *Semuren* of adopting a Chinese style surname. Chinese thinkers and writers were often involved in the process of a *Semuren* family choosing a surname. We also have statements from other prominent Chinese writers who opposed the practice. For examples, see Ch'en Yuan, *Western and Central Asians in China*, 226–41.

Chapter 5

Xie Family Transitional Figures

In this chapter we consider the sons and grandsons of Eren Temür, the brother of the Uyghur State Minister Bilge Buqa, since they constitute a transitional stage in the history of this family. As we know, Eren Temür established his family in Shandong Province where he was in service to Chinggis Qan's youngest brother, Temüge Odchigin. He remained in north China for the duration of his career as a *Semuren* official, and while his sons and grandsons grew up in Shandong, they also began to orient themselves more to the south, initially because of their official postings. That southward orientation eventually included an interest in Chinese cultural practices. By the time that Eren Temür's great-grandsons came along, this family had become thoroughly enmeshed in Chinese culture and closely connected with prominent Chinese, all while continuing to act as powerful *Semuren* officials. In order to fully understand this transformation, we look first at the careers of Eren Temür's sons and grandsons as *Semuren* officials. Then in Chapter Six we examine the activities of these men as Chinese-style social elites.

Eren Temür had ten sons while he lived at Yidu but we have information about only two of them, his fourth son Duermishi 都爾彌勢 (Turmïsh?), and his eighth son Qara Buqa 合剌普華.[1] Duermishi was probably born in the

[1] See Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.8b, for the names of Eren's sons, and for information on Duermishi. See also the table of names in Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing 蕭啓慶, "Meng Yuan shidai Gaochang Xieshi zhi shihuan yu hanhua" 蒙元時代 高昌偰氏 之仕宦與漢化 [The official careers and sinicization of the Gaochang Xie clan in the Mongol Yuan Dynasty], in *Yuanchao shi xinlun* 元朝史新論 [New essays on Yuan

1230s in Yidu, but we do not know anything about his childhood. He accompanied his uncle Sergius in the mission to put down Li Tan's rebellion at Yidu. After he returned, Duermishi was appointed to be a senior supervisor (*langzhong*) in his home district, Yidu, where he oversaw the various secretaries and sub-officials responsible for daily affairs of the local government. Duermishi would thus have had quite a bit of real power over Yidu's civil affairs, and his appointment to this position undoubtedly reflects the status of his family, especially his uncle, Sergius, who by that time had been elevated to the position of military governor of Shandong province.

At some point Duermishi led a contingent of troops alongside the Mongol general Bayan in a campaign against the Song. According to the sources, Sergius was originally assigned to go on that campaign, but Duermishi volunteered to go in his uncle's place because Sergius was getting old. Duermishi must have been successful as a military leader, because sometime after he returned from that campaign he was chosen to be the Military Commander of the Eastern Campaign in the Mongol invasion of Japan. Duermishi, however, did not take part in that campaign, resigning over differences of opinion with the Mongol general in charge of the whole operation, a certain Ataqai. His last commissions as a *Semuren* official were in south and east China; he was assigned to be an agent at Taiping Prefecture (*Taipinglu darughachi*), and was eventually sent to Yunnan as a surveillance commissioner. We know nothing more about his personal or public life.

Dynasty history], Yunchen congkan 允晨叢刊, no. 78 (Taibei: Yunchen Wenhua Press, 1999), 249. Interestingly, all but two of the ten siblings were given Uyghur personal names that ended with "Buqa." This may be an example of generational name tags in the Uyghur tradition.

Duermishi's career was typical of the *Semuren* who served in north China in the first decades of Mongol rule. They were expected to be proficient in civil and military affairs, and there was little real distinction between those spheres. His younger brother, Qara Buqa (1246–1284), followed a similar career pattern, distinguishing himself as a loyal and courageous *Semuren* official in various assignments as a military leader and civil administrator. Unfortunately, he was killed in the line of duty when he was only 38 years old. However, we know considerably more about this man than any of his siblings, undoubtedly because of the prominence of his immediate descendants. Qara Buqa is also interesting because he began a period of transition for his family, where these Uyghurs began to act more and more as typical, Chinese-type literati, even as they continued to occupy important positions as *Semuren* political elites. This transition involved geography, education and personal inclination.

Born in Yidu, Shandong Province, in 1246 where his father was serving at Temüge Odchigin's appanage, Qara Buqa would be the first member of his family to serve in southern China. By the time Qara Buqa was appointed to his first official position, as a member of the qan's imperial bodyguard, north China had been pacified and Qubilai was well on his way to conquering the south. Qara Buqa's career path also differed from his father's and grandfather's in that his position and status did not result from his affiliation with the Uyghur *idiqut*. Finally, while he was mainly a military man, there is some evidence that Qara Buqa was also interested in things Chinese. Thus, Qara Buqa represents a shift in *Semuren* career strategies and trajectories.

Before we discuss his career, we need to highlight Qara Buqa's qualities as a "gentleman." According to one source, Qara Buqa was a precocious child:

> One day as he was quickly working he sighed and said, "If I do not study while I am a young man, I will certainly degrade [the legacy of] my ancestors." Then he hastened to his father and told him this in person. His father was amazed at him, and made him study Uyghur script, and also gave to him the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Classic of History*, the *Mirror of Government*, and he memorized and recited them with skill and energy, coming from his natural instincts.[2]

This reference to Qara Buqa's scholarly abilities is surprising given the fact that he spent his entire career as a military and pacification officer under the Mongols and was never known for his literary abilities. It is undoubtedly information that was supplied to the writer of this source by later family members, but it is an important piece of information that sheds light on the strategies of this important Uyghur clan to position themselves as *Semuren* who would be accepted by Chinese *shidafu*.

However, we should not necessarily discount outright this information as spurious. *Semuren* officials such as Qara Buqa were in the vanguard of the Mongol presence in south China after 1260, and some of them may have felt an attraction to the Chinese culture they encountered there in a way they had not seen in the north. Perhaps Qara Buqa genuinely became interested in Confucianism and began to study it? Even discounting this, however, it is probably likely that Qara Buqa was literate both in Uyghur and Chinese.[3]

[2] The original text reads: 一日忽作而嘆曰幼而不學有不墮吾宗乎 即趋父所自白父奇之 俾習偉兀書及授語孟史鑒文字記誦精敏出於天性. Ouyang Xiu, *Guizhai wenji* 9b. Qara Buqa's tomb inscription supplies a much abbreviated version: 父奇其志授偉兀書儒書性警敏誦輒不忘. See Xu Youren, *Zhi Zheng ji* 54.3b, p. 256.

[3] It may be that *Semuren* such as Qara Buqa, whose families had histories as cultural and aristocratic elites in their native place, shifted

In typical fashion, Qara Buqa began his career as an official by induction into the Mongol qan's personal bodyguard.[4] His duties in various southern districts engaged him primarily in maintaining control over newly

their orientation toward Chinese culture when they moved into south China. A far broader study of social and vocational patterns among *Semuren* than is possible in this volume will be necessary to decide whether such a shift was experienced among *Semuren*, and the degree of change, if indeed it was experienced at all.

[4] Several primary sources document Qara Buqa's life and career. The most important are his tomb inscription, spirit way inscription, a history of his family, and a short biography as a "loyal and righteous" 忠義 official of the Yuan Dynasty. See, respectively, Xu Youren 許有壬, "Gu Jiayi dafu Guangdongdao du zhuanyun yanshi zeng tongyidafu hubu shangshu shang qingche duwei zhuifeng Gaochang junhou Qara Buqa gong muzhiming" 故嘉議大夫廣東都道轉運鹽使贈通議大夫戶部尚書上輕車都尉追封高昌郡侯合剌普華公墓志銘 [Tomb inscription of Master Qara Buqa, former Grandee of the Thirteenth Class, commissioner of salt transport for Guangdong circuit, posthumously titled Tongyi dafu, minister of Board of Revenue, Superior General of Light Chariots and enfeoffed as Marquis of Gaochang], *Zhi Zheng ji* 至正集 [Collected works of Xu Youren] 54.3b–5b (Shiyinben ed.; rpt. *Yuanren wenji zhenben congkan* 元人文集珍叢刊, 8 vols., Taibei: Xinwenfeng Press, 1985), Vol. 7, 256–58; Huang Jin 黃溍, "Guangdongdao du zhuanyun yanshi zeng tuicheng shouzhong quanjie gongchen zide dafu Henan Jiangbei dengchu xing zhongshusheng youcheng shang hujun zhuifeng Gaochang jungong shi zhongmin Qara Buqa gong shendaobei" 廣東道都轉運鹽使贈推誠守忠全節功臣資德大夫河南江北等處行中書省右承上護軍追封高昌郡公謚忠愍合剌普華公神道碑 [Spirit way inscription of Master Qara Buqa, commissioner of salt transport for Guangdong circuit, posthumously titled 'virtuous official who confidently protected his loyalty and was entirely virtuous,' Grandee of the Fifth Class, minister on the right in Henan, Jiangbei and other provinces, 'Supreme Protector,' posthumously granted honorific title of 'Duke of Gaochang Prefecture' and style name 'Loyal and Sympathetic'], *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 金華黃先生文集 [Collected works of Mr. Huang Jin of Jinhua] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1922) 25.1a–5b; Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.3a–13a; and *Yuanshi* 193.4384–86.

conquered areas and helping to push the conquest further on into south China. Qara Buqa had a relatively standard, if short, career as a *Semuren* official, and he would probably not have achieved the prominence necessary to have funerary inscriptions composed for him had it not been for the fame of his descendants. He was still a young man living at home in Yidu when Li Tan began his rebellion, and after it was over his uncle Sergius recommended his young nephew to Qubilai as a member of his personal guards. Like other members of the Uyghur elite of his time, he also married a woman from another *Semuren* family, the Xitaitele 希台特勒 clan. We know almost nothing about her except for the fact that she was thirty-five years old in 1284 when Qara Buqa's death made her a widow. Left with three small children, she took up her household duties with diligence and purpose. The sources (written at least one generation later) all comment on her devotion to her husband and her decision to remain a widow rather than remarry, and construct out of her actions a powerful topos of identity as an upright chaste widow, used by later family members to describe the moral characteristics of their family.[5]

Qara Buqa's first official assignment as a regular official was to oversee production at two iron mines located at Sijiao Mountain 四腳山 in Shandong, somewhere near Yidu. We do not have information on the operation of those

[5] According to Mongol customary law, enshrined by Qubilai Qan as the law of the land in China in 1271, all Mongol and *Semuren* women were subject to levirate marriage, the custom where a brother of a deceased male should marry that man's widow in order to keep the property of the male within the family. This practice was relaxed after 1276 in some cases, and women of status were often successful in evading it. Qara Buqa's widow was such a woman of status, who succeeded in remaining unmarried. See Birge, *Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction*, 238–51. I shall discuss this topos of identity further in the next chapter.

particular mines or the dates of Qara Buqa's assignment, but it was an important first position since iron would have been considered an essential resource for both revenue and weaponry, and production of that vital resource would have been given high priority by the Mongol government, as it had been under the preceding Song. His duties probably included oversight of other, less important officials as well as laborers since he was provided with a Golden Tiger Tablet to wear during his tenure at the mines.

Qara Buqa apparently succeeded in his duties at the Shandong iron mines, because he was next appointed as a superintendent of the provincial grain transport bureau (*xingdu caoyun shi*).[6] That office was in charge of one of the most vital links between south China and the Yuan capital, concerned with supplying the capital and other areas of north China with grain from the south. According to our sources, Qara Buqa was in charge of a substantial workforce (one source reports fifteen thousand people), and he was responsible for some important developments within the bureau, working to prevent accidents and skimming of profits that occurred during the transit of grain. The leadership skills he developed in his first two assignments as a *Semuren* official were undoubtedly noted by the Mongol court, and were vital to his assignments in the newly conquered south.

Qara Buqa was also in the first wave of *Semuren* officials to be posted to south China, and may have gone south as part of the Mongol general Bayan's campaigns against Song. Sometime in the 1270s he was promoted and sent into the field as a pacification officer (*xuanwei shi*) for Jiangxi region (*Jiangxidao* 江西道), and then appointed to

[6] Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 25.2a. This text of Qara Buqa's spirit-way stele gives the most detailed information on Qara Buqa's activities as an official in south China, as well as information on the various personnel and functions of the transport, salt and maritime offices.

be a superintendent of the regional salt tax office (*duzhuan yunyanshi*) for the Guangdong region (*Guangdong-dao* 廣東道) in southern Jiangxi Province.[7]

This was an important job because salt was a valuable taxable commodity produced in large quantities in Guangzhou, and extracting tax revenues from that salt trade, along with the taxes on other shipping activities in Guangzhou, was a vital source of revenue for the Mongol court. No date is reported for Qara Buqa's assignment to Guangdong, but his combined experience in the transport office in north China and in the pacification office in Jiangxi made him eminently suited to the job in that frontline area.

Guangdong was quite unsettled in the late 1270s. Song loyalists had occupied Guangzhou until February of 1278, and while Qubilai was able to establish firm control of south China by early 1279, pockets of resistance to Mongol control persisted, in the form of Song loyalists as well as bandits who took advantage of the situation to exert their control over areas in the south. Qara Buqa's position at Guangzhou was not unusual; the central government routinely sent trusted and experienced *semu* officials to frontier areas like south China to establish government offices and maintain order over newly pacified areas and populations. It was, however, a dangerous assignment, and the sources reflect this fact in their descriptions of Qara Buqa's activities in office there. He "was in charge of all of

[7] This office was opened in the city of Guangzhou immediately following the defeat of Song to supervise the production and transport of salt and revenues extracted from the salt trade. By 1285 the office was taken over by the Guangzhou Pacification Office, and its officials supervised both the salt industry and maritime operations in Guangzhou. The Jiangxi Branch Secretariat was established in 1277, and extended further into parts of south China, including eastern Guangdong and the city of Guangzhou. As such, the office in charge of salt tax and maritime activities at Guangzhou was under the supervision of the Jiangxi Branch government. See Farquhar, *Government of China*, 378–81.

the flourishing markets and sea-going merchants there, and set up laws that stopped the private sale of salt.... The salt traders in Donghuan, Xiangshan, and Huizhou [all near Guangzhou] planned a rebellion, but Qara Buqa and Dashman (荅失蠻) suppressed them and then reformed the salt laws."[8]

Qara Buqa was obviously a talented and efficient administrator, and his reform of the salt laws apparently favored the local population because the sources all say that he was very popular with the locals because of those reforms. He also put a stop to various problems that plagued the regional transport office such as the illegal skimming of profits off of the salt industry by officials. Since Qara Buqa was an officer in the regional pacification office he also had to maintain order over bandits who roamed the area.

Qara Buqa was killed while pursuing his obligations as a pacification official in Guangdong. In 1284 he was sent to keep order in an area just north of Guangzhou, after a local group of bandits had disrupted the supply route. On the way he met up with a local bandit chieftain, a certain Ouzhong, and his gang. When they caught Qara Buqa's small party, they tried to extract promises of goods and special treatment from Qara Buqa, but he refused and he and his men were then killed by the bandits.[9]

Qara Buqa's untimely death at the hands of those bandits resulted in his eventual recognition by the Mongol court for his loyalty as a *Semuren* official, by granting him a series of posthumous style names and official titles long

[8] Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 25.2b.

[9] Ouyang Xuan included a most interesting passage in his history of the Xie family that describes Qara Buqa's wife's actions on the night that he was killed. This passage is part of the picture of the virtuous, chaste woman theme featured in other contemporaneous sources.

after he was killed in 1284.[10] The practice of granting a man long dead with posthumous titles was common throughout Chinese imperial history and is not, in itself, remarkable. Qara Buqa's case is interesting, however, because at least one characteristic used to describe him in his posthumous titles, the term loyalty (*zhong*), became another topos of identity used by his descendants to describe themselves and their family as ideal Confucian types (see my discussion below). His death also left a widow with small children back in Shandong, and her actions, and those of their younger son, contributed to the formation of an identity that would be claimed by later family members.

By the time Qara Buqa began to serve the Mongols as a *Semuren* official in the early 1260s, a new phase in the Mongol occupation of China had begun. Qubilai Qan was beginning the final military campaigns against the Song that would extend Mongol rule over all of China. He was also starting to orient his rule towards China, which eventually resulted in the fragmentation of the Mongol empire into separate qanates. During Qubilai's reign, south China was consolidated into the Mongol realm, the capital of the whole Mongol empire was moved to north China, a new Chinese-style dynasty was proclaimed, and Chinese influence began to grow at the Mongol court and in many

[10] Showing loyalty was highly valued by Mongols and Chinese alike, and men who died as a result of their loyal service to the qan were often rewarded by the awarding of posthumous titles, offices, and other honors. For example, Chinggis chose his close companions by their loyalty to him, and we have already seen examples from biographies of other prominent Uyghur *Semuren* where Chinggis Qan specifically lauded the man for loyalty to his former masters. Qara Buqa's posthumous titles, honorific names and positions can be seen in his funerary inscriptions, two examples of which are "Meritorious Official Who Protected his Loyalty and was Completely Virtuous" (*shouzhong quanjie gongchen* 守忠 全節 功臣), and "Loyal and Longsuffering" (*Zhongmin* 忠愍).

areas of social and political life. By the end of Qubilai's reign in 1294, Mongol China was a very different place than it had been in 1260. Those changes can also be seen in the kinds of careers available to and personal choices made by many *Semuren* in China, including Qara Buqa's offspring.

Qara Buqa was the last member of his family whose personal and professional life was formed in north China. He was also the first member of his family to serve in the south. His positions there were, however, part of the final Mongol campaigns against the Song and subsequent mop-up operations, and did not, apparently, result in any significant shift of attention away from the north. It is with his eldest son that we begin to see the pattern change, though he too was at least partly a product of the north since he spent his childhood there, and his career followed the traditional pattern of wide involvement in both civil and military bureaus and duties.

Xie Wenzhi

When he died, Qara Buqa's family was at Yidu, and it is here that his widow began the education of their two sons. The eldest of these was known by his Chinese-sounding name of Xie Wenzhi 偰文質 (Sävinch?), while the younger carried the Uyghur name Ögrünch 越倫質.[11] Like his father, Xie Wenzhi was a precocious child. More than one source tells us that by the time he was eight years of age, Wenzhi was able to memorize "several hundred characters" every day, and could recite the texts he was learning by heart.[12]

[11] Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing argues that Xie was not used as a surname but as a Chinese transcription of the first syllable of that man's Uyghur personal name Sävinch. See his article "Meng Yuan shidai Gaochang Xieshi de shihuan yu hanhua." While I do not dispute his assertion, contemporaries clearly regarded Xie as a Chinese-style surname.

[12] His personal name, Wenzhi 文質 can be translated as "cultured and unaffected" or "literate and of personal character," both of which are

Even more interesting, we are told that when Wenzhi was only 10 years old he served up a piece of his own flesh to bring relief for his ill mother. He "cut off a piece of his own thigh, cooked it with some ground up deer antler and served it to his mother [because] he heard that this was practiced in ancient times [by sons for an ill parent]."[13] His actions apparently had the intended effect, for we are told that his mother lived until the ripe old age of 72 years. This action would come to be seen as one of the hallmarks of Xie Wenzhi's identity as an ideal model of filial piety, a virtue that would in time be transferred to his family as model Confucianists.

The practice of cutting off a piece of one's own body and preparing it for consumption by an ill parent has a long if contentious history in China, described by a modern scholar, Qiu Zhonglin.[14] The earliest references in the Chinese sources to the specific practice of using a piece of

full of Confucian meaning. See Luo Zhufeng 罗竹风, ed., *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 [Great dictionary of Chinese], 13 vols. (Shanghai: Hanyu da cidian chubanshe, 2001), Vol. 6, 1541, for definitions and historical usages of this term. As with children of the Chinese literati, children of Uyghurs and other *Semuren* in Mongol China probably received their primary education at home, and tutors would have been hired for higher level education for sons whose families valued or were interested in Chinese culture and acculturation to that tradition.

[13] While all of the sources report this incident, it is described in most detail in a poem written to honor the Xie family. See Liu Guan 柳貫, "Sanjie Tang shi" 三節堂詩 [Poem about the Sanjie Hall], in *Liu Daizhi wenji* 柳待制文集 [Collected works of Liu Guan] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1928) 1.11b–12b. Regarding this particular practice, see Qiu Zhonglin 邱仲麟, "Buxiao zhixiao – Tang yilai gegu liaoqin xianxiang de shihuishi chutan" 不孝之孝 – 唐以來割股療親現象的社會史初探 [Unfilial filial piety – a sociohistorical study of the phenomenon of cutting flesh to heal parents], *Xinshi Xue* 新史學 6.1 (March, 1995): 49–94. I thank Angela Leung for bringing this article to my attention.

[14] See Qiu Zhonglin, "Buxiao zhixiao."

flesh from one's own body to bring about the healing of an ill family member date from the Tang period. However, it is likely that this was practiced long before the Tang, and appears to originate either in the popularization of certain Buddhist practices or early Chinese medicine. Tang sources document several cases of people who cut off a piece of their own bodies, cooked it and offered it to an ill family member (most commonly to a parent, more rarely for a brother). Qiu claims that precedents for cutting of one's flesh appear in early Chinese medical literature, and that it was practiced by physicians who established that this custom was an efficacious way to heal an ill parent. But Qiu's point is that there was a good deal of ambiguity concerning the practice among the ancients. Various writers in the Tang and Song periods denounced the custom as really being quite unfilial. After all, it was considered highly un-Confucian to harm one's own body. Yet, the practice seems to have gained in popularity in the Yuan period, and continued to be practiced on a fairly wide scale in Ming and Qing times.

Portraying Wenzhi as familiar with this particular manifestation of Confucian morality when he was only 10 years old implies to us that he was raised with a heightened appreciation of Chinese culture and traditional values. This character attribution is not surprising in light of his descendants' familiarity with Confucian teachings. Wenzhi's Confucian orientation is further reinforced by the fact that his mother chose to remain a widow after Qara Buqa's death. Her choice was undoubtedly informed by a number of factors, including her economic position and the fact that levirate marriage seems not to have been favored by upper class *Semuren* in China. But her choice was also certainly informed by her appreciation of Confucian propriety, and those values were communicated to her children. This portrayal also provides us with insight into this Uyghur family and their uses of Chinese cultural

markers in forming their identity as literati in Mongol China.

Long after Wenzhi is supposed to have performed his act of filial piety for his sick mother, the sources report "the people of Yue [Guangdong and Guangxi] all called his family 'the family that practiced the three virtues of loyalty, uprightness and filial piety' [Yue zhi renshi wei zhong zhen xiao sanjie beiyu yijia 粵之人士謂忠真孝三節備於一家]. [Then] among themselves they [the people of Yue] had a drawing (*tu*) made which was passed around for all to see, and after a while the name of this family spread all about and people heaped praise on them."[15] This short statement in the history of the Xie family written by another famous Chinese writer, Ouyang Xuan, describes a pivotal event that shaped the identity and history of the family, and it all stemmed from Wenzhi's characteristic as a deeply filial son.

Since Qara Buqa's family was most likely living in Shandong when he was killed in Guangdong, why did the people in the south have Qara Buqa's likeness depicted in a painting? It presumably depicted Qara Buqa as the virtuous ancestor and exemplar of this model family? It would not have been unusual for Qara Buqa's wife to commission a drawing of her late husband, since that was common practice among those Chinese who could afford it.[16] Such an act would also have been in keeping for this woman, who had already taken vows of widow celibacy, and who was committed to living according to the Confucian code.

[15] Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.11b. Ouyang's history of the Xie family is the only source that reports these details.

[16] According to James Cahill, it was common for a family to commission a drawing or painting of a departed loved one that would be used at a family altar or to otherwise commemorate that person. James Cahill, personal communication, 1997. The creation and role of ancestor or memorial portraits in China is also described by Jan Stuart and Evelyn S. Rawski, *Worshipping the Ancestors: Chinese Commemorative Portraits* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

In this way her deceased husband would take his place as the family ancestor and be remembered, in good Confucian fashion, as the departed husband, father, and loyal official. Assuming that such a painting was done and that it became known in southern China, where Qara Buqa's memory may have been kept alive, it certainly provided his descendants with a good reputation.

The other action that Wenzhi took, presumably early on, that had long-term ramifications for his and his family's identity, was to adopt a Chinese-style surname for his family. None of the sources tell us when he decided to do this, but they all agree that he, and not his parents, were responsible for selecting this unusual surname. If Wenzhi was really as active in constructing this new identity for himself and his family as literati in the Chinese tradition as the sources imply, then the need for a surname would certainly have occurred to him. As we have already seen, many other Uyghur *Semuren* individuals adopted Chinese-style surnames after they had been living in China for awhile. But the name he chose was taken from the name of a river in the steppe where his Uyghur ancestors supposedly originated. Thus, the choice of this rather unusual character for a surname, as opposed to its more common homophone, seems to have been explicitly intended to accomplish two simultaneous goals: to preserve the Uyghur heritage for his descendants, while conforming to the Chinese surname tradition. I shall have more to say about this issue in the next chapter since several Chinese writers commented on it in their encomia written in Wenzhi's honor.

While his personal life reflected Chinese values, Xie Wenzhi's life as a *Semuren* official followed traditional patterns. He used his father's service as an official to gain admission into the Mongol administrative system by virtue of the *yin* protection privilege, a tactic that was common

among *Semuren* in China.[17] He received his first appointment at age 16, when he was assigned to the tax bureau in Teng County 滕縣 in his home district of Yidu.[18] Sometime during the Dade reign period (1294–1304), Xie Wenzhi was sent to Longxing Prefecture 龍興路 in Jiangxi Provice, as a judicial secretary (*liwen*) in the provincial Judicial Proceedings Office. He established his residence on East Lake in the prefectural city, also known by its old name of Yuzhang 豫章 (near to present-day Nanchang), where his five famous sons eventually grew up and where he lived, on and off, for over thirty years.

In 1314 Wenzhi was appointed to the position of a director general (*zongguan* 總管) of Guangde Prefecture (*Guangde lu* 廣德路) in northern Jiangzhe Province.[19] While stationed there he became known for his reputation

[17] Gazetteer sources that contain information on Xie Wenzhi's career as a *Semuren* official include Zhu Lin 朱麟, *Guangde zhouzhi* 廣德州志 [Gazetteer of Guangde Prefecture] (1535; rpt. Taibei: Chengwen, 1985); Wen Renquan 聞人詮, *Nanji zhi* 南畿志 [Gazetteer of Nanjing] (1469–1538 ed.; rpt. Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1987); *Liyang xianzhi* 溧陽縣志 [Gazetteer of Liyang County] (various editions, see comments below); and Fan Lai 范淶, *Xinxiu Nanchang fuzhi* 新修南昌府志 [Newly revised gazetteer of Nanchang Prefecture] (1527–1608 ed.; rpt. Beijing Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1990).

[18] *Liyang xianzhi* (Jiaqing ed.) 12.13b.

[19] Zhu Lin, *Guangde zhouzhi* 7.9a. Guangde Circuit was located in southeast China, in the northern part of Jiangzhe Province, southwest of Lake Tai in present-day southeast Anhui Province. The Yuan Dynasty *lu* was in most cases equivalent to the prior Song and subsequent Ming prefectures, and the usual term for prefecture, *fu*, was only used in Yuan for special circumstances. Frederick P. Mote, personal communication. It was second in importance to the circuit (*dao*), but it controlled most of the functions carried on at the local level, including education, taxation, and municipal affairs, and was also in charge of lower-level administrative units. For further description of Yuan administrative units, see Farquhar, *Government of China*, 411–25; and Hucker, *Dictionary of Official Titles*, 62–65. The director general was in charge of a semi-military unit (*du zongguan fu*) at the prefectural level.

as an honest official who ruled according to the law. The entry for Wenzhi in the Guangde gazetteer praises him for his qualities of honesty, self-restraint, his kindness to the people, and the fact that he worked to establish schools in the area. It was also there that he first became acquainted with his future son-in-law, the prominent Uyghur *Semuren* official, Talima Jierde Gusulu (see below).

After that assignment he was transferred west to Huguang Province, where he served as Director General of Tanzhou prefecture 潭州路 (present-day Changsha, Hunan Province). The Yuan court upgraded Tanzhou to a superior prefecture (*dajun*) on Wenzhi's watch, and he was praised for upholding the law without partiality. It was probably also at this point in his career that Wenzhi was promoted by the court with the honorary title Grandee of the Twelfth Class (*Tongyi dafu*).

Wenzhi's next official position was back in Jiangxi Province where he was assigned to be a Director General of Ganzhou prefecture 贛州路 in east-central Jiangxi. At Ganzhou he was given the prestigious Golden Tiger Tablet as a symbol of his imperial authority. At some point thereafter he was sent further south and west as an assistant pacification officer (*xuanwei fushi*) in the Guangxi region (*Guangxi liangdao* 廣西兩道), with the concurrent post of assistant regional military commissioner (*fudu yuanshuai*) in southern Huguang Province.[20] It is interesting to note that even in the mid-1300s *Semuren* officials were apparently routinely assigned to both civil and military positions, a vestige of the old Mongol practice of not

[20] The Yuan court established three Pacification Commissions and General Regional Military Commands in Huguang Province. See Farquhar, *Government of China*, 412. On Huguang during the Yuan, see Ritsuko Ōshima, "Mongol Control over Hu-kuang 湖廣 Province during the Yüan Dynasty: Control over the Hsi-tung 西洞 People," *Memoirs of the Research Department of The Toyo Bunko* 43 (1985): 19–43.

recognizing a strict distinction between those different spheres of authority. Furthermore, while it may be argued that officials like Wenzhi who served in these pacification bureaus with military titles were essentially managers and not commanding officers per se, there was never a clear, hard division between these areas during the time of Mongol rule of China.

Pacification bureaus were important components in the Mongol administration of China. They were placed just below the province in the administrative hierarchy, attached to bureaus of military affairs. They were usually located in frontier or other areas that the Mongols had trouble bringing under their control. The Guangxi Pacification Office was in charge of a vital part of southern China, the entire southern half of Huguang Province.[21] The sources note that while Wenzhi was serving in Guangxi there was a rebellion by the forced laborers (*yaomin*) in the south. We are not told why they rebelled, but Wenzhi led several thousand troops to put down the rebellion and captured nine or ten of the rebel leaders, including their leader and instigator of the rebellion, a certain Long Bantian 龍半天.[22] After that rebellion, Wenzhi continued to serve in Guangxi; he petitioned the court to allow some kind of restructuring of the system of military agricultural colonies (*tuntian*) there, and his requests were approved by the central government.

[21] This was part of the large pacification bureau that spanned Guangxi and Liangjiang Circuits. See Tan Qixiang 谭其骧, ed., *Zhongguo lishi dituji* 中國歷史地圖集 [Historical atlas of China], 8 vols. (Shanghai: Ditu chubanshe, 1982), Vol. 7, 32–33.

[22] It is secondary sources, most notably the *Xin Yuanshi*, that indicate the Yao rebels Wenzhi encountered in Guangxi were led by Long Bantian. According to these accounts, Wenzhi came up with a plan to capture the rebel and his gang, and so was able to establish peace in the region. See the accounts in Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shiji* 45.5; and Ke Shaomin, *Xin Yuanshi* 136.4b

Wenzhi's next official position was again back in central Jiangxi as an Agent at Ji'an Prefecture (Ji'anlu 吉安路).[23] Along with this posting came a promotion in honorary rank to Grandee of the Eleventh Class (*Zhengyi Dafu*). Wenzhi's last official position may have been an assignment as a judge (*duanshiguan*) back down in southern China, in Guangxi and Haibei, but the sources do not agree on either the timing or location. If he was sent back to the south, the court did so because of his earlier success as a pacification officer there.

Wenzhi was eventually allowed to retire from office in 1335 after repeatedly submitting petitions "of several thousand characters" to the court that were not approved. For reasons that are not clear, sometime after he retired to Yuzhang, Jiangxi, he moved his residence further north to Liyang County in Yuan-era Jiangzhe Province (present-day southern Jiangsu, between Nanjing and Shanghai), which he went to some considerable effort to establish as his family's permanent residence. Most important, he had the graves of his father and mother moved there from Shandong, and he built another family residence and adjoining hall. Since Liyang was just north of Guangde Prefecture where Wenzhi had his first important assignment as a *Semuren* official in southern China, we may speculate that he had made some good social and economic connections there that would make Liyang a better place than Jiangxi to establish his family's permanent residence.[24] Wenzhi died in 1340 and was eventually

[23] The sources do not agree on the timing of this position; some state that Xie Wenzhi was brought out of retirement to fill this position, while others state that he went to Ji'an before he retired to Yuzhang Prefecture. It is not possible at this time to verify which version of events is correct.

[24] It is interesting to note that there are far more entries about Wenzhi and his family in the Liyang gazetteers than there are in any of the Jiangxi gazetteers.

awarded several posthumous titles by the court: he was made Marquis of Yunzhong Prefecture (*Yunzhong junhou*), and had bestowed upon him the posthumous honorary name Loyal and Assisting (*Zhongxiang*).[25]

Wenzhi's career as a member of the *Semuren* political elite was typical of his prominent contemporaries. He used the *yin* privilege to enter the Mongol administration, and he advanced up through the ranks during a long and successful career in which he served as an administrator at local and regional levels in both civilian and military capacities. The fact that virtually all of his career was spent in southern China may have contributed to his decision to settle there rather than return back to Shandong after he retired from office. Since he had spent so much time in the south, he had gained many friends and acquaintances among the important Chinese of the area. This is clear from the essays and poems that a number of prominent Chinese writers from Jiangxi and other areas of the south wrote about Wenzhi and his family (which are discussed in the next chapter). So it seems evident that he succeeded in building good relationships with local Chinese literati while he was an official.

Wenzhi as a Member of the Cultural Elite

More interesting than any aspect of his official career, however, are his actions (invented or real) in his private life that conformed to the Confucian cultural norms and expectations held by contemporary Chinese literati and which contributed to the identity of his family as models of

[25] His honorary title "Marquis of Yunzhong Prefecture" was apparently a family heritage since it was also awarded to his great uncle Sergius. Yunzhong was the old name of Datong Prefecture 大同路 in northern Shanxi during the Liao and Jin Dynasties, but was perpetuated as an alternative name in honorific titles. Frederick P. Mote, personal communication. See *Yuanshi* 58.1375 for the historical names of Datong *lu*.

good behavior. Whether or not he actually did all of the things that were attributed to him as a child, it is clear that Wenzhi was attracted both to Chinese culture and to life in southern China. This is not surprising given the fact that the south was China's economic and social heartland and the place where he would have the most opportunity to further his own and his family's interests. His interest is obvious in Wenzhi's actions.

While serving as a *Semuren* official in Jiangxi, all of his sons received a Chinese style education and participated successfully in the imperial examination system. Since the exam system was not the most effective way for a Semuren to enter the bureaucracy (the standard routes were the *yin* inheritance privilege or induction into the qan's personal bodyguard), success must have been important to Wenzhi and his family.

Wenzhi also bought into the Chinese social system in other ways, most importantly by adopting and using a Chinese-style surname for himself and his family, and by physically relocating himself and his forebears into southern Chinese territories. The Liyang gazetteer tells us that when Wenzhi retired there he purchased enough land to build his own residence and to serve as a graveyard for his family. He then transferred his parents' tombs (*gaimu*) from the north to the village of Sandy Creek (*Shazhang cun* 沙漲村), in the northern part of the Liyang county seat.[26] In fact, he did not simply move his parents' graves there, but went to the expense of constructing an entire spirit way leading up to the tomb![27] (See cover photo.) This was an

[26] The text reads, "Gaochang jungong zhongmin Qara Buqa mu zai xianbei Shazhang cun," 高昌郡公忠愍合剌普華墓在縣北沙漲村 *Liyang xianzhi* (1813 edition) 4.30a. This gazetteer also lists the locations of the graves of Xie Wenzhi, his son Xie Zhedu, and grandson Xie Si.

[27] Xie family members who still live in Liyang City have spent a considerable amount of money to restore Qara Buqa's tomb and stelae

expensive undertaking and indicates how serious Xie Wenzhi was in wishing to establish his new home at Liyang.

The fact that Wenzhi had accumulated enough capital to purchase land in Liyang represents an important refocus of his identity away from north China, his natal home, and from Jiangxi, where his own family had grown up. We are not told how much land Wenzhi purchased, but he was able to buy enough land to build his residence and accommodate his parents' graves. Land ownership was an important source of economic and cultural capital for prominent Chinese in China, and Wenzhi undoubtedly made this investment for economic and social reasons.

Transferring his parents' graves from Shandong to Liyang was another highly significant act that underscores Wenzhi's intention to settle in Liyang county as a member of the local elite. Resituating an ancestral grave was usually done when a branch of a family moved permanently to a new location and wished to maintain links to the main lineage. It was an important procedure that invoked the identity of the family that had moved, and it was an expensive procedure that involved ritual specialists and the purchase of land for the permanent grave. These graves would also have been the focus of annual ancestral veneration during the Qing Ming festival.

As Rubie Watson points out in her study of the politics of grave sitings in southeast China, the placement of text and rituals associated with an ancestor's grave were all important to the living, and done for the benefit of the living members of the family. Siting a grave was an overt political event, "involved in the give and take of local politics… [since] groups and individuals make claims and counterclaims that alter the status quo."[28] Watson's point is

inscription. The Yuan-era spirit way stone animal and human figures are largely intact and in place, and can still be seen.

[28] Rubie S. Watson, "Remembering the Dead: Graves and Politics in Southeastern China," in *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern*

that the ancestor's bones and grave are loci of power for the living descendants, in contrast to the funeral rites and subsequent rituals performed in an ancestral hall. Since Wenzhi seems to have been the only child of his parents to reach adult age (the sources make brief mention of his only brother dying at a young age), it was natural for Wenzhi to be concerned with the location of his parents' graves. He was also clearly aware of the importance in Chinese culture of ancestral graves to the identity of the living descendants. Since he had no previous connection to Liyang, moving his parents' graves there provided Wenzhi with important and immediate contact to his adopted locality.

The next action that Wenzhi took to secure his identity as a member of the Liyang elite was to build a family residence on land he had purchased there. He had already built a family residence and hall in Yuzhang, Jiangxi, where he had lived before retirement, so the precedent was established for constructing one in his new home. At Liyang Wenzhi built a family home with an attached hall, and that residence soon became an important locus of his family's identity. Tapping into the imperial title given to his family to add further weight to his new residence, he called it the "Hall of Three Virtuous Ones" (*Sanjie Tang* 三節堂). This name would most certainly have provided every person in Liyang with a daily reminder that these Uyghurs were people who practiced Confucian virtuous behavior.[29]

China, ed. James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 204–05. Watson stresses the distinction between ancestor worship in the hall and at the grave, and the self-interest involved in grave rites. She borrows from and extends Maurice Freedman's work on ancestor worship and the geomancy of burial. Moreover, although Watson deals with the 1930s, her arguments about the overtly political ramification of grave sitings and rituals apply to late-imperial China as well.

[29] It was common for local elites to give auspicious names to their residences and attached study or ancestral halls. Evelyn Rawski points

Conclusion

Qara Buqa and his son Xie Wenzhi were both transitional figures in their family's history. The lives and careers of both men occurred during a period when the Mongol Empire was evolving and maturing after the death of the founder, Chinggis Qan. China had finally been fully conquered by the Mongols, who imposed a very different type of rule on the south versus the north. The princely appanage system was not extended to south China, and the Mongols accommodated more Chinese practices and personnel into their civil bureaucracy after the south was conquered than had been the case when they only controlled the north. Qara Buqa's and Xie Wenzhi's lives reflect these changes.

What were the conditions that made Qara Buqa and his son, Xie Wenzhi, transitional figures in their family's history? Judged solely from their records as *Semuren* officials in the Mongol administration of China, it is not clear how they might have differed from any other *Semuren* before or after their time. Both men served in a variety of positions that included military as well as civil authority, and the kinds of positions in which they served – pacification commissioner (*xuanweishi*), judge (*duanshiguan*), or agent (*darughachi*) – were given only to Mongols or *Semuren*, never to Chinese. As the range of these positions and duties also make clear, both men were part of a typical Mongol administrative system, where there was little real distinction between the civil and military spheres and where these non-Chinese held real power over

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out that in the Qing period the name of an ancestral hall (*tangming*) – a hall attached to the residence of an elite family – referred to the household itself; see her article, "The Ma Landlords of Yang-chia-kou in Late Ch'ing and Republican China," in *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940*, ed. Patricia Ebrey and James Watson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 245.

their Chinese contemporaries. But the lives and careers of both men were, in fact, quite different from their predecessors and their descendants.

One obvious difference between these two men and their ancestors is the fact that they served most, if not all, of their careers in south China. More important, they were the last men in the family whose official duties included both military and civilian functions. Xie Wenzhi, in particular, marks this transition; he settled in the south rather than return to his family's home in Temüge Odchigin's old appanage lands in Shandong.

Why did Wenzhi settle in southeast China when he retired from office rather than return to his family's home at Yidu? We know that the southeast did not experience the radical economic and social dislocation visited on north China by the Mongol invasion. In fact, one of the remarkable facts about Yuan history is the rapidity with which Qubilai established good working relations with the Chinese in the south. He understood that it was vital to maintain the social and economic infrastructure in south China in order for the Mongols to hold onto power in China. Wenzhi's decision probably turned on the economic prosperity and opportunities available to *Semuren* and Chinese alike in south China, which had been the economic center of China since at least the mid-eighth century. Unlike his father's generation, Wenzhi had also spent the majority of his adult life in southern China, most of it as a *Semuren* official. He had enjoyed successful tenures as an official in several parts of southern China, and had likely established good personal and professional relations with important local community leaders in some of those places (certainly in Jiangxi and Jiangzhe). The cooperation of local elites was necessary for any representative of the Mongol court to maintain order. But Wenzhi may have also felt a deeper kinship to the Chinese local elites because of his own family's history and his interests in Chinese culture.

Xie Wenzhi was also the last Xie family member whose service included stints in the pacification bureaus. His sons served exclusively in civilian positions, and reflect the evolution of the Mongol administration towards a more functionally specific system with clear distinction between the civilian and military spheres of power.[30]

Qara Buqa and his son are also represented in the sources as making specific choices about education, lifestyle, and identity that set them apart from their Uyghur ancestors and paved a new way for their descendants. Some of their choices were undoubtedly due to the longstanding appreciation and experience of literate cultures that they had as Uyghurs, while other choices were related to their experiences in southern China. Those choices ultimately led to new identities for these men, their wives and their descendants, as ideal Chinese cultural types, or what some have called a "Sino-Uyghur identity." We have already seen other examples, such as the families of Qara Ïghach Buyruq and Buyruq Qaya, where prominent Uyghur *Semuren* fashioned similar identities. In essence, we can say that Qara Buqa and Xie Wenzhi began a process of creating new kinds of cultural capital, which their descendants could use to become full-fledged cultural elites acceptable to Chinese counterparts even as they continued to act as powerful political elites representing Mongol interests.

But we must also remember that these men were really using the same strategies of survival long practiced by their ancestors. We have already seen that the first generation of Gaochang Uyghurs in Mongol China

[30] It could be argued that the fact that throughout the Yuan era the Mongols continued to use agents (*darughachi*), an office that fused military and civilian powers and duties, shows that they never fully abandoned the most important parts of the Mongol nomadic administrative system. This issue is, however, well beyond the scope of this book.

possessed important forms of cultural and social capital that they used to their advantage as a diaspora group. Their cultural capital included the specialized knowledge of systems of literacy (specifically, a written language) and administration (such as the use of seals), and their credentials as a highly cultured people. Their social capital coalesced around two principal relationships: association with the Uyghur *idiqut*, and the network of relationships with other Uyghur elites that began at Gaochang and extended among members of the Uyghur diaspora community in China. In the next chapter we shall see just how effective the Xie family was at using these forms of capital to construct their well-known identity as the family of the three virtuous ones and the six *jinshi* scholars.

Chapter 6

Resources and Strategies of Identity

By the time Bilge Buqa and Eren Temür's descendants had been in China for three generations they began to acquire additional types of cultural capital that were more specific to China, especially honorific Chinese-style official titles and laudatory descriptions by prominent Chinese writers of the time, which this family then used to become members of the Chinese literati community. By the end of Xie Wenzhi's life, his family had established a reputation as paragons of Confucian virtue and diligence that coalesced in the phrase "the family of the three virtuous ones and six *jinshi* scholars" (see their genealogical chart on p. 272).

Loyalty and Fidelity: Two Topoi of Identity

We have already seen how Qara Buqa's death while on assignment in south China resulted in his award by the Yuan court of several posthumous titles. He achieved a certain kind of immortality with inclusion among the *Yuanshi* biographies of loyal officials. The real effect of those honors, however, redounded to his descendants, who tapped the moral quality of his loyalty as a marker of their identity. That topos turned out to be valuable cultural capital indeed, worth far more than any financial or material capital that Qara Buqa may have left to his descendants. Several sources show us precisely how the identification as a loyal official was developed and bequeathed to the family. In the end, Qara Buqa became the head of a family known for their loyalty, fidelity and filial piety.

Four prominent Chinese literati wrote eulogies and inscriptions in honor of Qara Buqa long after his death. In addition to the important biographical data they contain, the

content, authorship, and context of these texts also provide us with clues to the strategies employed by Qara Buqa's descendants to create some specific cultural capital by establishing the identity of their illustrious ancestor, and to place themselves in positions that enabled them to use that capital to construct identities for themselves as political and cultural elites. For example, some of these pieces were written by men involved in intense political struggles beginning in the 1340s, and their eulogies tell us something about the status of the Xie family among the different Confucian factions that were responsible for the direction of politics in the last decades of the Yuan dynasty.

We first turn to two eulogy texts written by Huang Jin and Xu Youren, because they contain the most detailed information about Qara Buqa and the Xie family, and because both writers were cohorts of Qara Buqa's well-known grandson, Xie Zhedu, in the first civil service exams in 1315, and important cultural figures in their own right.[1] The piece written by Huang Jin 黃溍 (1272–1357) was a spirit way inscription for Qara Buqa.[2] The title of the text, in typical fashion, summarized all of the career high points of the deceased for anyone who came across the stone that

[1] See John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yuan China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 75–94, for information about Huang's and Xu's role in Yuan court factionalism.

[2] Huang Jin was a distinguished Confucian scholar who held several important positions in the central government. He was also a cohort of Qara Buqa's grandson, Zhedu, in the metropolitan exams of 1315. Among his official positions he served in the Hanlin Academy, the National College, and as Superintendent of Confucian Schools in Jiangxi Province. A spirit way inscription was essentially identical in content and structure to a funerary inscription or epitaph, except that the latter was meant to be placed inside the tomb while the former was inscribed on a stone that was placed on a path leading to the tomb or in front of the tomb where the public could read it. See my discussion of funerary inscriptions below.

marked the path to his grave. This one is titled "Spirit Way Inscription of Master Qara Buqa, Minister of Tax Transport and Salt Monopoly for Guangdong Circuit, who was posthumously awarded the titles of Meritorious Official Who Extended His Honesty, Protected His Loyalty and Was Entirely Virtuous, Grandee of the Fifth Class, Minister on the Right in Henan, Jiangbei and other Provinces, Supreme Protector of the State, and who was awarded the posthumous honorary titles Duke of Gaochang Prefecture, and Loyal and Grieved."[3] The text starts with Qara Buqa's father and traces the history of this family down through Qara Buqa's great-grandsons, who lived in the final days of the Yuan dynasty. We can date this text to around 1349 because it states that one of Qara Buqa's descendants, Xie Zhedu, had just been promoted to the rank of Second Privy Councilor (*canzhi zhengshi*) in the Jiangzhe provincial government (*Jiangzhe xingsheng* 江浙行省).

A long text, Huang Jin's composition contains a wealth of biographical detail about this Uyghur family going back several generations and ending with descriptions of Qara Buqa's immediate family. We get some sense of the high esteem in which Qara Buqa's grandson, Xie Zhedu, was held by the Yuan court from the introductory lines: the Hanlin Academy ordered Huang Jin to write an inscription for Zhedu's grandfather's spirit way stela because his grandfather's grave was located in the province where Zhedu was assigned (and site of his father, Xie Wenzhi's retirement). Two other high officials also added their stylized characters to the stela upon its completion, a certain Duoerzhiban 朵爾直班 (Dorji Bal?), presumably a Mongol who was head of the Office for the Empress's Household, and Tai Buqa 泰不花, who was Minister of the Office of Rites. Perhaps most important, the

[3] Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 25.1a.

eulogy gives us a detailed history of the sequence of Qara Buqa's imperial posthumous awards.

> Emperor Renzong [temple name for Ayurbarwada Qan, r. 1312–1320] reflected on Qara Buqa's death, and in the 11th month of 1318 he conferred on Qara Buqa the hereditary title Grandee of the Twelfth Class (*Tongyi Dafu*), and [working titles] Minister of Revenue and Supreme Master of Light Chariots (*Hubu shangshu* and *Shang qingche duwei*), and granted him the landed title Marquis of Gaochang Prefecture.... In the 10th month of 1334 the emperor [Toghon Temür, r. 1333–1368] granted him the posthumous style name of Meritorious Official who Protected his Loyalty and was Entirely Virtuous, and the name Loyal and Grieved. Again in the first month of 1349 the emperor bestowed on Qara Buqa the additional title Meritorious Official who Extended his Honesty, Protected his Loyalty and was Entirely Virtuous, and he granted Qara Buqa [the honorary name] Grandee of the Fifth Class (*Zide Dafu*) [and restated his other titles enumerated above].[4]

This unambiguous chronology of events reveals the accumulation of cultural capital to Qara Buqa, as locus of Xie family identity, by virtue of imperial grant of posthumous titles and ranks to him over a period of thirty-one years, beginning more than thirty years after he died. Each new installment or promotion granted by the Yuan court to Qara Buqa can be correlated with some accomplishment by one of his descendants, as we will see in the following chapters. By 1318 his most famous grandson, Xie Zhedu, had achieved his *jinshi* degree and was an officeholder. By 1334 all six of Qara Buqa's grandsons had achieved the *jinshi* degree, and by 1349, when this text was composed, Zhedu had reached the height of his career in the Ministry of Revenue and two of

[4] Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 25.2b–3a.

Qara Buqa's great-grandsons, Xie Si and Xie Boliaoxun, were well on their ways to important careers as *Semuren* officials. Huang's eulogy text reveals the process by which Qara Buqa became both the original source of his family's cultural capital and the symbolic repository of the on-going accumulation of such capital by various later Xie family members through their own achievements in office or as social and cultural elites.

The second of Qara Buqa's eulogies is a tomb inscription (*muzhiming*) written for him by the noted Chinese scholar Xu Youren 許有壬 (1287–1364).[5] The title and content of this inscription are similar to Qara Buqa's spirit way inscription, listing most of the same functional and honorary official titles and posthumous titles that are mentioned in the former text. The only significant difference between the two titles is that Xu Youren's text indicates that Qara Buqa had been awarded the honorary title of Grandee of the Thirteenth Class (*Jiayi dafu*) while still alive, calling Qara Buqa the "Grandee of the Thirteenth Class and Commissioner of Tax Transport and Salt Monopoly for Guangdong" before listing posthumous titles.[6]

Xu began his eulogy by recounting the history of Qara Buqa's ancestors, linking them to the famous Türk general Tonyuquq. He provides basic biographical information for all family members through Qara Buqa's grandsons, as well as some interesting mentions of Qara Buqa's wife. The first part of this text ends with a laudatory

[5] Xu Youren was a native of north China, who achieved his *jinshi* degree in 1315, in the same class as Qara Buqa's grandson, Xie Zhedu. He spent the majority of his long career in the Yuan Censorate as Second Privy Councilor (*canzheng*), and as Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy.

[6] The text reads: 嘉議大夫廣東道都轉運鹽使; Xu Youren, *Zhi Zheng ji* 至正集 54.3b–5b.

commendation of Qara Buqa, and tells the reader why he wrote this tomb inscription.

> The master [Qara Buqa] has seldom been written about, but he had great abilities in leading troops and managing resources. That was his primary virtue. If you examine what he did for the people and that which became law, and then look on how he sacrificed his life for the state then his great virtue will be known. In the *yanyou* era (1314–1320) the system of exams was established... and his grandsons were all recommended together, as if they were one person. Of the learned Confucian families who took the exams in the Tang and Song, none were like the Xie family.... Seeing Qara Buqa's actions we know that Heaven's way comes naturally [to some].[7]

It appears from the text that Qara Buqa's son, Xie Wenzhi, asked Xu to write his father's tomb inscription. This commission was thus part of Wenzhi's strategy to establish his family's identity as members of the social elite in Liyang. Xu comments: "In order to display the merits of the Xie family, they moved his [Qara Buqa's] grave on the certain day of a certain month of a certain year. It was originally located at Qinggou, in Lijiao Village, Teng Prefecture [Teng was the name of an ancient state in Shandong and the site of Qara Buqa's first post as a *Semuren* official]. The commissioner [Wenzhi] asked me to write an inscription."[8] This marked attention to Qara Buqa's genealogy in his tomb inscription is interesting because epitaphs written during the preceding Song period de-emphasized genealogy.[9] Unlike epitaphs from earlier

[7] Xu Youren, *Zhi Zheng ji* 54.8b.
[8] This portion of the text reads: 滕州禮教鄉清溝. See Xu Youren, *Zhi Zheng ji* 54.5b.
[9] Angela Schottenhammer, "Characteristics of Song Epitaphs," in *Burial in Song China*, ed. Dieter Kuhn (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), 262.

dynastic eras that were primarily functional and reiterated the deceased's genealogy to serve the ancestral and family cult, Song period epitaphs tended to be shorter and more akin to private historiographical texts showcasing the individual's personal accomplishments, rather than his achievements in office and his family's history. Qara Buqa's tomb inscription thus follows the pre-Song model for an epitaph of a high official. This should not surprise us, especially if Qara Buqa's descendants needed to "prove" their aristocratic line to their peers.

Again resembling Huang Jin's spirit way inscription, Xu Youren attached a short inscription (*ming*) in the form of a poem to the end of Qara Buqa's tomb inscription. Much shorter than the rest of the epitaph, the poem begins by referring to the Xie family's origins at the Xienianjie River in the steppe, and goes on to extol the virtues of loyalty, uprightness and filial piety that had become the hallmarks of Qara Buqa's family. As might be expected, the language of this poem is quite flowery and stands in marked contrast to the tone and content of the prose text that precedes it. Here, all of Qara Buqa's accomplishments and moral qualities are alluded to via poetic metaphors and dense language. These poems would only have been understood and appreciated by the most highly literate of readers of the day.

Two other prose texts written in Qara Buqa's honor also emphasize the topos of loyalty as his defining moral character. These texts differ from the ones already mentioned, however, since they focus on a family ancestral temple built to honor Qara Buqa. Through these texts we can see how Qara Buqa's descendants sought to portray themselves as paragons of Confucian family values by honoring their worthy ancestor in a family shrine. In this case Qara Buqa's son, Wenzhi, and his grandson, Zhedu, both participated in this Confucian family obligation. The

Xie ancestral hall, in turn, was to become another locus of identity for the Xie family.

Wu Cheng 吳澄 (1249–1333), a famous Neo-Confucian scholar in the Yuan period, wrote one of the inscriptions for the Xie family hall, which he entitled "Record of the Ancestral Hall of the Minister of Transport, the Marquis of Gaochang."[10] In this long text, Wu first describes the virtuous qualities of loyalty and virtue that merited an ancestral hall in Qara Buqa's honor, and follows with a description of the history of the Xie family through Qara Buqa's direct descendants, his son, Xie Wenzhi, and his grandson, Zhedu. A few pertinent biographical details are given about Qara Buqa, Wenzhi and Zhedu, but most of Wu's text is devoted to discussing the functions and meaning of Qara Buqa's ancestral hall.

Wu attributes the success of the six Xie family members in the *jinshi* exams to Qara Buqa's moral qualities, especially his virtue of loyalty. Qara Buqa, the author declares, should rightly be honored as an ancestor, since his descendants have achieved so much. Furthermore, it is important that future generations of family members also recognize the importance of their ancestor, Qara Buqa, and

[10] Wu Cheng, "Duyun shangshu Gaochang hou citang ji" 都運尚書高昌侯祠堂記, in *Wu Wenzheng ji* 吳文正集 [Collected works of Wu Cheng] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1971) 35.3a–6b. Wu Cheng was known for his Confucian learning, and after starting his official career in the southern Song, was appointed to a series of high-level offices at the Yuan court, including Deputy Director, and then Director of the National College, Academician in the Hanlin Academy and lecturer in the emperor's Classics Colloquium. For information on Wu Cheng, see David Gedalecia, "Wu Ch'eng and the Perpetuation of the Classical Heritage in the Yüan," in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 186–211; and his more recent expanded study, *The Philosophy of Wu Ch'eng: A Neo-Confucian of the Yüan Dynasty* (Bloomington: Indiana University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1999).

thereby continue the achievements and status of the Xie family.

A second essay that commemorated the Xie family hall was written by another Chinese literatus, Zheng Yuanyou 鄭元祐 (1292–1364). This short piece was entitled "Hall of the Former Virtuous Marquis Xie of Gaochang."[11] In it Zheng highlights the moral qualities of Qara Buqa, his wife and son, and the impact of their virtuous conduct on later family members:

> ...When the few loyal and valiant of our eminent kingdom had conquered Jin and pacified Song, it was ordered that the meritorious and the extravagant [i.e., all officials] be investigated.... The marquis [Qara Buqa] was sent as an official to the south where he was loyal in his administration.... His wife was upright, and upon her husband's death she taught her sons to be filial.... He cut a piece of his flesh for his mother when she was ill, and people all praised his character as filial and loyal.... The marquis's grandsons were all educated [lit. read books] and all succeeded in the exams.... His son wore the Golden Tiger Tablet, and his grandsons all had the purple ribbons of office. Generations of men proclaimed their excellence. The marquis [Qara Buqa] established it, and the great three virtuous ones produced a single line [of eminent family members]. How can anyone match this record![12]

[11] Zheng Yuanyou, "Gaochang Xiehou zaojie Tang" 高昌傒侯早節堂 [Hall of the First Worthies of the family of Marquis Xie of Gaochang], in *Qiao Wu ji* 僑吳集 [Collected works of Zheng Yuanyou] (Taibei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1970) 1.1b. Zheng was an itinerant scholar, originally from Zhejiang. He refused appointments to office for most of his life, preferring to travel around and stay with other scholars. He did hold the position of Confucian teacher in Pingjiang route in 1357, but only stayed in that post for one year. He was eventually assigned to be a director of Confucian Studies in the Zhejiang provincial government in 1364, but died in office.

[12] Zheng Yuanyou, *Qiao Wu ji* 1.1b.

Zheng's brief essay perhaps sums up best the attitude of many Chinese elites to the Xie family. Qara Buqa is portrayed as the real source of his descendants' political and social success, and even the secondary virtues of uprightness and filial piety displayed by his wife and son were byproducts of his loyalty. After all, the text is focused on the ancestral hall dedicated to Qara Buqa.

Zheng also links Qara Buqa to his family's Uyghur heritage by using the posthumous title Marquis of Gaochang in the title of his essay. This title is not, in itself, surprising, since Chinese posthumous honorary titles frequently used ancient toponyms. But by the mid-1300s, when Zheng wrote this, Qara Buqa's descendants were acting like Chinese-style aristocrats. This explicit reference to Qara Buqa's connection to Uyghuristan would surely have reinforced Qara Buqa's alternate *Semuren* identity, to Chinese and *Semuren* readers alike. It was undoubtedly a reference that his family did not protest, and may have been an important counterpoint aimed to maintain their Uyghur identity and ties within the Uyghur *Semuren* community in China. This Uyghur aristocrat was loyal to the Mongols to the end!

Uprightness (zhen 真): The Second Confucian Topos of Xie Family Identity

The second Confucian topos that became a type of cultural capital for Qara Buqa's descendants was moral uprightness and was associated specifically with Qara Buqa's wife.[13] This term referred specifically to the virtuous behavior of women, and was manifested in such ways as wifely regard

[13] While *zhen* is commonly translated as truth, sincerity, or genuineness, I render it as uprightness here since it is associated with the character of Qara Buqa's widow, and implies a moral quality associated with widow chastity. This sense of *zhen* is reinforced by its use in the compound *zhenlie* as a category of widows in local gazetteers, translated as "the chaste and the staunch" by Sherry Mou, personal communication.

for husband and sons, and the vow of the widow to remain faithful to her husband after his death with an oath of chastity. Ouyang Xuan makes the connection between uprightness and Qara Buqa's wife clear in his biography of the family: "in the prime of life she became a widow. She was pure and morally upright, and both strict and foreboding in her righteous ways."[14] Once people began to describe Qara Buqa's wife in this manner, it was easy to apply the term "uprightness" as a general moral virtue of the entire family.

It is surprising to see such behavior practiced by a woman who was obviously not Chinese, who was married into another prominent Uyghur family who had not been in China for more than two generations, and who ignored Mongol customary law of levirate marriage, which specified that a widow should be remarried to her late-husband's brother or cousin. What were her actions that prompted the accolades of later Chinese writers, how did they fit in with accepted customs of marriage in her lifetime, and why was she so important to her family's identity?

All we really know about the origins of Qara Buqa's wife is that she was definitely *Semuren*, coming from the Xitaitele 希台特勒 family.[15] When her husband

[14] Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.11b. Ouyang's portrayal of this woman as a chaste widow must be understood within the context of the view of women held by Daoxue Confucianists of the time, which was largely negative. Paul Smith has described this attitude as "gynophobia." See his "Fear of Gynarchy in an age of Chaos: Kong Qi's Reflections on Life in South China under Mongol Rule," *Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient* 41.1 (Feb., 1998): 1–95, which is discussed below.

[15] Both of Qara Buqa's eulogies and Ouyang's History of the Xie Family report his wife's clan name as Xitaitele, while later sources render her clan name as Xijiteqin 希吉特勤. See, for example, Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shiji* 45.5a. None of the sources provides any other information about her or her natal family, but it is either a Mongol or

was killed in south China in 1284, we are told that the lady Xitaitele became a widow at age 35, and was left with three young children. According to the sources, she was the ideal widow who proceeded to run her own household and to give her three children a purportedly Chinese education (curiously, only her sons are mentioned in most sources, but we know that she also had a daughter).[16] Moreover, she ignored the Mongol customary law of levirate marriage and did not remarry after Qara Buqa's early death. The lady Xitaitele lived until the ripe old age of 72, and after she died, the Yuan court bestowed on her the posthumous title of Mistress of Gaochang Prefecture (*Gaochang jun furen* 高昌郡夫人), matching her husband's posthumous title as Marquis of Gaochang Prefecture.[17]

Semuren name. I have not so far located this name in any list of prominent Yuan *Semuren* individuals or families.

[16] We know that the two boys were familiar with Chinese culture and probably the Chinese language, but we know nothing about Qara Buqa's daughter. Xu Youren's tomb inscription for Qara Buqa is the only source that reports the existence of a daughter, and that only obliquely by referring to a daughter who had married a certain Hutukehashihuohaya (Qutuq Qash Qaya?) of Zhenjiang 鎮江呼圖克哈適霍哈雅. See Xu Youren, *Zhi Zheng ji* 54.8a.

[17] For another example of a *Semuren* who adopted the Confucian practice of widow chastity, see the story of Safaliq (Safali 薩法禮), a woman from Khotan and wife of a Qipchaq general, in Thomas T. Allsen, " Mahmūd Yalavač (?–1254), Mas'ūd Beg (?–1289), 'Alī Beg (?–1280), Bujir (fl. 1206–1260)," in *In the Service of the Khan*, 131. Francis Cleaves has also discussed this woman in conjunction with his translation of a passage from the *Yuan Dianzhang* regarding Uyghur mourning regulations. See Cleaves, "Uighuric Mourning Regulations." It is interesting to note in this text, which Cleaves tentatively dates to sometime in Qubilai's period, that Uyghurs were enjoined from imitating the mourning rituals of northern Chinese (Haner 漢兒). In this light the adoption of the Chinese custom of widow chastity becomes even more significant as an indication of the acculturation of these *Semuren*. I thank Thomas Allsen for these references.

We do not know if her decision to remain single and raise her family herself was based on her economic position, her interest in leading an independent life, or out of a genuine sense of Confucian moral obligation to remain true to her husband and to express that devotion by focusing on her children rather than remarrying. But in any event, her actions were interpreted by later Chinese writers (especially the authors of Qara Buqa's eulogies) in Confucian terms. Consequently, the lady Xitaitele is portrayed in all of the sources as a woman who was devoted first to her husband and then to her children, and maintained that by becoming a faithful (chaste) widow, one of the time-honored Chinese moral categories often applied to women. The uprightness imputed to this woman as chaste widow was then converted into a powerful type of cultural capital, the second great moral quality of uprightness that accrued to her descendants.[18]

Since her decision to not remarry flew in the face of the Mongol custom of levirate marriage, which was extended to all Yuan subjects in 1271 (although enforcement was relaxed after 1276 in certain cases), and her decision was the basis of her reputation as an upright woman, we need to know a bit more about this practice in Mongol China.[19] We do not know the Uyghur customs and expectations regarding remarriage at that time, but as the wife of a *Semuren* elite she would, in theory, have been subject to forced remarriage under the custom of levirate.

As I have already noted above, one of the major differences between the Mongol and Chinese populations in Yuan China was the practice of levirate marriage,

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[18] This does not mean that her descendants had no hand in crafting her identity in these Confucian terms, and I suspect that the Chinese writers reflected Xie family members' own views on the matter.

[19] Qubilai Qan's own mother managed to evade the levirate when her husband, Prince Tolui, was killed in battle in 1232. Frederick P. Mote, personal communication.

whereby a widow would be taken in marriage by one of her late-husband's brothers or cousins. Levirate marriage operated in conjunction with the practice of bride-price, and was rooted in the way that property was divided among the sons in a Mongol family. Pre-mortem inheritance by all but the youngest son was common practice in Mongol families, and the levirate was one way to insure that families remained cohesive units. Once a woman was married, if her natal family was adequately compensated for their loss, then her family had no further claim on her. Since a Mongol senior wife inherited her husband's property (the hearth property, as distinct from that given to his sons before his death), in the case of widowhood it was important that the husband's family retain control over the wife, in order to maintain family control over that property. Obligatory levirate provided the most efficient means to regulate transfer of property within the male's line of descent.

In Yuan China, levirate marriage contrasted sharply with Chinese marriage customs, and was objected to by the Chinese population. The traditional Chinese custom of dowry implied a much greater degree of control of a woman and her property by her natal family, and was rooted in the structure of the Chinese family, where several generations of family lived under the same roof, and property was divided equally after death.[20] At any rate, as we have seen above, levirate was not uniformly practiced by Mongols and *Semuren* throughout the Yuan period. In fact, there seems to have been great variation in the practice of levirate even among Mongol and *Semuren* households, depending on the economic position of the parties involved, even as levirate was written into the early Yuan legal code

[20] Jennifer Holmgren, "The Economic Foundations of Virtue: Widow-Remarriage in Early and Modern China," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* (Jan., 1985): 1–27, makes the point about the economic aspects of marriage explicit.

and enforced on Mongol and *Semuren* populations. When Qubilai abolished the old Jin legal code and instituted a new one for the Yuan dynasty in 1271, levirate was made obligatory for the entire population, Chinese and non-Chinese alike. However, as we have just pointed out, levirate was in direct contradiction to Chinese customs and the long precedent of Chinese customary law regarding division of property and remarriage. As such, it quickly proved impossible to impose levirate marriage on the population, and very quickly exemptions begin to show up in application and enforcement.[21]

The practice of levirate also reinforced certain social expectations being placed on women by conservative Daoxue Confucianists in the late Yuan. By and large, levirate seems to have been more widely practiced in north China, and usually among poorer households. After the Mongols conquered the south, jurisdiction over levirate came increasingly under Chinese influence, and seems to have been treated in a semi-voluntary fashion. The topos of the faithful widow was becoming more popular in China by the mid-Yuan as marriage patterns changed and the cult of fidelity was promoted by Chinese literati.[22] In fact, as Carlitz points out, the practice of levirate dovetailed nicely with the Neo-Confucian agenda that surfaced in the Yuan, one effect of which was to further curtail women's freedom and choice.

Given these developments, then, it does not seem at all surprising that the *Semuren* wife of the highly respected official, Qara Buqa, should opt to join the ranks of chaste

[21] Paul Ratchnevsky makes this clear in his study, "The Levirate in the Legislation of the Yuan Dynasty."

[22] Katherine Carlitz discusses the shifting patterns of marriage and emergence of the cult of fidelity beginning in the late Yuan. See her "Shrines, Governing-Class Identity, and the Cult of Widow Fidelity in Mid-Ming Jiangnan," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56.3 (August, 1997): 612–40.

widows. Her husband's family had undoubtedly acquired sufficient economic resources, which meant that levirate was probably not her best option. Neither is it clear that all *Semuren* practiced levirate marriage, in spite of the fact that it was applied to all *Semuren* in Yuan legal codes. Finally, if Qara Buqa's wife was as interested in Chinese culture and values as she seems to be, then widow chastity was a rational option; her participation in the topos of the faithful widow would validate her own dedication to Chinese culture, and it would be in her family's best interest. Her deliberate choice to "protect her virtue as a widow" was certainly beneficial to her son and later descendants, and it is just possible that this woman was prescient enough to understand the long-term ramifications of her choice.

Xie Wenzhi and the Topos of Filial Piety: the Third Leg of Xie Family Identity

The story of Xie Wenzhi's childhood recounted in the last chapter is striking because it is not at all what we expect to see from the son of an important Uyghur *Semuren* official. His actions reveal a great deal about the kind of family in which he was raised, and also about Wenzhi's own predilections and values.[23] As we have already noted, his mother was actively involved in his early education, which appears to have been largely Chinese in orientation. For example, he would only have learned about the extreme form of filial piety of cooking a piece of one's own flesh for an ill person from Chinese literature. He would also

[23] It is important to point out here that the accuracy or verifiability of these stories about Wenzhi or, for that matter, other Xie family members is not the issue. In presenting these accounts we need to keep in mind the primary function of such sources, which was to adopt stereotypical language and images to present a myth about the subject. At the same time, it is important to take the stories seriously, and to try to read them in the manner in which they were intended for the original audience.

have become acutely aware of the importance of a surname through associating with Chinese people and reading Chinese texts. But we would not have learned of any of Wenzhi's actions had they not been described in writing, and it is to these texts that we now turn to understand the importance of these actions as markers of identity for Wenzhi and his family.

The single most important source of information that documents the Xie family and its Uyghur ancestors before they became Mongol subjects is a history of the family written by Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄 (1283–1357).[24] It is especially important because it is one of the few essays that purports to document the early history of this family in Uyghuristan, before they were absorbed into the Mongol empire.[25] As Herbert Franke has shown, the practice of writing private histories began in earnest in the Yuan period, and Wenzhi and his descendants are certainly

[24] Ouyang Xuan, "Gaochang Xieshi jiazhuan," in *Guizhai wenji*, 11.3a–13a. A punctuated edition of Ouyang's essay is contained in Chen Gaohua 陈高华, ed., *Yuandai Weiwuer – Halalu ziliao jilu* 元代维吾尔哈剌鲁资料辑录 [Compilation of historical materials on Yuan dynasty Uyghurs and Qarluqs] (Urumqi: Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1986), 75–82. Ouyang Xuan was a well-known scholar-official in Mongol China, descendant of the famous Song Dynasty writer Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), a director of the project to compile the Song, Liao, and Jin dynastic histories, and a cohort of one of Xie Wenzhi's sons in the first *jinshi* examinations in 1315. He is discussed in more detail below.

[25] The only other sources that report the pre-Yuan history of this Uyghur family are Qara Buqa's eulogy texts, which were composed at about the same time as Ouyang's history. The later official biographies of the four Xie family members included in the *Yuanshi* seem to have drawn from these accounts. As I have argued above, Juvaini's history of the Mongols is also an important source for Xie family history prior to and in the very early years of the Mongol empire, but does not contain the same level of detail found in Ouyang's text. The earliest date of any of these texts is surely Juvaini's, which was begun in 1252.

examples of that practice.[26] The use of a biography commissioned by a family and written by a prominent Chinese writer was an accepted means of communicating elite power in China by the time that Ouyang wrote his essay.

Ouyang's account is a good example of the use of biography writing by elites to project or construct identity. He provides us with the names, official titles and other details for several generations of this Uyghur family in Uyghuristan, long before they became Mongol subjects. Just as important to the Yuan-era Xie family, it also describes the ethnogenesis of the Uyghur people that specifically links this family to the earliest Uyghur steppe aristocracy. Finally, it provides the rationale for Xie Wenzhi's choice of surname, purportedly in his own words.

The fact that such a prominent writer as Ouyang Xuan was commissioned to write their story was also a type of evidence of the high status of this family in Yuan China. Ouyang's text would probably have been inscribed on a stone tablet to be hung in Xie Wenzhi's residence, where it would suitably impress visitors and remind them of the Xie family story. It was common for families of means to commission a well-known writer to compose epitaph texts or private biographies, and this may have been the case with this biography. Ouyang was also a cohort of one of Wenzhi's sons in the 1315 *jinshi* exams, and probably wrote this essay with more personal interest than may have normally been the case in such commissioned works. Since Xie family members provided him with information, his essay is also probably a reliable source for aspects of this family's history (taking into account, of course, the partial and often hyperbolic nature of these kinds of texts). One of the most important themes in Ouyang's history is the linkage of the Xie family to their ancient Türk and Uyghur

[26] Herbert Franke, "Some Aspects of Chinese Private Historiography in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 115–34.

heritage. This putative history provides an excellent example of the centrality of biography to identity, and how that was used by the Xie family.

In Ouyang's history, the family traces its origins to one Tonyuquq 暾欲谷, a leading figure in the history of the Uyghur people who succeeded the Eastern Türk empire in the 730s. We know quite a bit about him because his funerary inscription was found in 1897, and has been translated.[27] Tonyuquq was a Turk who grew up in Tang China because his father was an administrator for the Tang court in the northern frontier zone (in northern Shanxi). Tonyuquq first appears in the historical sources as an advisor to the Eastern Türk qaghan Qutlugh sometime after 680, and he is an important figure in both Turk and Uyghur history for several reasons. He introduced Chinese administrative institutions and practices to the Eastern Türks, and his insider knowledge of affairs at the Tang court at the time was crucial to Qutlugh's rise to power. He is also cited frequently in the Tang Dynastic Histories for his role in the military raids on northern China that the Eastern Türks carried out – first under Qutlugh between 682 and 690 – and as advisor to Qutlugh's successor, Moche. In fact, it was under Moche's leadership that the Turks reached the apogee of their success as a nomadic empire.

Moche was killed in 716 by dissident Turks, and Tonyuquq went on to serve as an advisor to his successor, Mojilian. By this time the Türk empire was in civil war over the succession problem, and they were in no shape to carry out raids on China as had been common under Moche. Perhaps Tonyuquq's greatest contribution to the survival of his people was when he dissuaded Mojilian from leading an

[27] See Rybatzki, *Die Toñuquq-Inschrift*. Also see Talât Tekin, *A Grammar of Orkhon Turkic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 283–90; and Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes*, 103–13.

attack on Tang China to inaugurate his reign. He is also famous for his prescient advice to not build a walled capital, another goal of Mojilian's. Tonyuquq knew that the Turks' strength lay in their mobility as nomads, and centering the nomadic Türk empire in a walled city would result in their defeat. His last action as advisor was to suggest that Mojilian offer a peace treaty with China, in 718. When the Tang emperor declined the treaty and threatened joint action, along with the Qitan and the Basmïl Türks, against the Eastern Türks, Tonyuquq assured him that the Chinese would not be able to mount such an attack. On his advice, Mojilian attacked and defeated his old enemies the Basmïl, and eventually signed a peace treaty with Tang China. Mojilian died in 734 and the Eastern Türk qaghanate soon fractured. Three Turkic tribes which had been subordinate to the Eastern Türks soon rose in revolt: the Basmïl, the Uyghurs and the Qarluq. Eventually the Uyghurs succeeded in gaining power over their rivals, and in 744 the Uyghur leader, Gulipeiluo, set himself up as qaghan over the Türk lands at Qarabalghasun. He adopted the title Qutlugh Bilge, leader of the Uyghurs.

Since the Xie family history so explicitly ties the lineage to the figure of Tonyuquq, we need to understand Tonyuquq's currency as a putative family ancestor. First, any person literate in Chinese history in the twelfth century would have been aware of the importance of Tonyuquq to the history of Tang China and the Türk Empire. He is cited numerous times in the Tang Histories. Moreover, it is likely that literate Uyghurs would have known about the stories of Tonyuquq and other important Türk leaders that had been recorded on stone stelae in the Orkhon River valley. Tonyuquq was a person of major cultural and historical importance to the history of the Turkic people, and since the Uyghurs were not only the political and military successors to the Turkic steppe empire in 745, but also ethnically related to the Turks, proof of direct descent from

this man endowed his descendants with enormous cultural capital, and claiming descent from Tonyuquq established the aristocracy of Xie family ancestors.

Identification with Tonyuquq, the consummate political player, tells us something about the situation and goals of the Xie ancestors at Gaochang. Tonyuquq's power was based on his knowledge of Tang China and his position as an advisor to the ancient Türk qans. He was also related by marriage to the Turk royal family, and survived Kul Tegin's coup because of this. Yet Tonyuquq was only incidentally related to the Uyghurs. Does this also reflect on the position of this family of Uyghurs at Gaochang? The Xie ancestors at Gaochang were not members of the Uyghur royal family, but they could claim aristocratic heritage through their link to Tonyuquq. That link was demonstrated in two specific ways: Tonyuquq was portrayed as the biological ancestor of the extended Xie family, and his "descendants" held hereditary titles at Gaochang that they claimed were first given to Tonyuquq.[28]

The important point here is not that there was no basis in fact for this Uyghur family's claim of descent from Tonyuquq. We have no way of determining the veracity of that claim. The significance lies in the claim itself; biography was an important, powerful tool in the construction of elite identity, and selective use of biography had been a well-known strategy throughout the medieval world.[29] The Yuan-era Xie family also utilized that strategy to further their own goals by claiming descent from Tonyuquq.

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[28] Ouyang's text states that "Tonyuquq first held the position of *guoxiang*"; *Guizhai wenji* 11.5a.

[29] See Jennifer Holmgren, "Lineage falsification in the northern dynasties: Wei Shou's ancestry," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 21 (1980): 1-16. Thanks to Scott Pearce for this reference.

According to Ouyang's account, the Xie family's next ancestor was Kezhipuer 克直普爾. The putative nature of the claim of descent from Tonyuquq is raised at this point, however, since there is a gap in time of some three hundred years between these two individuals in Ouyang's chronology. Tonyuquq probably died sometime in the early 700s, while it seems that Kezhipuer lived in the late eleventh or early twelfth century. Ouyang's text only states vaguely that he followed Tonyuquq by "several generations." Since Ouyang provides us with a detailed description of Kezhipuer's life and activities this may indicate that he was the earliest ancestor the Xie family knew anything about when Ouyang wrote his text.

Kezhipuer held the title of high state minister (*guoxiang*) at the Uyghur court, along with several other functional and honorary titles that indicate he moved among the highest levels of the Uyghur aristocracy at Gaochang, including Free Noble (*darqan*) and Elder Statesman (*ata Tutuq*).[30] All of these titles and offices were inherited by his heirs down through Bilge Buqa, the last family member to hold them and serve at Gaochang. At some point Kezhipuer was sent to the Liao court as a Uyghur envoy where he held other important positions, including that of Grand Preceptor (*taishi*), Grand Councilor-in-Chief (*da chengxiang*), and was in charge of royal storehouses at the Liao capital (*zongguan neiwai zangshi*).[31] Kezhipuer's son, Yuebi 岳弼, inherited his father's titles and duties at the Uyghur court, but that is virtually all we know about him from this or any other

[30] *Darqan* was originally granted for military merit, while *ata dudu* (T. *tutuq*) is an old Türk title borrowed from Chinese that meant a military governor of a province. See Han Rulin, "Menggu dalahan kao"; and Ecsedy, "Old Turkic Titles of Chinese Origin."

[31] Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.4b. On the office of Grand Preceptor, or *taishi*, see Serruys, "The Office of Tayisi in Mongolia in the Fifteenth Century."

source. Ouyang moves quickly on to Yuebi's two famous sons, Bilge Buqa (also known as Bilge Temür) and Eren Temür, and their stories then serve as introduction to Qara Buqa and descendants.

Ouyang's history of this family is also interesting to us because he devotes a good deal of space to tell his reader how this prominent Uyghur family became known by the Xie surname The particular name Wenzhi chose was loaded with meaning. First, we are told that it was derived from the name of a river in the Mongol steppe where the ancient Uyghur peoples, the ancestors of this family, originally lived.[32] According to Ouyang:

> The original home of the Uyghurs was at the confluence of three rivers near Qara-khorum 哈剌和林, in present-day [Yuan-period] Hening Prefecture 和寧路. The first river is called the Ganerhan (幹耳汗, the Orchon Gol River?), and it flows northeast of Bingcheng. The second river is called the Helin (和林, the Halahelin River?), and it flows northwest of Jiangcheng. The third river, called Huerbandamier (忽爾斑達彌爾, the Tuul Gol River?), begins in the northwest and flows east. These three rivers converge 30 li north of the city into the river called the Xienianjie (偰辇傑, the Selenge?).[33]

[32] As I have already pointed out, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing argues that the character Xie was a Chinese rendering of the first part of a Uyghur personal name, and thus not really a Chinese style surname *per se*, translating Xie Wenzhi as Sävinch. See his "Meng Yuan shidai Gaochang Xieshi de shihuan yu hanhua."

[33] Ouyang Xuan, *Guizhai wenji* 11.3b. The only river identified in Ouyang's text that can be positively identified in the Chinese Historical Atlas is the Ganerhan River. A river called Halahelin flows into that river, which I believe is transcribed incorrectly in Ouyang's text as the Helin River. I believe the Xienianjie is the river now known as the Selenge, in the Mongolian steppe, but this question remains in dispute. See Tan Qixiang, ed., *Zhongguo lishi dituji*, Vol. 7, 11–12, for these rivers in the Yuan period.

The end of Ouyang's text is taken up with a direct quote from Wenzhi, who states that he adopted the Xie surname so that his descendants would remember their heritage as a family of Uyghur aristocrats whose natal home was located in the ancient Turk heartland in the steppe.

Wenzhi thus not only preserved his ancestral, or native, identity as a part of the Uyghur aristocracy who were part of the glorious steppe empire, he also implicitly linked his family to the longer history of the Turk empire. These cultural symbols would have been recognized by *Semuren* peers of the Xie family. At the same time, using a surname would have made this family more acceptable to their Chinese peers. Wenzhi and his *Semuren* peers undoubtedly knew that surnames were (and are) essential to one's identity in China, especially in such matters as marriages, taxation, and social power. Tracing one's lineage back to a "founding ancestor" and "native place" was a common enough scheme used by any Chinese family who wished to substantiate their status as elites, especially after moving to a new place. Adopting a homophone of a more common surname Xie 謝 cleverly combined two different identity markers that would make sense to the different audiences with whom this *Semuren* family had to deal in Mongol China.

Poetry in Honor of Xie Wenzhi

In addition to Ouyang Xuan's family history, we are fortunate to have a large number of poems and prefaces to poems and other works that were written to honor various Xie family members by other important Chinese writers and thinkers. The Yuan period is notable for several developments in literary style and form, including its poetry. Yoshikawa Kōjirō has described these developments in poetry in terms of both a quantitative increase in the numbers of people who were writing poetry,

especially the "townsmen," and in the types of poetry being written at the time.[34] He argues that many more Chinese were drawn to writing poetry because they were cut off from politics, and turned to the arts to express themselves. Since these men had no particular ties to politics they also developed into a new type of "independent artist," free from most social conventions and attuned only to the demands of their art.

However, lest we think that only hermits wrote poetry in the Yuan, many of the important poets whom Yoshikawa identifies in the Yuan period were involved in politics. Several of those men wrote poetry or essays in honor of Xie family members, including Yu Ji, Ouyang Xuan, Huang Jin, and Liu Guan. Regardless of their views on serving the Mongols, Tang poetry was held up as an exemplar for these Yuan thinkers and writers, who adopted that style (known as *shi*) and abandoned the more rationalistic or philosophic Song poetic models.[35]

All of the poems written to honor Xie family members appear to be *shi*-style poems, written as described by Yoshikawa by townsmen, or local elites. Most *shi*-style poetry was written in lyric form and was probably meant to

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[34] See Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150–1650: The Chin, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties*, tr. John Timothy Wixted (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), especially Chs. 4–5.

[35] See Frederick W. Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yuan Period," in *The Confucian Persuasion*, ed. Arthur F. Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 202–40, for a discussion of philosophical poetry that persisted in the Yuan period. For an example of a Yuan-period writer who continued to express sympathy for the Song, see William A. Brown, *Wen T'ien-Hsiang: a Biographical Study of a Sung Patriot* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1986). On the issue of Song-era poetic styles and themes, see Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, tr. Burton Watson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967).

be performed orally among a group of friends.[36] It did not employ colloquial language, and depended on elaborate figures of speech, extensive use of allusion, imagery and symbolism to evoke a response of empathy for the experience described in the poem. Yuan-era *shi* poetry also borrowed heavily from earlier Tang models, and assumed that the audience was fluent with Tang history and personalities. As Richard Lynn points out, one of the hallmarks of Yuan *shi* poetry, especially in contrast with Song-period *shi* poetry, was its "exploitation of the full range of syntactic possibilities of the literary language," and the fact that Tang and Yuan *shi* poetry both used "formal (*wen*) expressions as against the tendency to use colloquial expressions (*pai*)."[37]

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[36] For an in-depth treatment of *shi*-style narrative poetry, see Dore J. Levy, *Chinese Narrative Poetry: the Late Han through T'ang Dynasties* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988); and Ching-hsien Wang, "The Nature of Narrative in T'ang Poetry" and Yu-kung Kao, "The Aesthetics of Regulated Verse," both in *The Vitality of the Lyric Voice: Shih Poetry from the Late Han to the T'ang*, ed. Shuen-fu Lin and Stephen Owen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 217–52 and 332–85, respectively.

[37] Lynn, *Kuan Yün-shih*, 84–85. Lynn's study of this prominent Uyghur *Semuren* is also one of most thorough studies of Yuan *shi*-style poetry to date. It has served as a model for my research, and inspired me in my efforts to deal with the poetry about and by Xie family members. I make no claim to any expertise in reading or understanding Chinese poetry, and so shall not attempt to analyze the poetry of any Yuan writer in terms of its poetic form or style. Nor am I trying to link *shi* poetry to a specific community of writers in the Yuan period (that would be a book in itself). But the vast majority of Chinese literati wrote and performed *shi*-style poetry as a matter of course, and it was one of the chief hallmarks of their status as members of the cultural elite. The fact that so many Xie family members were honored in poetry or were subjects of prefaces to poems and literary collections, as well as having written poetry themselves, indicates, I think, that they were recognized as full members of the literati community. Many of these poems are quite ambiguous and difficult to interpret, and extracting biographical details from them is just as fraught with

Liu Guan 柳貫 (1270–1342), a writer and official from Jiangzhe Province, and a contemporary of Wenzhi's, wrote a poem in honor of Wenzhi's family hall in Jiangxi. Liu was from Pujiang, just south of Hangzhou in Jiangzhe province (the area was also known by the literary name Luling).[38] Throughout his forty year long career as an official in Mongol China he was involved in positions related to Chinese culture and Confucianism, and was one of the major figures in the Daoxue Neo-Confucian school at the time. Liu Guan was first assigned as an official in 1300, to be a lecturer in Confucian schools. In 1319 he was promoted to the National University at the capital as a preceptor, and then promoted to the position of erudite (*boshi*) in that college. In 1326 he was sent to Jiangxi as a Superintendent of Confucian Schools, and reached the highest level for a Chinese literati in 1341 when he was promoted to be a compiler of the first class (*daizhi*) in the famed Hanlin Academy. He died in 1342 at the age of 73. It is unclear when Liu Guan became acquainted with Wenzhi, but Liu's poem is clearly a product of a friendship , and not simply a work written in his official capacity in the Hanlin Academy or at the behest of the court. In fact, this long poem is striking for its personal tone as well as for the information it contains on the Xie family home and hall.

Liu Guan's "Sanjie Tang" poem is an especially

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problems as understanding them as poems. I have included them here because they indicate a relationship between a Chinese writer and a member of the Xie family. My translations of relevant portions of poems are intended only to evoke the spirit of a given poem, and to evaluate information that seem to pertain to biographical details provided in other sources.

[38] Liu Guan's life and career are summarized in Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 2.753–55. He has a very short biographical entry appended to the biography of another Chinese man of letters, Huang Jin, in *Yuanshi* 181. See also John D. Langlois, Jr., "Political Thought in Chin-hua under Mongol Rule," in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 137–85.

interesting source for information on the Xies.[39] Consisting of almost one hundred five-character lines, it was written in the *gu-shi* old-style genre.[40] The piece reads as a laudatory paean of praise from one Chinese literatus to another, using terminology and phrasing that would only be understood by a very well-educated reader. It begins by reciting the history of the Xie family beginning with Qara Buqa and proceeding to Wenzhi's sons and nephew. And we are given some additional details about Wenzhi's hall that was attached to his residence at Liyang, and which, in a sense, is the real subject of this poem. But true to the *gu-shi* form, after the introduction the entire last half of the poem is given over to describing the ideals of virtue and righteousness in their own right. We get the sense that Liu's agenda in writing his poem was really to extol those moral virtues, of which the Xies were, in some senses, merely the best human examples he could call on. Since this is an extraordinarily long poem, I shall only translate fragments:

[Natives of] Gaochang and the Xienian [river],
an eminent family of noble ancestry,
several [family members] prospered as officials,
several [also] served with honor at the imperial court.
They wore imperial garments and followed
Confucius and Mencius,
and their actions were in accord with righteousness
and propriety.
Now they are called the Xie clan,
owing to their place of origin.
This family's ancestors are registered as "Family of
Three Virtuous Ones,"
and they maintain their hearts with utmost sincerity.

[39] Liu Guan, *Liu Daizhi wenji* 1.11b–12b.

[40] According to Frederick Mote, personal communication, in contrast to the standard *shi* style genre, which was limited to four or eight lines, *gu-shi* genre poems went on at great length and were more usual for narrative poetry, because the longer form was required to relate a story. See also Levy, *Chinese Narrative Poetry*, 7–9.

[*The next 54 lines of the poem describe the virtuous conduct of Qara Buqa, his wife, and their son Wenzhi, laying emphasis on the actions that each took during their lives to gain the reputation as the "three virtuous ones".*]

. . . . . .

Does [this family] spring up from no root?
A plant that is cultivated will depend on its
roots to grow.

[*The author uses the image of the growth of a plant to suggest that this family has not come about in a short time, but has grown strong from its strong root over a long period of time.*]

. . . . . .

Unexpectedly I ran into [Xie Wenzhi] in Jiantang,
we sighed about traveling from place to place in
the past.
I went up to his hall and wished him a long life,
sending out my thoughts and friendship to my
old friend.[41]

Apart from one reference to the Xie family's origins in Uyghuristan, the poem provides a strong sense of the impeccable Chinese cultural credentials of the Xie family.

As in the biographical texts we have already discussed, Xie Wenzhi is portrayed as the ideal son, who followed his parents' model of exemplary moral behavior by his filial piety. Liu also provides a better description of the family complex at Liyang than we have had in other sources. Wenzhi built an ancestral hall that was attached to

[41] Liu Guan, *Liu Daizhi wenji* 1. 11b–12b.

his residence where his ancestors (i.e., Qara Buqa and his wife) were worshipped in good Confucian fashion. According to Liu, "[Wenzhi] built the hall to make sacrifices to ancestors, large scrolls were hung in the hall between the pillars, meant not only to be honored by people, but also in order to make known the 'regulations' of the family's ancestors...."[42] We have to wonder if the painting of Qara Buqa that was executed in southern China was among this collection?

The high scholarly and literary achievements of Wenzhi's sons are also highlighted in the poem, as for example, in the florid descriptions of their careers and achievements as men of high culture. The poem ends on a melancholic note when Liu Guan mourns the passing of his old friend Wenzhi. In fact, his death appears to have been the reason that Liu wrote this poem in the first place.

Chen Lü 陳旅 (1287–1342) was another Confucian thinker and writer from southeast China who wrote in honor of Wenzhi as a member of the Liyang elite. Chen was originally from Quanzhou (in present-day Fujian).[43] He came from a family of Confucian scholars, and he followed in his ancestors' footsteps under the Mongols. His first position as an official in Yuan China was to be in charge of Confucian studies at Minhai, in Fujian. He was eventually appointed as a preceptor (*zhujiao*) in the National University, after traveling to the capital with a friend and fellow elite, the *Semuren* poet Ma Zuchang. In 1334 he was selected to be an Assistant Superintendant of Confucian Schools in Zhejiang Province, and in 1338 promoted to the position of writer (*yingfeng*) in the Hanlin Academy at the capital. He was shifted back to the National University in 1341 as a deputy director (*jiancheng*), and died the next

[42] Liu Guan, *Liu Daizhi wenji* 1.12a.
[43] Chen Lü's biography is summarized in Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 2.1278.

year. Chen's recognition by his contemporaries and the Yuan court during his lifetime as a Confucian scholar and writer can be ascertained from the fact that his biography was included in the chapter on prominent Confucianists in the Yuan Dynastic History.

Chen's "Postscript to an Inscription for the Hall of Three Virtuous Ones" is typical of the type of texts that Chinese literati were commissioned to write for inscriptions and other similar media; it extols the good qualities of the subject of the inscription, but does not provide much by way of substantial information about the subject.[44] Chen's short text is interesting precisely because it is a good example of literati encomia focused on Xie Wenzhi and his family. The postscript begins with a long commentary on the general moral qualities that resulted in certain men being called "virtuous." That was followed by specific references to the Xie family; Chen reviews briefly the actions of Wenzhi and his parents that gave rise to their identity as the Three Virtuous Ones, and then explains their relationship to the subject of the inscription.

> Those people of the Xie family, the official [Qara Buqa], his wife, and his son, were proper in all things [*jindang* 盡當], [but] they were not the only ones who took pleasure in the fact. Their virtuous behavior came as the result of adversities which have been recorded. All people have benefited from and enjoyed the record of their acts [that have been] displayed.... Wenzhi was healthy in his old age, and all of his sons were selected for imperial degrees, and they all had prosperous careers. Everyone asked after them and took pleasure in the [flourishing of the] Xie family.[45]

[44] Chen Lü, "Shu Sanjietang ji xu hou" 書三節堂記序後, in *An Ya Tang ji* 安雅堂集 [Collected works of Chen Lü] (Taibei: Guoli Zhongyang Tushuguan, 1970) 9.13b–14a.
[45] Chen Lü, "Shu Sanjietang ji xu hou" 14a.

The character of the Xie family comes through clearly in Chen's text.

Chen presumably wrote this postscript because he was commissioned by the Xie family, but he may also have known about Xie Wenzhi since Chen spent at least four years as an official in Zhejiang near Liyang where Wenzhi retired. In any case, his postscript is another example of the interest of important Chinese Confucian literati in the Xie family during and after Wenzhi's lifetime.

At some point after 1330, Wenzhi altered the name of his family hall to reflect the fact that his five sons and nephew had all achieved the *jinshi* degree in the state civil service exams. As a result of their unusual achievement, those Xie men became known by the title "the Six *Jinshi*" (*Liugui*, literally, "Six Cassia"), and that was added to the moniker "Sanjie."[46] By the end of Wenzhi's life, his family, and his residence at Liyang, came to be known as the family of the Three Virtuous Ones and Six *Jinshi* (*Sanjie Liugui*).

Liu Yueshen 劉岳申 (1260–1346) was a contemporary of Xie Wenzhi who lived in Jishui in Jiangxi.[47] Liu was best known for his erudition in Chinese classical literature and Confucian studies. His official positions

[46] The usage of cassia, or cinnamon, to denote *jinshi* degree holders derives from the term *guiji* (the imperial register of *jinshi* degree holders), which in turn goes back to the expression *guilin yizhi* 桂林一枝 found in the *Jin Shu* 晉書 biography of Xi Shen 郤詵, which is probably short for *guizi*. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this reference to the source of this term.

[47] Liu's life and career are summarized by Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 3.1838–39; and by Chang Bide 昌彼得, "Xulu" 敘錄 [Introduction], in *Shen Zhai Liu xiansheng wenji* 申齋劉先生文集 [Collected works of Mr. Liu Yueshen (usually abbreviated as *Shen Zhai wenji*)] (Siku quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Guoli Zhongyang Tushuguan, 1970), 1–3.

under the Mongols were all related to education; he was in charge of examinations in Huguang, an instructor in the state-sponsored school in Yongshuang, and an Assistant Superintendent of Confucian schools in Liaoyang. Liu most likely became acquainted with Wenzhi when Wenzhi served as an administrator of Liu's natal district Ji'an in southern Jiangxi Province. Liu wrote two inscriptions that honored the Xie family, both contained in his collected works. The first was an "Inscription for the Hall of the Three Virtuous Ones and Six *Jinshi*," and the other a "Memorial Offering for Magistrate Xie: of the Five *Jinshi* Xie Family of Yuzhang."[48]

Liu Yueshen's long inscription is valuable as a source of information on Wenzhi and his extended family. Liu confirms that Xie Wenzhi used the name "Sanjie Liugui" for his private dwelling and family hall at Yuzhang. But the real importance of Liu's essay is that it is the clearest exposition we have in any extant primary source of the meaning of this name. He tells us that "Sanjie" represents the three Confucian virtues of loyalty (*zhong*), uprightness (*zhen*), and filial piety (*xiao*), and that each originated out of specific actions taken by Qara Buqa, his wife, and their son, Wenzhi, respectively. The "*Liugui*" refers to the five sons and nephew of Wenzhi who all achieved the *jinshi* degree between 1315 and 1330.

> The Hall of Three Virtuous Ones and Six *Jinshi* is the name of the hall attached to the private residence at Yuzhang of Xie Wenzhi, former military commander of Guangxi. Why is it called Three Virtuous Ones? It is said that the minister [Qara Buqa], his wife and his son [exhibited] the three virtues of loyalty, uprightness and filial piety. This is a fitting name [to

[48] See Liu Yueshen, "San Jie Liu Gui Tangji" 三節六桂堂記 [Inscription for the Hall of Three Worthies and Six *Jinshi*]," in *Shen Zhai ji* 5.10b-11a; and "Ji Xie Jianjun Wen: Yuzhang Wugui Xieshi" 祭偰監郡文 豫章五桂 偰氏, in *Shen Zhai wenji* 12.6a–6b.

> describe them]. Why is [the family] called the Six *Jinshi*? It is said that in the exams that were started in the *yanyou* reign period [1314–1320], the five sons and nephew of Xie Wenzhi all attained degrees [*jinshi*] in the six exams that were held between 1315 and 1330. This too is a fitting name [that describes their accomplishments].[49]

After this explanation of the name of the Xie family hall, Liu lists the high points in the Xie family history that gave rise to the qualities encapsulated in the name of their residence. He begins with Qara Buqa, and reiterates the story of Qara Buqa's death in the line of duty, and the fact that the Yuan court awarded Qara Buqa the posthumous title Loyal and Grieving. According to Liu, Qara Buqa's reward for an honorable life also included his upright wife, his filial son, and his grandsons, who all took the exams and were promoted to offices themselves.

It is obvious from the text that Wenzhi was living in Jiangxi when Liu wrote this inscription. Liu devotes a fair amount of space in the inscription describing how the virtues of their predecessors paved the way for the accomplishments of Wenzhi's sons and nephew, the celebrated six *jinshi*.

> The Xie family was aided by Heaven to move beyond the common people. Because they planted their virtue deeply they obtained many rewards and a profound fate.... Heaven has made its declaration and has fixed their ranks. They have flourished in the exams, [because] those who read books and teach their children have different fates from the commoners. Thus the six *jinshi* [of the Xie family] have naturally ascended the heights like *jinshi* of old, and they are now famous officials in the land.[50]

[49] Liu Yueshen, *Shen Zhai wenji* 5.10b–11a.
[50] Liu Yueshen, *Shen Zhai wenji* 12.a.

In spite of the typically dense, hyperbolic language of this type of text, Liu's meaning comes through rather directly. He clearly aims to show to the reader that the achievements of the six Xie family members in his own time are all the direct result of actions and moral qualities found in their ancestors.

We can infer that Liu was asked to write this essay while Wenzhi was still alive. He does not tell the reader who requested him to write his essay, but most likely it is the product of Liu's personal acquaintance with the Xie family since Liu was a native of Ji'an Circuit, where Wenzhi himself served as an official. The overall tenor of Liu's text is one of praise for Wenzhi's accomplishments as an official and as a responsible head of a family that achieved almost unparalleled success, even measured by the standards of the Chinese literati elite.

The second of Liu's essays that he wrote for the Xie family is his "Memorial Offering for Magistrate Xie: Of the Five *Jinshi* Xie Family of Yuzhang."[51] Liu wrote this short prayer to honor the memory of his old friend, Xie Wenzhi, after he had died.[52] This prayer is more personal in feeling than Liu's inscription for the Xie family hall, and also provides context for Liu's other encomia honoring the Xie family.

> The Duke [Xie Wenzhi] came to Luling [old name for Ji'an], and it seems like only yesterday that I was asked to write an inscription for his residence hall. Now I hear his obituary notice.... I wish to recall something of the late Master. He regulated his life; within the inner chambers of his residence he revered his mother, and in the outer courtyard he taught his

[51] Liu Yueshen, "Ji Xie Jianjun wen: Yuzhang Wugui Xieshi" 祭偰監郡文豫章五桂 偰氏 [Memorial offering for Magistrate Xie: of the five Jinshi Xie Family of Yuzhang], in *Shen Zhai Liu xiansheng wenji* 12.6a-6b.
[52] Liu Yueshen, *Shen Zhai wenji* 12.6a.

> sons.... The Gaochang Xie family were praised in the region because [Wenzhi] promoted peace in his governing Luling.... I lament his death. I am now old, why do I sing at length to express my sorrow? Nothing is as good as singing to quiet my distress.

Liu's tone of grief shows that he knew Xie Wenzhi and missed his old friend. Not surprisingly then, Liu portrays Wenzhi as the epitome of a good Confucian official. He recounts how Wenzhi came to Jiangxi as an official in charge of the area, and that peace and stability resulted from his tenure in office. Just as important for Liu was Wenzhi's home life, which was the model of decorum and correct behavior. "Within his hall he honored his mother [parents?], and in the outer courtyard he taught his sons, and his teaching paved the way for their success as learned men."[53] Thus, Wenzhi is portrayed as the exemplary Confucian scholar-official, who was humane in office, and observed propriety in his private and family life. But we also have to remember that, regardless of Wenzhi's personal relationship with Liu, this account would have been an important part of the Xie family identity as Chinese-style literati.

Liu's brief biographical sketches of the members of this family corroborate and supplement the descriptions of their careers contained in the various official sources such as the local gazetteers. More important for my purposes, however, Liu's essays reveal the cultural activities of this family of Uyghur *Semuren*, and the fact that Wenzhi was actively involved in constructing an identity for himself and his family as members of the Chinese cultural elite, an identity that would go well beyond their identity as *Semuren* officials.

Wenzhi's stint as an official in Ji'an was obviously successful. He made more than one friend among the

[53] Liu Yueshen, *Shen Zhai wenji* 12.6a.

Chinese community in Jiangxi during his service there. Liu Shen 劉詵 (1268–1350) was another Chinese literatus from Jishui who wrote an ode that honored the Xie family that he titled "In Praise of the 'Hall of Three Virtuous Ones and Six *Jinshi*.'"[54] Liu Shen was a contemporary of Wenzhi. He was a poet and writer, and was known primarily for his Confucian learning and expertise.[55] However, unlike his fellow Jishui native Liu Yueshen, Liu Shen never held any official position in Yuan China. Liu's importance to the literati elite in southeast China may be judged by his written work, two collections of which (one each of his poetry and his essays) still exist. It is as a member of that community of Chinese literati in Jiangxi that Liu Shen's ode commemorating the Xie family hall must be understood.

Liu Shen provides his own unique perspective on the Xie family by relating some details not given in any other contemporaneous source. For example, he begins by locating the ancestors of the Xie family first in Beiting (the Chinese name for the Uyghur capital city Beshbaliq), then later in Gaochang (known in Uyghur as Kocho). Liu Shen's brief recounting of the Xie family ancestors at Beiting, which must surely come from Wenzhi or other Xie family members, seems intended to link Wenzhi's generation to Uyghurs who were the defenders of Chinese interests at Beiting in the Tang period, and who were also presumably part of the ancient Uyghur aristocratic circle.[56]

[54] Liu Shen, "Song: Sanjie Liugui Tang" 頌三節六桂堂, in *Gui Yin wenji* 桂陰文集 [Collected works of Liu Shen] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1972) 4.4a–6a.

[55] Liu Shen's life and career are summarized in Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji* 3.1798–99. His status as a Confucian scholar is reflected in the fact that his biography was included in the chapter on Confucianists (*ruxue*) in the *Yuanshi*; see chapter 190.

[56] Ecsedy, "Uyghurs and Tibetans in Pei-t'ing (790–791)," reviews this issue.

This serves as a prelude to Liu's main point, which is to honor the Xie family that he knew personally. He does this like other Chinese writers who wrote about this famous Uyghur *Semuren* family, by focusing in on their unusual moniker "Family of Three Virtuous Ones and Six *Jinshi*." After telling the reader about the three Xie family members who were known for their virtuous behavior and identifying the six *jinshi* degree holders, Liu focuses on the accuracy of the epithet to describe Wenzhi's family: "The term 'three virtuous ones' [or 'three who practiced virtuous deeds'] alone is not sufficient, nor is the term 'six *jinshi*' adequate to describe this family. Only when you put them both together do they bring out [the attributes of] the Xie family."[57] Liu then compares this family with other notable literati families of the past who were known for their virtuous behavior, and concludes that the Xie family is rightly well known by all of his contemporaries, and that their deeds will be known by later generations.

Conclusion

Qara Buqa was the prototypical *Semuren* official in early Mongol China. He grew up in north China on the appanage lands of a member of the Mongol imperial clan, and was drafted early into the qan's personal bodyguard, from which he was launched on a successful if short career in a series of positions in both civilian and military spheres. His son, Xie Wenzhi, was more of a transitional figure in his family's history. Like his father, he served in a wide variety of positions that included both civil and military duties. But he was the last person in this family to do so; his sons and later descendants served exclusively in civilian bureaus. He also turned south, where he adopted a Chinese style surname, purchased land for a residence and ancestral graves, and made sure that his sons were all educated in the

[57] Liu Shen, *Gui Yin wenji* 4.4b.

Chinese tradition and competed successfully in the civil service exams. His story reflects the simultaneous evolution of the Mongol experience in governing China and of many *Semuren* individuals as people who were at home both in *Semuren* and Chinese society.

The people who wrote about his family were mainly contemporaries of Xie Wenzhi's sons, and the consistent references in their writings to the Xie family's origins in Uyghuristan and their Confucian character seems to be a subtle ploy to rest the family's prestige on two, seemingly contradictory, bases of identity as "Confucianized Uyghurs." As descendants of the Uyghuristan aristocracy, they could claim a legacy of independent high cultural attainment that was then reinforced by their appropriation of core Confucian values, manifested most vividly by the virtuous actions of their ancestors and the fact that they had produced six *jinshi* degree holders in one generation.

By the time that Xie Wenzhi died in 1340, his five sons and nephew had all obtained the coveted *jinshi* degree within a record 30 years, and they all held a variety of important positions in the Yuan civil administration. In fact, it is in that generation that the Xie family reached its apex in terms of political prestige in China. That same generation of Xie men also marked the social-cultural high water mark for this family in China. His family had become true Chinese-style *shidafu wenren* who, while employed in the civilian bureaucracy, were capable of military accomplishments even though they no longer served in those capacities. Their careers and lives look quite different from those of their grandfather and father.

Chapter 7

The Six Xie Jinshi: *A New Generation of Elites*

The Confucian credentials of this Uyghur family were really confirmed when Xie Wenzhi's sons and nephew competed successfully for the *jinshi* degree. That accomplishment may even have provided a rationale for their contemporaries to describe so vividly the virtuous "actions" of members of that family. But regardless of the authenticity of the acts of the "san jie" generation, it is clear that the six *jinshi* degree holders represent the political and social apex of this family in Yuan China. In this chapter we examine the lives of Xie Yuli, Xie Zhijian, Xie Zhedu, Xie Chaowu, Xie Liechi, and their cousin, Shanzhu during and immediately after the Yuan dynasty (see their genealogical chart on p. 273).[1]

Xie Zhijian, Xie Chaowu, Xie Liechi, (Xie) Shanzhu

Three of Wenzhi's sons followed careers that were very typical of *Semuren* political elites, but do not appear to have used their education or family background to significantly alter their identities as *Semuren* or their standing among the Chinese literati. We know very little about Wenzhi's second son, Xie Zhijian 偰直堅 apart from some of the offices he held. He achieved the *jinshi* degree in 1324, after which the court promoted him with the

[1] The Nanchang Prefectural gazetteer (*Nanchang Fuzhi*) and the Liyang County gazetteer (*Liyang xianzhi*) both contain extensive information about exam dates and degrees and official appointments to office for all of the Xie family members discussed in this chapter. This data is also conveniently summarized in Chen Menglei, et al., comp., "Shizu dian" 氏族典, in *Gujin Tushu Jicheng* 37.4537-38, and 5248.

honorary title Gentleman of the Fourth Class (*Chengwu lang*) and sent him to be an Agent (*darughachi*) of Susong county 宿松縣 in Anqing Prefecture 安慶路, 250 miles upriver from Liyang.[2]

Wenzhi's fourth son, Xie Chaowu 偰朝吾, obtained his *jinshi* degree in 1321. According to the gazetteer for Nanchang Prefecture, his name was inscribed on "a memorial pillar in the center of the city that honored families who had five *jinshi* holders."[3] Like his brother, the court awarded Chaowu the honorary title of Gentleman of the Fourth Class (*Chengwu lang*), and assigned him to be a Vice Prefect (*tongzhi*) of Ji Prefecture (*Jizhou* 濟州) in southwest Shandong (located in the region of the Yuan capital, Dadu, and thus within the bounds of the Central Secretariat). He was eventually promoted to the honorary rank of Grandee of the Twenty-fourth Class (*Fengyi Dafu*), and sent south as a Vice Prefect (*tongzhi*) of Xun Prefecture (循府) in southern Jiangxi Province.[4]

Wenzhi's youngest son, Xie Liechi 偰烈篪 (d. 1358), had a distinguished if short career as a *Semuren* official. He was the last of the six Xie siblings to obtain the

[2] Primary sources that contain information on Zhijian include *Gui Zhai wenji* 11.12a–b; and *Liyang xianzhi* (Qing ed.).

[3] Fan, *Nanchang fuzhi* 17.23b. The memorial pillar that honored families that had produced five *jinshi* degree holders (*wugui fang*) was probably an imperial register of local families who had obtained that achievement. Such was the case with several families in the Song period who were so honored, and who used that title on their family halls. See Zhang Qiyun 張其昀 and Lin Yin 林尹, *Zhongwen da cidian* 中文大辭典, 10 vols. (Taibei: Zhonghua wenhua yanjiusuo, 1962-68), Vol. 1, 659–60, which cites the Song dynasty Fan (范) and Li (李) families as examples of this practice.

[4] The general chronology of Chaowu's career as a *Semuren* official can be determined by comparing records in the *Liyang xianzhi* (Qing Jiaqing edition) 10.3b; Chen Zuolin, comp., *Jinling tongzhuan* 9.3a; and the *Nanchang fuzhi* (Ming edition) 17.23a. The Nanchang gazetteer erroneously lists Chaowu as a degree candidate in 1347 and 1350.

jinshi degree, doing so in 1330. His Chinese courtesy name (*zi*) was Shide 世德. His biography notes that after he achieved his *jinshi* degree "the regional governor placed their names on a list and honored the family for having the five *jinshi*," presumably the same list in Nanchang on which his elder brother's name was inscribed.[5]

After achieving his degree, Xie Liechi was promoted to the honorary rank of Gentleman of the Eighth Class (*Congshi lang*), and assigned to be a Compiler (*daizhi*) in the prestigious Hanlin Academy. It was a great honor for a new graduate to be assigned as an official in that academy, and this posting indicates that Liechi had literary talent and was familiar with the Confucian classics and doctrine that were valued by the Chinese scholars who dominated that academy at the Yuan court. Xie Liechi was eventually sent to southeast China as an Agent (*darughachi*) at Chaozhou Prefecture (潮州路, in southeast Jiangxi).

At some point in Emperor Toghon Temür's reign (r. 1341–1368), Liechi was sent north to Henan Superior Prefecture (*Henan fulu* 河南府路) where he was assigned the position of Registrar (*jingli*).[6] A Registrar was an important but low-ranking official, who had overall responsibility for the running of the administrative offices in the prefectural offices. This assignment may have been in connection with Prime Minister Toghto's public works

[5] Shao Yuanping 劭遠平, *Yuanshi leibian* 元史類編 [Categorized Yuan history], 10 vols. (Taibei: Guangwen shuju, 1968) 40.14a, is the most comprehensive biographical entry for Xie Liechi, in a chapter devoted to "those exemplifying virtuous conduct"(旌德). In addition to the gazetteer sources, cited above, see also Chen, et al., *Gujin Tushu Jicheng* 37.45477 for information on Liechi.

[6] Henan fulu was located at the city of Luoyang in northwest Henan–Jiangbei Province.

project to rechannel the Yellow River and dredge the Grand Canal, which he started in 1351.

Xie Liechi eventually returned to Jiangxi in some official capacity, presumably to deal with the Red Turban rebellion that first arose in the 1330s and which had spread through parts of the southeast.[7]

> In the *Zhizheng* era [1341–1367] the Red Turbans rebelled, and officials at the court sent [Liechi] to go and be in charge of the east gate [of the prefectural city].... He offered a sacrifice of wine at his ancestors' grave, then assembled his wife and children and told them: "If this city cannot be defended, then you should wait until the proper time and then drown yourselves in the city pond, so that you will not be defiled." Then the city fell to the bandits. Liechi threw himself into the pond and died, and 11 members of his family, his wife, his concubine, and his children, all followed him in death. The next day, the Daoist [a certain Chen Baiyun] dredged up their bodies from the pond, prepared coffins and buried them.[8]

These rebels were part of a large movement in the late-Yuan that spread through south-central China. Many different rebel groups were all lumped together under the name "Red Turban". We do not know anything more specific about Xie Liechi's duties there at the time of that incident.

Liechi achieved a certain posterity for his efforts; as we have seen, his biography was included in the chapter dedicated to Yuan officials who demonstrated exemplary courage in their assignments in the recompiled Yuan

[7] Frederick W. Mote describes this group as the "northern Red Turbans"; see his "The Rise of the Ming Dynasty, 1330–1367," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 7, *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644*, ed. Frederick W. Mote and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 37–43.
[8] Shao, *Yuanshi leibian* 40.14a.

dynastic history, *Yuanshi leibian*. More interesting is his legacy in present-day China. According to the Grand Dictionary of Placenames, a "Xie Family Pond" (偰家池) is still located in the northwest corner of the county seat of Xinjian County (新建縣, near Nanchang), in Jiangxi Province. That pond was located near a building called the Xie Family Building and was given the title Loyal and Meritorious (*zhonglie*) by the Yuan court to honor Xie Liechi.[9] It may be the same pond in which Liechi and his family perished.

Liechi's contribution to his family may not, however, have ended with his death in Jiangxi. According to a much later gazetteer from Yunnan Province, Liechi's descendants "led followers and moved to Yunnan" in the first years of the Ming dynasty.[10]

(Xie) Shanzhu 善著 was the son of Xie Wenzhi's brother, Yuelunzhi. The exact nature of Shanzhu's relationship to his uncle is unclear, but it seems fairly certain that he also used Xie as a family surname like his uncle and cousins, and like his kinsmen was interested in Chinese cultural modes.[11] He used and was known by a

[9] Zang Lihe 臧勵龢, comp., *Zhongguo gujin diming da cidian* 中國古今地名大辭典 [Dictionary of ancient and modern placenames in China] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1933), 784. I have no idea if this building or the well still exist.
[10] I am indebted to Professor Yao Jide for supplying me with this information from a 1947 edition of the Yao'an County Gazetteer (姚安縣志). According to this record, Liechi's descendants converted and moved to Huase Village (花色村), in Yao'an County, Yunnan, in the early years of the Ming. Xie family members still live in Yao'an and other parts of central Yunnan Province where they are prominent members of the Muslim Huizu community. The history of that branch of the Xie family is beyond the scope of this book.
[11] Both the *Nanchang fuzhi* and *Liyang xianzhi* (cited above) record his name as Xie Shanzhu. Ouyang Xuan, however, referred to him only as Shanzhu in his history of the Xie family. See *Gui Zhai wenji* 11.12b. But since Ouyang then went on to report a conversation that he had had

Chinese-style courtesy name, Shiwen 世文. The important point for our story, of course, is the fact that Shanzhu, who seems to have been taken in by Xie Wenzhi at Jiangxi, also attained the *jinshi* degree and was one of the celebrated six *jinshi* of this family (the *liugui*).

Shanzhu achieved his *jinshi* degree in 1327, three years before Liechi. He was then promoted to the honorary rank of Gentleman of the Fourth Class (*Chengwu Lang*), and his first official assignment was in south-central China as a Vice Prefect (*tongzhi*) of Tianlin Circuit (天臨路, in Huguang Province, present-day Changsha). Curiously, this was the same place that Xie Wenzhi had been assigned as a Director General, sometime after 1314.[12] He was eventually promoted to be a Compiler of the Third Class (*bianxiu*) in the Hanlin Academy, and served concurrently as a Vice Prefect of Xiangtan Prefecture (湘潭), in present-day Hunan. These postings to the Hanlin Academy indicate that Shanzhu was acquainted with Chinese and Mongolian languages, and probably also fluent in the Confucian classics and other literature favored by the Chinese literati.

We know something about Shanzhu's personal life because he was mentioned in a foreword to a poem written by a fellow *Semuren*, the well-known writer and poet Sadula.[13] The subject of Sadula's seven-character *shi*-style

with Shanzhu concerning the reasons for the family having taken Xie as their surname, we may surmise that he did, in fact, use it as well.

[12] When Xie Wenzhi was sent there it was known by its old name of Tanzhou Circuit 潭州路. The name was changed to Tianlin Circuit in 1329. See Tan, *Zhongguo lishi dituji*, Vol. 7, 32; and *Yuanshi* 63.1527–28. I am indebted to Frederick Mote for this information.

[13] Sadula (薩都剌, 1272–1355) was a Muslim poet who was a cohort of Shanzhu's in the 1327 *jinshi* examination, and served in a number of positions at the central court, including the Hanlin Academy, and as regional or local administrator in various areas in China. He is best remembered today for his poetry. In addition to an extant collection of his poetry, cited below, Sadula's poetry has been collected and studied

poem, a Buddhist hermit who lived on Eagle Peak, does not directly concern us here. But in the poem's introduction, where Sadula explained his chance encounter with the hermit, we get a glimpse of Shanzhu's personal life and his friendship with Sadula. According to Sadula:

> I was selected to go as an official to Fujian, and I had occasion to pass through Jianyang, where I met my examination classmate Xie Shiwen [Shanzhu], who invited me to visit his family. And so I climbed up the path that led through the canyon [on Eagle Peak]. Suddenly I heard the sound of music and someone chanting poetry coming through the dense growth of trees and bamboo. I asked Shiwen about it and he replied that it was a Buddhist monk who lived up on Ling mountain. After awhile I met him in his hut. He has the appearance of a crane, floating through the clouds. He wrote a poem on a piece of parchment that was like the wind in the forest. I started on my journey south, and Shiwen was also about to leave for his post as editor [in the Hanlin Academy]. The man who lived on Eagle Summit saw me off at the top of the stream....[14]

When Sadula was sent to Fujian Province to be in charge of the Surveillance Bureau there in 1335, he was invited to visit his friend, Xie Shanzhu, on his way south to

by Liu Shijun 刘世俊, Zhang Yingsheng 张迎胜, and Ding Shengjun 丁生俊, ed., *Sadula Shixuan* 萨都剌诗选 [Anthology of poems of Sadula] (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin chubanshe, 1982). His poems have also been collected in Wang Shupan 王叔磐, et al., ed., *Yuandai Shaoshu Minzu shixuan* 元代少数民族诗选 [Anthology of Yuan Dynasty minority people's poems] (Hohote: Nei Menggu Renmin chubanshe, 1981), 165–210, where he is mistakenly identified as a Mongol.

[14] Sadula, "Zengbie Jiufeng shangren bingyin," 贈別鷲峰上人并引 [Presented to Monk Jiufeng on parting, with introductory note], in *Sa Tianxi shiji* 薩天錫詩集 [Collected poems of Sa Tianxi] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1929), 66b–67b.

his new post. Shanzhu was living in Jianyang 建陽 at the time, a city in Fujian Province that was the center of private book publishing in the Song and Yuan periods.[15]

Sadula's description of climbing up a mountainside amid dense jungle indicates a place that was perfect for recluses or hermits. The text is not clear as to whether Shanzhu lived on or near the mountain in question, or just why he was living in Jianyang. It is likely that he was not, himself, living as a recluse. But Shanzhu certainly knew about the learned monk who was living in reclusion on top of Eagle Peak, the subject of Sadula's poem. What is interesting for our purposes is the sense that Shanzhu was involved in some way with a group of literati in Fujian, as well as his stated connection with the *Semuren* poet Sadula.

Given the fact that Shanzhu was about to head back north to the capital as an official in the Hanlin Academy, Sadula's remarks about the hermit monk, at the end of the introduction to his poem, seem to be a pointed commentary to his friend. Sadula reveals that the Buddhist monk was a relative of none other than Ouyang Xuan and that the monk had also been a member of the Hanlin Academy off and on during the 1320s. Since we have already seen Ouyang Xuan's connection to the Xie family – in the case of Ouyang Xuan and Xie Zhedu – this is especially interesting, and may indicate even closer personal ties between the Xie family and Ouyang.

[15] On Jianyang as a center of Chinese literati writing and publishing activities, see Lucille Chia, "The Development of the Jianyang Book Trade, Song–Yuan," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (June, 1996): 10–48; her more recent work, "Mashaben: Commercial Publishing in Jianyang from the Song to the Ming," in *The Song–Yuan–Ming transition in Chinese history*, ed. Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 284–328; and Cynthia J. Brokaw, "Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China: the Zou and Ma Family Businesses of Sibao," *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (1996): 49–92.

The poem's preface is also interesting for what it reveals about Shanzhu's activities in political and social elite circles, and his connections to other prominent *Semuren* and Chinese. We are given a sense that this was a meeting between two old friends, each of whom was climbing the ladder of success. Shanzhu's appointment to the Hanlin Academy would have been an important step up for him. Likewise, Sadula would have wielded enormous political power and prestige in Fujian in his tenure in the Surveillance Burea. Both men were also acting as typical literati in the Chinese tradition. Shanzhu was possibly re-entering society from a time in private life, and Sadula recorded his visit to Eagle Mountain in the time-honored format of the *shi*-style narrative, meant to connote his own feelings about life as an official.[16] In a sense, then, both Sadula and Shanzhu symbolize the larger issue of *Semuren* who participated in the partially overlapping, sometimes contradictory arenas of political and cultural power in the ways possible by the 1330s.

Xie Yuli and Xie Zhedu

These last two Xie siblings were the most successful of the famous six *jinshi* in their dual roles as members of political and social elites, at least if the large number of contemporaneous encomia is any measure. Their stories provide a rare glimpse into the intersection of public and private spheres of prominent *Semuren* individuals in the last decades of the Yuan dynasty. We first examine Xie Yuli, and conclude the chapter with the most prominent family member of that generation, Xie Zhedu.

[16] According to Frederick Mote, this poem, while in a lyric mode, was written in the irregular *gu-shi* style form often used for narrative poems.

Xie Yuli as a Member of the Political Elite

Xie Yuli 偰玉立 had a successful career as a *Semuren* official, and he was also a well-known man of letters.[17] Though the oldest of the Xie siblings, he passed his *jinshi* degree three years after his younger brother, Xie Zhedu, in 1318. He adopted the Chinese-style courtesy name (*zi*) of Shiyu 世玉, and his first assignment was as an assistant staff writer in the Office of the Imperial Library (*Mishujian zhuzuo zuolang*). This office was responsible for maintaining the collections of books, paintings, maps and other documents housed at the Yuan court, and officials prepared compilations of documents for the Yuan emperors. According to the extant Records of the Imperial Library, Yuli was appointed to this office on the fifth day of the eighth (lunar) month of 1318, and he served there for approximately 10 months.[18] Sometime thereafter, Yuli was promoted to the honorary rank of Grandee of the Twentieth Class (*Chaoqing Dafu*), and assigned to serve concurrently as a Compiler (*daizhi*) in the Hanlin Academy and as a Compiler of the Third Class in the Imperial History Bureau (*guoshiyuan bianxiu*). We can infer from these postings that Zhedu was already highly regarded for his intellectual abilities.

[17] In addition to the gazetteer sources already cited above, biographical information about Xie Yuli is found in the following primary sources: He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠, *Min shu* 閩書 [Gazetteer of Fujian] (Fuzhou: Fujian Renmin chubanshe, 1994) 53.30; Wang Xuan 王軒, *Shanxi tongzhi* 山西通志 [Gazetteer of Shanxi Province] (1892 ed.; rpt. Taibei: Huawen shuju, 1969) 8.34a; and his biography in Gu Sili's anthology of Yuan poetry *Yuanshi xuan* (see note 40, below, for more information on this anthology).

[18] See the official memoir of the Yuan Imperial Library Bureau, Wang Shidian 王士點 and Shang Qiweng 商企翁, comp., *Yuan Mishujian zhi* 元秘書監志 [Account of the Yuan Imperial Library Bureau] (1342; rpt. Jiangsu Guangling Guji keyinshe, 1988) 10.4a. For information on this position and the Imperial Library, see Farquhar, *Government of China*, 137 and 162 n. 63.

After serving in those capacities in the capital, Yuli was sent out to a series of local and provincial supervisory positions. At some point between the years 1341–1368 (during Emperor Toghon Temür's reign) he was sent to Hedong and Shanxi provinces in central China as an official in the Regional Investigation Bureau (*suzheng lianfangsi*).[19] His most important postings as a local official, however, were all in Fujian Province. I have not been able to reconstruct a precise chronology of his various postings in Fujian, but a variety of official and private sources all confirm that he spent a good part of his career as a *Semuren* official there.

We know from a tomb inscription for the Fujian native Zheng Li 鄭禮 (1299–1370) written by the famous Chinese writer Su Boheng 蘇伯衡 (1329–1392?) that Yuli served as Magistrate (*shouzhang*) of Anxi County (安溪縣), in Fujian Province, about eighty *li* upriver from Quanzhou.[20] According to this text, when the young Mr. Zheng was sent to Anxi as an assistant magistrate he had to report to Xie Yuli, who was his immediate superior in office. Unfortunately, we are not given any details about Yuli's position or personal life in this text. However, another eulogy text, this one written by the well-known

[19] Li Kan 李侃, *Shanxi tongzhi* 山西通志 [Gazetteer of Shanxi Province] (1474 ed., microfilm copy) 8.34a.

[20] Su Boheng, "Gu Yuan Chengdelang Zhedongdao xuanweishisi Duyuanshuaifu dushi Zheng gong muzhiming" 故元承德郎浙東道宣慰使司都元帥府都事鄭公墓誌銘 [Tomb inscription of the former Master Zheng, Gentleman of the First Class, General Secretary in the Regional Military Bureau in the Pacification Office for the Zhedong area in Yuan China], in *Su Pingzhong wenji* (Sibu congkan ed., rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1922), 25a–26b. Su Boheng was a member of the famous coterie of Confucian literati from Jinhua who served as advisors to Zhu Yuanzhang. He was appointed to the Ming Hanlin Academy in 1378 on the recommendation of Song Lian (see below).

writer Song Lian 宋濂 (1310–81), in honor of the official Xiang Disun 項棣孫 (1296–1366), refers to Xie Yuli in his position as a prefect in Quanzhou.

> When Mr. Xiang was in Quanzhou, the people had hard lives, and corpses of those who had starved lay on the roads.... Mr. Xiang knew of these affairs and was getting worried, so he said to the Prefect Xie Yuli to establish a public contribution fund [to aid the poor and needy]. The heads of large shops and businesses gave gold that could be used to purchase grain to relieve the suffering of the people, and the entire prefecture obtained relief in this way.[21]

This is an important piece of evidence that demonstrates Xie Yuli's activities as an official in Quanzhou. Xiang Disun held the important post of Supervisor of Maritime Trade at Quanzhou in the late Yuan era, and referring to Yuli by name in this text indicates that the author expected his readers to know who Yuli was.

We know that Yuli was appointed to be the Agent (*darughachi*) who oversaw Quanzhou district in 1349, and it was in that position that he achieved his greatest success

[21] Song Lian, "Yuangu Yanpinglu zongguan Xiangjun muzhiming – youxu" 元故延平路總管項君墓誌銘 - 有序 [Tomb inscription for Gentleman Xiang, former official in Yuan Yanping Prefecture – with preface], in *Song Xueshi wenji* 宋學士文集 [Collected works of Song Lian] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1937) 34.456–59. Song Lian was an important Confucian thinker and writer from Jinhua in the late Yuan, and was part of the group of Chinese literati that Zhu Yuanzhang relied on for advice in the first decades of his Ming dynasty. Among other things, Song Lian was one of the *Yuanshi* compilers appointed by Zhu Yuanzhang. See Frederick W. Mote, "Sung Lien," in *Dictionary of Ming Biography 1368-1644*, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), Vol. 2, 1225-31, for more information.

and renown as an official.[22] By the Yuan period, Quanzhou (on the Fujian coast) already had a long history as one of China's most important port cities, dating back as far as the Tang dynasty. Moreover, as a major port of entry, Quanzhou was also home to a large community of foreigners. The city and the surrounding region had played an important role in the Mongol conquest of south China, and Quanzhou continued to be an important port and regional center in southeast China in the Yuan.[23]

According to a local gazetteer from the area, Yuli established a reputation as a responsible official in Quanzhou, and was involved in many different activities that benefited the local population.

> In the mid-Zhizheng era [1341–1368] he was promoted to the position of Director of Quanzhou. He built up the city's walls, dredged the rivers, instituted schools, repaired bridges, and gave relief to the poor. He [also] examined maps and records, and sought out the oral history [of Quanzhou], and asked Wu Jian, who lived at Sanshan, to compile the "Supplementary Gazetteer of Qingyuan" 清源續志 to supplement the history of the area.[24]

[22] There is disagreement in the sources as to Xie Yuli's precise position at Quanzhou. The *Min shu* records Yuli as a Director (*jian*) of Quanzhou, while all other sources report that he was an Agent (*darughachi*).

[23] Edward H. Schafer, *The Empire of Min* (Rutland: C. E. Tuttle Co., 1954), provides a good history of the region. See also Hugh R. Clark, *Community, Trade, and Networks: Southern Fujian Province from the Third to the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[24] He, *Min shu* 53.30b. He Qiaoyuan, a native of Quanzhou, compiled the *Min shu* in 1640. See Wolfgang Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1968), 247, for a description of this gazetteer. Qingyuan was the ancient name for the area.

Yuli was obviously an active and effective overseer who initiated a number of public works projects and tried to better the lives of the people in Quanzhou. Among the many public works that Yuli was responsible for during his tenure at Quanzhou was the rebuilding of the Quanzhou mosque (called the Qingjing Mosque). According to the Quanzhou prefectural gazetteer:

> The repair of the mosque Ch'ing-ching-ssu was one of his [Xie Yuli's] achievements. In the 12th year of Chih-cheng (1352 A.D.) he carried on the repair of the wall of Ch'üan-chou. Up to his time the wing wall [翼城] that You [sic] Chiu-kung 游九功, chief of the district, had constructed in the third year of Shao-ding of the Sung (1230 A.D.), surrounded the southern outside of the exterior wall [外城 羅城] which faced the southern port of Ch'üan-chou. Hsieh Yü-li removed the part of the exterior wall which went side by side with the wing wall and reinforced the wing wall to the height of twofold altitude, i.e. 2 *chang* and 1 *ch'ih*. By this construction the moat surrounding the outer side of the old exterior wall was included within the reinforced wall so that it became usable as a canal, after it was dredged.[25]

Maejima summarizes an inscription written to commemorate the repair of the Qingjing Mosque 清淨寺 in Quanzhou. That inscription, which was composed by the same Wu Jian whom Xie Yuli had asked to compile the new gazetteer of Qingyuan, is important for the evidence it provides about the Muslim community in Quanzhou in the late Yuan, as well as for information on Xie Yuli.[26] It is

[25] Translation from Shinji Maejima, "The Muslims in Ch'üan-chou at the End of the Yüan Dynasty," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 31 (1973): 44–45, citing the *Quanzhou fuzhi* (Qianlong ed.) 11. I have not been able to consult the original Quanzhou gazetteer.

[26] The Qingjing Mosque still exists in Quanzhou. For a description and photograph of that mosque, see *Zhongguo mingsheng cidian* 中国名胜

thanks to Wu Jian that a number of documents and epigraphic texts survive that shed light on aspects of the history of Quanzhou, including a "Record of the Mosque" that he compiled in 1349.[27] Very little is known about Wu Jian 吳鑒 apart from the fact that he came from Fuzhou (referred to in these sources by its formal name of Sanshan 三山).[28] As one of Yuli's main advisors at Quanzhou, Wu Jian produced several written documents that were commissioned by Yuli, or produced during Yuli's tenure there as Agent.

The Qingjing Mosque appears to have been an important institution for the community of Muslims who lived at Quanzhou. The mosque was staffed by a number of Arabs and Central Asians, at least some of whom appear to have made the *hajj* and who were leaders of the Islamic community there. According to Maejima, that community of Muslims was still active in Quanzhou in the early decades of the Ming; he cites an inscription in the wall of this same Qingjing Mosque, dated 1407, in which the Yongle Emperor commended the leader of the community there, a certain Milihazhi 米里哈只 (Mir Hajji).

Xie Yuli also commissioned the compilation of the first gazetteer of Quanzhou in the Yuan period. According to Maejima, the "Supplemental Gazetteer of Qingyuan," which Wu Jian compiled on orders from Yuli, and which

词典 [Guidebook to famous places in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1981), Vol. 2, 505. I thank Nancy Steinhardt for this information.

[27] *Qingzhen siji* 清淨寺記. See Maejima, "Muslims in Ch'üan-chou," 37, for that inscription.

[28] The gazetteer for Sanshan is one of the surviving Song-era gazetteers; Liang Kejia 梁克家, *Chunxi Sanshan zhi* 淳熙三山志 [Gazetteer of Sanshan] (1174–90; rpt. Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1976). For information on this gazetteer, see also Etienne Balazs and Yves Hervouet, *A Sung Bibliography* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1978), 149.

was published in 1351, was the first local gazetteer for Quanzhou published in over one hundred years.[29] For his achievements as an official in Quanzhou, a memorial shrine was erected in Yuli's honor in Quanzhou, and his old friend, Wu Jian, wrote the inscription: "[I]n the tenth year of Chih-cheng (1350 A.D.) of the Yüan, people of the district raised a shrine for Hsieh Yü-li, Darhachi at that time, and erected there a monument with the inscription by Wu Chien of San-shan."[30] This honor that was bestowed on Yuli during his lifetime by the elite of Quanzhou is evidence that he was held by them in high esteem. In spite of his high standing at Quanzhou, Yuli did not settle there. Instead, he chose to remain active as a *Semuren* official, and continued to lead the peripatetic life of the official.

At some point around 1352 Yuli was sent even further south as an investigation official. This appears to have been a demotion since he was assigned as an assistant official (*qianshi*) in Huguang. He was eventually promoted when he was sent to Haibei and Hainan as a Commissioner in the Regional Investigation Bureau.[31] This probably occurred in the mid-1350s, but we do not know the precise dates of his tenures in any of these offices, nor his exact duties. The regional Investigation Bureaus were branches of the censorate that were meant to extend the power of the central censorate over all areas of China. Since Yuli was one of two Commissioners in charge of the Investigation Office that oversaw the entire Haibei-Hainan region of south China, he would have had enormous power, and it was most certainly a promotion in office. However, Yuli

[29] Maejima, "Muslims in Ch'üan-chou," 40–42. See Maejima's informative discussion of Quanzhou gazetteers.

[30] Maejima, "Muslims in Ch'üan-chou," 46, citing the "Comprehensive Gazetteer of Min" (八閩通志) 59. I have not been able to consult this gazetteer.

[31] His duties at Haibei and Hainan are described in Chen, *Jinling tongzhuan* 9.3a.

may not have viewed his promotion as entirely positive since by that time the Mongols were really starting to lose control in the south. Curiously, this part of Yuli's career is shrouded in mystery; none of the sources comment on his time in south China, or the end of his life.

Yuli's peripatetic life as an official in south and southeast China also contributed to his work as a poet. We know this because of the themes that he used in some of his poetry. A few of his poems were considered important enough to be included in a comprehensive anthology of Yuan poetry. Yuli's reputation among his peers as a learned man is also confirmed by his promotion to the Hanlin Academy, which was then dominated by influential Chinese.

Xie Yuli as a Member of the Social Elite

We know about Xie Yuli's close relationship to his aristocratic Chinese contemporaries via the poems and essays that many of them wrote in his honor. For example, the respected writer Gong Shitai 貢師泰 (1298–1362) wrote two poems honoring Yuli. Gong had a long career as a scholar and official in the late Yuan period. He was appointed to various important positions at the court, including the Hanlin Academy, the State History Office, and the Ministry of Personnel. He was a Vice Minister in the Ministry of Personnel (*libu shilang*) in 1352, the same year that Yuli's brother, Xie Zhedu, was a Minister of that same bureau (see below).[32]

Gong's poems evoke a picture of friendship between these two men. His first poem, titled "On the Departure at the Quanzhou Post Station of Prefect Xie

[32] Primary sources pertinent to Gong include his official biography, *Yuanshi* 187.4294–96; and the extensive introduction, chronology and biography included with his collected works, *Wan Zhai ji* 玩齋集 (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1972).

Yuli," makes it clear that Gong knew Yuli when they both lived in Quanzhou, and that Yuli left his position as Prefect to take up some other post, presumably at the court. "I urge the official to decline [involvement in] government affairs, for ten thousand *li* dense clouds will follow the man of responsibility,... Let's release goldfish and go buy some farewell wine, Lake Zheng below the Luoyang Bridge is calm."[33]

Gong's other poem for Yuli, titled "Sent to the [Hanlin] Writer Xie Yuanlu at the Ancestral Shrine of the [Four] Seas and [Five] Mountains," is more difficult to interpret than the previous one, but it verifies Xie Yuli's appointment to the Hanlin Academy.[34] We also know from this poem that Xie Yuli adopted an additional literary style name, Yuanlu. The context of the poem seems to be the Yuan court, where Yuli was serving when the poem was written. "The Son of Heaven goes behind the vermilion screen, and officials in the ancestral temple serve [him] in the Jade Hall; incense wafts throughout the hall and has no escape, and their prayers that issue forth through the north gate are written down [by Yuli?]...."[35] This may reflect the fact that Gong sent his poem to his old friend who was now an official at court, whereas the previous poem was more private in nature, between two friends.

Another Chinese writer, Zhang Zhu 張翥 (1287–1368), also wrote a poem for Yuli. Zhang Zhu was an important court official from north central China. He served in a series of high-level positions at the Yuan court,

[33] Gong Shitai, "Quanzhouyi bie taishou Xie Shiyu" 泉州驛別太守偰世玉, in *Wan Zhai ji* 4.35b. For comments on the Luoyang Bridge at the northern end of Quanzhou bay, see Paul Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale Librairie Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1959), 597.

[34] Gong Shitai, "Song Xie Yuanlu yingfeng daici haiyou" 送偰元魯應奉代祠海嶽, in *Wan Zhai ji* 3.6a

[35] Gong, *Wan Zhai ji* 3.6a.

including a turn as an imperial tutor, an Erudite at the office of Imperial Sacrifices, and at least two different postings to the Hanlin Academy. He was also a member of the team that compiled the Song, Liao and Jin dynastic histories. Zhang's obscure poem, entitled "Sent to Xie Yuanlu Who Was Sent to Xiangnan Peak in Nanhai," corroborates Yuli's assignment as a *Semuren* official in the Haibei and Hainan Regional Investigation Bureau.[36] Nanhai was located in the far south (at present-day Guangzhou), and was, coincidentally, in the same area where his grandfather, Qara Buqa, was killed as a *Semuren* official in 1284.

Zhang's poem is interesting because he paints a picture of south China as a wild frontier area full of hidden dangers. This attitude was typical of Chinese literati from the north, and Zhang was no exception, coming as he did from Qinning Prefecture, Shanxi Province. But in the face of the breakdown of Mongol authority in the region, this perception may have had some basis in fact. Zhang expressed his concern for his friend's future in typical fashion, by writing a poem for him. "In the Tiankai period the area of Red Peak [i.e. south China] was incorporated [into the realm. This area in the south adjoins a great wild area. Those who serve in office there maintain the law and rites, and the gods clearly and diligently guard our country's frontiers... Take care that you, official and man of letters, pray with sincerity, [or] in your wish to govern with justice, evil may fall upon you."[37]

This poem corroborates Yuli's transfer to south China, specifically Hainan, as a *Semuren* official. Also of note, Zhang's phrase "official and man of letters" to describe Xie Yuli is in keeping with the traditional Chinese

[36] Zhang Zhu, "Song Xie Yuanlu jiang Xiangnanyou Nanhai" 送偰元魯降香南岳南海, in *Tui An ji* 蛻菴集 [Collected works of Zhang Zhu] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1972) 4.27b–28a.

[37] Zhang, *Tui An ji* 4.27b–28a.

ideal of the scholar-official, clear indication that he had attained that status among his Chinese peers. Finally, the poem is important because it shows us the friendship between Yuli and Zhang. We do not know where they became acquainted, the extent of their friendship, nor even when Zhang wrote this poem. Nevertheless, the fact that such an important person as Zhang took the time to write a poem to Yuli indicates not only that Yuli had developed a wide network of friends and acquaintances among the most prominent Chinese of the day, but also that at least some of those relationships were carried on by exchanging poems over long distance.

Yuli was certainly capable of participating in that kind of pure literati exchange because he had mastered the art of writing *shi* poetry. Some of his own poems have been preserved in the Qing anthology of Yuan poetry, *Yuanshi xuan*, under the title "Collected Poems of Mr. [Xie] Shiyu."[38] This collection itself is unfortunately no longer extant, but some poems of Xie Yuli and his younger brother Xie Zhedu, along with their biographies, were included in *Yuanshi xuan*. The purpose of this anthology was to prove to a Qing period audience that Chinese culture had flourished during the non-Chinese Yuan Dynasty, and the compiler, Gu Sili, felt the best way to do that was to

[38] See "Shiyu ji" 世玉集 in Gu Sili 顧嗣立, ed. *Yuanshi xuan* 元詩選 [Anthology of Yuan Dynasty poetry] (microfilm of 1720 edition). Xie Yuli's poetry is located in the "geng" 庚 section of this large work. I am indebted to Martin J. Heijdra for supplying a copy of this text for me. See Lynn, *Kuan Yün-Shih*, 67ff., for the history of this anthology and its role in Ming and Qing literary criticism. The poets represented all adopted the *shi* style, as a sign of their erudition and adherence to that classical style that epitomized poetry of the Tang period. Revival of *shi*-style poetry also had the effect of distancing those poets from their contemporaries who were writing plays, poetry, and other literature in vernacular language. Both Xie Yuli's and Xie Zhedu's poems have also been reprinted in Wang Shupan, ed., *Yuandai shaoshu minzu shixuan*, 137–44.

present a comprehensive collection of poetry from the Yuan period as evidence of the high literary achievement of the time. Fortunately for us, the works of several *Semuren* poets, including those of the Xie family, were included in the collection.

Eleven of Yuli's poems, along with a lengthy biography of Yuli, were included in *Yuanshi xuan*. His biography in that collection is important because it is the most comprehensive for Yuli in any primary source. Just as important, however, for our purposes, are Yuli's poems themselves. Some of them confirm, directly or indirectly, statements made about Yuli's career in his biography or other sources. They also demonstrate that Yuli was a competent writer of *shi*-style poetry.

As we can see from the titles of Yuli's poems, they are related to his travels, and they range from descriptions of places where Yuli visited, to historical persons, to scenes of natural beauty. All of his poems were written in five or seven character stanzas, in traditional *shi* style. True to that style, Yuli used highly stylized language, and larded his poems with frequent allusions to figures or ideas in the Chinese classics and history. The titles of his poems include: "Pond in the Hermit's Garden in Jiang," "Poem upon Climbing up to the Pavilion of Virtuous Breezes," "Wandering along Qin Creek," "Respectfully Appended to the Ode to Boyi written by Fan Wenzheng," "The Grottos of Qingyuan," "The Duke of Lu's Pavilion," "A Visit to the Tianshi Palace," "The Stone Drum Academy," "On the Road to Ji Prefecture," "Luohan Peak," and finally "Pavilion of Heavenly Breezes and Sea Clouds."[39] Space limitations prevent me from commenting on all of his poems, but even a brief look at some of them will convey the overall sense of his poetry.

[39] Xie Yuli, "Shi Yu ji," in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 1a–4a.

The first poem in the anthology, "Pond in the Hermit's Garden in Jiang," has an introduction attached that provides some background to the poem and fills in a few of the gaps in our knowledge of Yuli's life.[40] According to the introduction, Yuli wrote this poem in 1345 as he was passing through Jiang village. The occasion was Yuli's return to public life after a time in exile, and the tenor of this long poem is longing for the past. The introduction sets the mood of the poem:

> On my way through Jiang I climbed up to the garden pond. The pavilion and hut that were there earlier were all gone. By the swiftly moving stream I set up a lone pavilion and planted some flowers, and it looked as before, as a flowing spring and lotus flowers in the pond. There was a bank of willows and dark shade along the stream, flowers along the path and a few shoots of bamboo in the courtyard, and a gentle breeze blew through them. I had thoughts of the other world, and set them down in this poem.[41]

Yuli's long poem that follows this introduction adopts themes laid out in the introduction. The author contrasts the progression of time in the world, marked by the succession of dynasties and generations of people, with the changelessness of life in the mountains, marked by the scenes of nature, the old pavilion in Jiang, and the old man who lived there. These are classic themes in Chinese poetry, where the retired official has been recalled to active duty, and accepts the call with deep reservation and longing for the life of the recluse. More directly on point, however, we must ask where this particular poem fits in with what we know of Yuli's public life. None of the primary sources

[40] 絳守居園池. The first stanza of the poem says the old name of Jiang village was Fan 藩. I have not been able to determine the location of this place.
[41] Xie Yuli, "Shi Yu ji," in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 1b.

make any comment on Yuli's having been forced out of office or into exile, yet the preface to this poem says this was the case. All that we can deduce is that his demotion must have occurred before he went to Quanzhou, since we know that he took up his post at Quanzhou in 1349. The poem does not reveal any details of Yuli's period of exile, but we get the clear sense from it of his longing for that life in reclusion, and regret in having to re-enter public life again. Here, he echoes the familiar pattern of the morally upright man who withdraws from daily affairs to preserve his integrity so common in imperial China.[42]

One other poem may refer to Yuli's public life as an official. His poem "On the Way to Ji Prefecture" may have been written when Yuli was being transferred from Quanzhou south, to a new official position as an assistant official in Huguang.[43] Two different Ji Prefectures existed in Yuan China, and the poem does not specifically assign the context to either one. As Wang Shupan and his fellow compilers comment, it seems likely that the setting was Ji'an, in Jiangxi Province, and that Yuli went through Ji'an on his way to Huguang.[44] Certainly the feelings evoked in each of the three sections of this poem are consistent with departure from a familiar place into the unknown, accompanied by a longing to escape from reality. A feeling of isolation pervades the first section of the poem: "With snow on the mountains and clouds layering the hills I look toward Ji Prefecture. Clear green frost sparkles everywhere around me."[45] These themes of isolation in nature continue in the next sections of the poem, and the reader is left with

[42] On reclusion in imperial China, see Alan J. Berkowitz, "The Moral Hero: a Pattern of Reclusion in Traditional China," *Monumenta Serica* 40 (1992): 1-32; and Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yuan Period."
[43] Xie Yuli, "Jizhou daozhong" 吉州道中, in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 3b.
[44] See Wang Shupan, *Yuandai shaoshu minzu shixuan*, 137 n. 1.
[45] Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 3b.

a feeling that Xie Yuli wishes to escape from the world. Again, his feelings of frustration make sense given the breakdown of Mongol political authority and concomitant chaos and uncertainty at that time.

Several of Yuli's poems were written after a visit to a temple, the mountain retreats of writers or recluses, or even historical sites. These poems share themes of nature, the supernatural, or a general longing for the past, and contain references that would only have been understood and appreciated by a very well read audience. For example, the poem "Wandering along the Jin Creek" commemorates a visit to the site of the ancient Jin ancestral temple. It is a long poem filled with scenes of an old temple situated on a mountain, and with dense descriptions of the surroundings. The last two stanzas bring home for the reader the real effect the scene had on the author: "I hear the sound of a drum on the very top of Green Mountain, and [saw] an immortal floating in a white cloud; it disappeared before long, [and then] only the sound of a crane's cry was [heard] high in the sky."[46]

The appeal to literati tastes is nowhere more directly expressed than in Yuli's short essay titled "Appended to the Poem 'Boyi Odes' Written by Fan Wenzheng":

> Wenzheng is an erudite of the ages, his refined and loyal spirit has not departed. His name is as weighty as the mountains, and his writings are still relevant. Tall, ancient trees reach up to Heaven, and lightly scented flowers waft their fragrant scent in wave upon wave. I came to his ancestral temple to pay him homage, wishing to wash in the river.[47]

[46] Xie Yuli, "Wandering Along the Jin Creek" 遊晉溪, in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 2b.

[47] The text reads: 敬題范文正公所書伯夷頌卷尾. See Wang Shupan, et al., *Yuandai shaoshu minzu shixuan*, 139–40, for helpful annotations of this poem. Wenzheng was the posthumous honorific title of the Northern Song scholar-official Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052). Fan

The title of this essay establishes an image of Yuli as a traditional literatus of the time; the very fact that he invokes the famous Song scholar-official and reformer Fan Zhongyan (Wenzheng) in his poem would have been ample proof to any contemporaneous Chinese reader of Yuli's understanding and appreciation of the Chinese literati tradition, and that he felt secure enough in his own identity to express his own thoughts about Fan in writing.

A few of Yuli's poems seem much more rooted in mystical visions or fantasies of longing and these themes, too, would have appealed to many Chinese literati readers. One such poem, in which Yuli evokes the mystical world, is "The Qingyuan Grotto" (清源洞). The setting for this poem appears to be Quanzhou (known by its old name Qingyuan), but Yuli paints his old haunt in very otherworldly tones.

> Spirits and fairies go into the grotto and do not reappear, while in Qingyuan purple hats [officials?] are raised up against the cold. To the south of Quan [Quanzhou?] lies the immeasurable land of the Buddha, and in the sea off Min [Fujian] lies the supreme mountain Penglai. In the moonlit night a phoenix [flies] and pipes make a crying sound (*yinyin*), in the autumn breeze a crane [flies] and the pendants on my belt tinkle....[48]

was one of the most famous Song literati, not least because of his attempts to reform the imperial government and the long success of his clan's charitable estate. For more on Fan, see James T. C. Liu, "Fan Chung-Yen," in *Sung Biographies*, ed. Herbert Franke (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1976), 321-30; and Denis Twitchett, "The Fan Clan's Charitable Estate," in *Confucianism in Action*, ed. David S. Nivison and Arthur F. Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), 97-133.

[48] Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 2b.

These poems are filled with obscure references to people and places that could only be appreciated by someone who had been well schooled in classical Chinese prose, poetry, and history.

It is obvious that Yuli was thoroughly versed in the various *shi*-style poetic forms, was fluent in classical Chinese literature and history, and understood Chinese cultural tastes. Yuli was also a member of a smaller fraternity of *Semuren* individuals whose poetry was well enough known to merit inclusion in Gu's anthology of Yuan poets. Yuli's ability to write this kind of poetry, and his appreciation of literati conventions and tastes, also reflect the larger strategy of his extended family, whereby he "used Confucian studies to launch his career."[49] The nature and content of Yuli's poems reveal him as a highly literate man who could and did participate in this form of elite cultural activity during his life. Yuli's younger brother, Xie Zhedu, was even more astute in adapting to the predominant Chinese culture while also occupying positions of great power as a *Semuren* official.

Xie Zhedu as a Member of the Semuren *Political Elite*

The Uyghur Xie family reached their greatest success in Yuan political and social circles with Wenzhi's third son, Xie Zhedu 偰哲篤. Zhedu was the first Xie family member to obtain the *jinshi* degree, and he eventually served in the highest levels of Yuan government as Minister of Personnel, where he was involved in determining fiscal policy, among other things. Zhedu also made a name for himself as a Chinese-style literatus, and is an important figure in the long-term history of the Xie family, because it was through

[49] His biography in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 1a, is the only source that provides this interesting attribute: "Yuli yi ruye qi jia" 玉立以儒業起家.

his direct descendants that the Xie family continued to exist in China long after his time.

Xie Zhedu first held office as a junior member of the Longxing Prefecture (*Longxing lu* 龍興路) Municipal Affairs Office (*lushi si*) in present-day Nanchang, Jiangxi. Since his family lived in Jiangxi at the time, this appointment may have been entirely due to his father's influence there. He also held this office before 1315, when he took and passed the *jinshi* exams. Zhedu had some prominent Chinese cohorts in that exam, such as Ouyang Xuan, Xu Youren, Huang Jin, and the *Semuren* poet Ma Zuchang. After he obtained the degree, Zhedu was promoted with the honorary title Grandee of the Nineteenth Class (*Zhongxun Dafu*) and the position of Magistrate of Gaoyou Prefecture (高郵州, northeast of Nanjing). The Gaoyou gazetteer reports that he was a good administrator, diligent in his duties, and noted especially for repairing dikes that protected the northern part of the prefectural city of Gaoyou. Zhedu was also nominated for a position in the Nanjing administration in 1329, but does not appear to have filled that position.[50] This may have been because in the same year he was appointed to an even more important position in the Office of Imperial Sacrifices in the Southern Pavilion (*Nantai*) office of the Censorate.[51]

Sometime thereafter, Zhedu was promoted to the position of Assistant Surveillance Commissioner for

[50] Zhang Xuan 張鉉, *Jinling xinzhi* 金陵新志 [New gazetteer of Jinling] (1308–11 ed.; rpt. Taibei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshu guan, 1977) 6.27. Jinling is the old name for Nanjing.

[51] Most of the primary sources report Zhedu's appointment to the Southern Censorate, which was probably the Branch Censorate for the Several Jiangnan Regions, having jurisdiction over the southeast provinces Jiangzhe, Jiangxi, and Huguang. Its offices were located in Jiankang (modern Nanjing). However, one source reports Zhedu's appointment to the Western Branch Censorate (see my discussion of Yu Ji's poem, below).

Guangdong. The sources report that Zhedu was "falsely accused" or impeached while he was there, and then Zhedu resigned his office and moved to Liyang County, where his father had retired. A tomb inscription written for Zhedu's wife by the prominent Chinese writer Huang Jin, provides a detailed account of the Xie family at that time:

> Zhedu was sent to manage the affairs of the Guangdong Pacification Office, [but] was impeached. To avoid [those who] opposed him he gave up his seal of office and resigned. He then went with his wife to Jiangdong, where his father [Xie Wenzhi] had purchased land in Liyang, at Sandy Creek in Yongcheng village. He [Zhedu] honored his ancestors and his own family there by reverently arranging the ancestral graves, offering wine and praying aloud, saying, "May my new wife assist my sons in maintaining our family's tombs, in sacrificing to the filial [i.e., Zhedu's father, Wenzhi], and in maintaining her respect. I pray that my offspring will all resemble my wife in her virtue."[52]

We are not told the nature of the accusation against Zhedu, but it may have been due to policies enacted by the Prime Minister Bayan to impose strict divisions between Chinese and non-Chinese people. Bayan was convinced that there was too much fraternization between these two groups, which he felt went against Qubilai Qan's original intentions. One example of Bayan's policies was his termination of the civil service exams in 1335. Since Zhedu was obviously one of the *Semuren* who found Chinese culture and the Chinese literati congenial, he may have

[52] Huang Jin, "Weijun furen Weiwushi muzhiming" 魏郡夫人偉吾氏墓誌銘 [Tomb inscription of the Uyghur Mistress of Wei Prefecture], in *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* [Collected works of Mr. Huang Jin of Jinhua] (Sibu congkan ed.; rpt. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1922) 39.18a. See further comments on Zhedu's wife, and this inscription below.

been criticized by zealous officials who were carrying out Bayan's program.

As I have already discussed (see Chapter 5), it is not clear why Zhedu's father, Xie Wenzhi, decided to move to Liyang in his retirement, rather than to Jiangxi where his sons had taken their *jinshi* degrees and where they had already established a name for themselves. One would think that there might have been some pull to return to Shandong where he grew up, but that was clearly out at this point. For whatever reasons, however, this passage makes clear that Wenzhi and his family engaged in the kinds of activities that would ensure their identity with Liyang, the most important of which was relocating their ancestral graves. It also reveals the extent to which the Xie family accepted Confucian conventions about family rites. It would be overly cynical to attribute these acts solely to a calculated strategy to build or reinforce the family's identity as Chinese-style social elites, but relocating the ancestral graves to their new home was certainly an effective way to integrate into Liyang society. One manifestation of that success is that Xie men from Zhedu's generation on were known as "Liyang natives" (溧陽人).

In Zhedu's case, his identity as a Liyang person was also reinforced by the fact that he purchased land and built his own residence there after he was forced into retirement. The sources do not tell us why Zhedu did not simply settle into his father's residence. It is possible that the family compound had grown too small for him and his family. Zhedu retired from his position in Guangdong sometime in the 1330s, and his father died in 1340. Zhedu may also have wanted to establish his identity in the community as a person of means, and purchasing his own property and building his own residence would certainly have accomplished that goal, and contributed to the other forms of cultural and social capital his family had already accrued to that point. Perhaps the clearest evidence that Zhedu

understood this process is the fact that he borrowed the sobriquet "Family of the three virtuous ones and six *jinshi*" for his new residence and attached hall (*Sanjie Liugui Tang*), and hired a local Chinese tutor for his sons.[53]

Sometime after 1341, Zhedu was called back into official duty, this time to the court in Dadu where he was appointed to the position of Minister of Personnel (*libu shangshu*). He was one of three ministers in charge of this important office that controlled the selection, appointment and evaluation of all civil service officials, and it was during his tenure in that position that he became involved in a major reform of the Yuan currency system in 1351.

Paper money had been introduced in the Song period, but it was the Mongols who perfected the system, and historians have long remarked on the success of the Yuan government in developing and maintaining a stable paper currency over the duration of the dynasty. This represented a significant development in the power of the central government vis-à-vis regional or local powers, who often minted their own currency in attempts to assert their authority. The Mongols were naturally concerned about competing centers of authority, and very early recognized the importance of establishing a uniform system of currency in maintaining their control over China.[54] As early

[53] Xie Wenzhi also used at least the first part of that sobriquet, "three virtuous ones," for his residence in Yuzhang town, Jiangxi, and perhaps the same full sobriquet that his son used in Liyang. As we have seen, some poems and essays written in Wenzhi's honor referred to his Jiangxi residence by the full name "Hall of Three Worthies and Six *Jinshi*." Since Wenzhi's sons and nephew all obtained their *jinshi* degrees while he was living in Jiangxi, it is possible that Wenzhi himself used that full title for his residence and hall.

[54] On the Yuan currency system and fiscal history, see especially: Lien-sheng Yang, *Money and Credit in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952, 1971); Herbert F. Schurmann, *Economic Structure of the Yüan Dynasty: Translation of Chapters 93 and 94 of the Yüan Shih* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956);

as 1236 the Mongols, on the advice of their Jurchen advisor, Yelü Chucai, issued paper currency in North China. It was called the *jiaochao* exchange note, using the same name as the old Jurchen Jin paper currency. We do not know how long it was issued, or whether it was actually circulated and used throughout north China. In fact, a variety of paper currencies were produced and circulated in north China up to Qubilai's accession in 1260. When Qubilai came to power as the supreme Qan, he implemented a currency reform that was a major innovation; three paper currencies were issued, two based for the first time in Chinese history on silver reserves. Of these latter two silver-based currencies, the one known as the *Zhongtong yuanbao jiaochao* ("primary treasury exchange note of the *Zhongtong* era [1260–1263]") proved to be the most stable. It quickly became the major form of paper currency in China, and it circulated in China until the end of the Yuan dynasty. When the Mongols completed the conquest of south China, they also introduced the *Zhongtong* currency there, and the population was allowed to exchange their old Song notes for the Mongol currency.

There were, however, three subsequent changes, or additions, to the Mongol currency system after 1260. A new paper currency, the *Zhiyuan chao*, was introduced in 1287–1288, and yet another paper currency, the *Zhida yinchao*, was issued in 1309–1310. The latter, however, was abolished after 1312, and until 1350 both the

Herbert Franke, *Geld und Wirtschaft in China under der Mongolen-Herrschaft: Beitrage zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Yüan-Zeit* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1949), esp. 34ff.; Hok-lam Chan, "Appendix 3: The Yüan Currency System," in *The Government of China Under Mongolian Rule*, David M. Farquhar (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1990), 445–56; and Nancy S. Steinhardt, "Currency Issues of Yüan China," *Bulletin of Sung and Yüan Studies* 16 (1980): 59–81. The main primary source that deals with Yuan currency is the chapter on food and money in *Yuanshi* 93, "Shi Huo zhi" 食貨志.

Zhongtong and *Zhiyuan* notes circulated throughout Yuan China. In 1350 yet another currency was introduced into the system. That later paper currency was confusingly called the *Zhongtong jiaochao* (also known informally as the *Zhizheng chao* to avoid confusion), apparently in an attempt to hearken back to the good old days of Qubilai Qan's era. By the late 1340s there was an increasingly tight supply of money in circulation, and problems such as counterfeiting were on the rise. As Hok-lam Chan notes, this was also the beginning of a period of massive inflation, and the start of the downward slide of the stability of the Yuan economy.

The major impetus for currency reform at that time, however, was the activist Prime Minister Toghto. Toghto served twice as Prime Minister, his first appointment (1340 to 1344) coming after the conservative Bayan. His first administration exemplified a reaction to Bayan, and promulgation of policies that included Chinese literati in government. Among other things, Toghto reinstituted the civil service exams, and provided funds and personnel to complete the drafting of the Song, Liao and Jin dynastic histories. [55] His activist government was opposed by conservative elements, and Toghto resigned in 1344 after a series of rebellions broke out across China.[56] Returning to office in 1349, he immediately set about to restore activism to the central government. One manifestation of Toghto's activism was the spate of public works projects that he initiated, for which increased state funding was required. In 1350, Toghto came up with the idea of issuing a new paper currency as a way to finance his projects. Wu Qi 武祺, an

[55] On this issue, see Hok-lam Chan, "Chinese Official Historiography at the Yüan Court: The Composition of the Liao, Chin, and Sung Histories," in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 56–106.
[56] See Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians*, esp. 75ff. Toghto's second administration is discussed in detail by Dardess at pp. 95–118.

official in the Ministry of Revenue, and Xie Zhedu, Minister of Personnel at the time, both backed Toghto's plan.[57] In discussions at the court over the issue, Zhedu added his own suggestion that the government increase the minting of copper coins in addition to the new paper currency. An entry in the dynastic history reveals details of these discussions at the court, including Zhedu's contributions to the plan:

> Toghto, Chief Councilor on the Right in the central government, assembled the ministers of the Central Secretariat to discuss adopting a new currency.... The Minister of Personnel, Xie Zhedu, and the General Secretary of the Office of the Left, Wu Qi, both supported the plan to introduce the new currency. Xie Zhedu said "The currency exchange must be changed so that one guan of paper currency corresponds to 1000 copper coins, and the standard of basis is now the paper currency."... [after much argument and dispute by other ministers] Xie Zhedu and Wu Qi said: "Since there are many counterfeits of the *Zhiyuan* paper currency, it must be changed."[58]

Xie Zhedu was obviously sympathetic with Toghto's realist, or pragmatic approach to government, and a member of the "reform" faction of Confucianists who allied themselves with him. Zhedu's alliance with Toghto's faction is also made clear by the career of his eldest son, Xie Boliaoxun, who was given a post in the office that oversaw the education of the heir apparent, the *Duanben Tang* (an office that Toghto created in 1349 as a sop to conservative Confucianists at the court; see below). Finally, the assignment of Zhedu's brother, Xie Liechi, to north

[57] For information on Wu Qi, see Ke Shaomin, *Xin Yuanshi* 113.1a–4b, pp. 1937–38.
[58] *Yuanshi* 97.2483–85. Franke includes an extended translation of this passage in his study; see his *Geld und Wirtschaft in China*, 95–98.

China at that time may also have been related to Toghto's power bloc at the court.

The sources are less clear about Xie Zhedu's career trajectory after 1350. Several sources report that Zhedu was transferred to the Ministry of Works (*gongbu*) after his tenure in the Ministry of Personnel, but we have no information on his activities or dates that he served in that ministry. Zhedu was assigned to the position of Minister on the Right in the Jiangxi Provincial Secretariat after his stint in the central government, and one source even indicates that he was appointed concurrently as an Assistant Grand Councilor and Junior Lord in the Agriculture Office in Jiangzhe Province.[59] Since we don't know the dates of these postings, it is unclear if they were related to Toghto's dismissal in 1355, or whether they reflect Toghto's policy of assigning loyal and trusted men to the provinces to insure that his various public works projects were carried out.[60]

At any rate, by the time Zhedu settled once again in Liyang he had joined the ranks of the Chinese social elite: he owned land, he established a soon-to-be famous study hall attached to his personal residence that attracted students, and he contributed to the cultural life of the area

[59] See Zhao Pang 趙彷, below.

[60] One famous example of Toghto's public works projects was the re-channeling of the Yellow River south of the Shandong peninsula. According to Dardess, Toghto's plan was opposed by several conservative officials, who wanted to carry out a simpler, far less costly plan of building dikes on the banks of the existing riverbed. Among the officials who toured the area and disagreed with Toghto's plan were the Minister of Works and the Grand Minister of Agriculture. Toghto's plan was approved by the emperor, in spite of the resistance of these officials and the warnings from conservative Confucianists that popular rebellion would break out in the area once the project was begun. While the sources do not mention Zhedu in connection with this project, his assignment to the Ministry of Agriculture in Jiangzhe may have been connected to Toghto's plans.

by his own literary achievements and the ongoing achievements of his sons. Since Zhedu was so clearly allied with Toghto, he was assuredly popular among at least some prominent Chinese personnel there, as reflected in the large number of encomia written about him and his family by such luminaries as Huang Jin, Yu Ji, Liu Ji, Guo Junyuan, Xu Youren, Su Tianjue and Kong Keqi.

Xie Zhedu as a Member of the Social Elite

One of the most interesting pieces of evidence that sheds light on Xie Zhedu's personal life, and the lifestyles that many *Semuren* such as Zhedu adopted, is the eulogy composed for Zhedu's wife when she died in 1341. This "Tomb inscription for the Uyghur Mistress of Wei Prefecture" was written by the well-known Chinese writer Huang Jin 黃溍 (1277–1357), the famous Confucianist from Jinhua.[61] Zhedu was married to a woman named Yuelunshihudu 月倫石護篤 (Yelunq Qutuq?), the eldest daughter of a prominent Uyghur *Semuren* by the name of Talima Jierde, of the Gusulu clan (古速魯達里麻吉而的).[62] They married in 1317, when she was 17

[61] Huang Jin, "Weijun furen Weiwushi muzhiming," in *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 39.17a–18b. For biographical information on this woman's family, see her father's tomb inscription, composed by Wei Su 危素 (1303–1372): "Yuan gu zishan dafu Fujiandao xuanweishi duyuanshuai Gusulu gong muzhiming" 元故資善大夫福建道宣尉使都元帥古速魯公墓誌銘 [Tomb inscription of former Duke Gusulu, Pacification Commissioner and Military Commander in Fujian Circuit and Grandee of the Seventh Class in Yuan China], in *Weitaipu wenxuji* 危太朴文續集 [Supplemental collected works of Wei Su] (Wuxing Liushi Jiayetang ed.; rpt. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1986) 5.1a–4a. Ch'en Yuan includes Zhedu's wife as one of the *Semuren* women trained in Confucian studies, placing particular emphasis on her sinicization; see his *Western and Central Asians in China*, 281–82.

[62] According to Thomas Allsen, Talima is a form of the Uyghur personal name Tarim, which was taken from the name of the Tarim River. Thomas Allsen, personal communication. Talima Jierde (1268–

years old, and the marriage has all the signs of an alliance between two important Uyghur families. It turns out that Xie Wenzhi, Zhedu's father, had helped out Talima Jierde after a flood had devastated the area of Raozhou where he lived, when Wenzhi was the Magistrate of Guangde Circuit in Jiangxi Province. Talima Jierde was a member of a prominent Uyghur family who had distinguished themselves by their loyal and effective service to the Mongols as *Semuren* officials.

Yuelunshihudu was an intelligent woman of many resources, and she appears to have been an important addition to the Xie family and an excellent wife for Zhedu. First, she was lauded because she had achieved a high level of education. Interestingly, she was most familiar with Chinese works dealing specifically with women and women's history, such as the *Classic of Filial Women* (*Nü Xiaojing*) and the *Biographies of Virtuous Women* (*Lienü zhuan*), as well as other more standard classics, including the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing*) and the *Analects* (*Lun Yu*). Zhedu's wife was obviously raised in a family that valued Chinese culture, and her tomb inscription shows just how thoroughly she absorbed those cultural values into her own life from the models of virtuous and filial women portrayed in the classics that she was reading. It is worth quoting for the sense that it conveys of Zhedu's wife's actions as a model wife, and for the spirit of Zhedu's family.

> The wife of Hsieh Chê-tu, now minister of the board of civil office, has passed away. He has personally written an epitaph for her shrine. The son, Hsieh Po-liao-hsün, and others have transmitted the request of the minister that I append a note. ... The lady bore the name Yüeh-lun-shih-hu-tu ..., and her *tzŭ* was Shun-chên 順貞. She came from the Wei-wu clan. Her forefathers, from her great-grandfather on up, served

1329) served as an Agent (*darughachi*) for the Mongols in north and south China.

> their own country. She demonstrated her intelligence as a child. As she grew up she became familiar with book learning and could recite the *Hsiao-ching*, *Lun-yü*, *Nü-hsiao-ching*, and *Lieh-nü-chuan*. When she came across passages on heroic acts by women in histories of earlier times, she would read them over and over again with admiration. At the age of seventeen, she joined the family of Hsieh. This family belonged to the T'u-chüeh nobility. From T'ang times on, members of the clan served the Wei-wu, and so they were subjects of that people.[63] ...
>
> Xie Zhedu was from a great family in Gaochang, and his wife herself also came from a line of great power and influence, enabling her, through her feminine virtues, to succeed in the role of spouse to an eminent gentleman. She served [her mother-in-law] the Mistress of Gaochang Commandery, with utmost filial devotion. She provided fine delicacies, warm and cold, with unobtrusive delicacy. She was sincere in dealing with her sisters-in-law, and they had harmonious relations and there was no gossip. She directed the maidservants in the general duties of women's work, such as preparing silk and linen, and in all the work she led by her own example. Her mother-in-law said of her 'You, the newly-married wife [of my son], are so filial and respectful that I hope only to grow old in your company.' ...
>
> [In 1328] When [her husband, Xie Zhedu] was transferred from the Court of Imperial Sacrifices to the Western Branch Censorate [at present-day Xian], his wife remained alone at Dadu....
>
> Later, she moved her family to the south, and when the Minister [her husband] was transferred to the Southern Branch Censorate [at present-day Nanjing], she attended to her mother-in-law at Gaoyou where both fell ill to fevers. The mistress, in spite of her

[63] This portion of Huang Jin's eulogy is taken from Ch'en Yuan, *Western and Central Asians in China*, 281–82, citing Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang wenji* 39.7a.

> own illness, with effort attended her mother-in-law, serving her rice gruel and medicine, but she did not recover. The mistress grieved for her day and night, the sounds carrying well beyond the women's quarters. She mourned in accordance with the regulations set forth in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, carrying out all the ritual arrangements, her grief and sense of loss unabated from the time of her first passing.[64]

This passage reveals several things about both *Semuren* families involved in this new marriage. Not only was Zhedu's new wife steeped in the Confucian classics, and understood the proper roles of the filial wife and daughter-in-law, but her new mother-in-law also seems to have expected that type of behavior from her daughter-in-law. From the tenor of this inscription it appears that both of these prominent Uyghur *Semuren* families had thoroughly adopted Chinese patterns of social behavior, and were virtually indistinct from their Chinese elite counterparts. Those qualities would have appealed to a person like Huang Jin, the author of the eulogy, who was also no doubt interested to present the Xie family in the best possible light by underscoring the impeccable moral character of the wife of his colleague and friend. After all, Zhedu was Minister of Personnel when Huang Jin wrote this inscription, and was probably sympathetic to the pragmatic Confucianism espoused by Huang and fellow Jinhua literati.[65] Yet in spite of the formulaic nature of such texts, the character of these *Semuren* families comes through.

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[64] Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 39.7b–8a. I am grateful to Frederick Mote for his help in translating this portion of Huang Jin's text.

[65] John Langlois makes this point in his discussion of Huang Jin and utilitarian Confucianism in the late Yuan. See his "Political Thought in Chin-hua under Mongol Rule," esp. 178–85.

Perhaps just as important, Zhedu's marriage to a woman from another prominent Uyghur clan reveals details about marriage alliances between some prominent Uyghur families. I have already alluded to this strategy in Chapter Four. Wang Meitang, in a recent study on the Lian family, has described marriage ties between three Uyghur clans: the Lians, the Gusulus, and the Xies.[66] According to Wang, Lian Xishu's daughter married Talima Jierde of the Gusulu family, the same man who was the father of Xie Zhedu's wife. A more direct connection between the Lian and Xie families was made when Lian Xixian's great-grandson, Lian Yaoyao 廉咬咬, married Xie Zhedu's daughter.[67] One further interesting connection between the Gusulu and Xie families was the fact that Zhedu's son, Xie Boliaoxun, was asked to write an introduction to Talima Jierde's eulogy (see my discussion of Boliaoxun below). The evidence from these three prominent *Semuren* families points to the fact that marriage alliances among prominent Uyghur *Semuren* were ways to maintain a sense of group solidarity and may also have been important means by which to maintain their own standing within the larger *Semuren* status group in China.[68]

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[66] Wang Meitang, "Yuandai neiqian weiwuerzu shijia." I am indebted to Fang Jun for providing me with a copy of this paper. The ancestors of the Lian family were members of the first wave of Uyghur migrants to the Mongol empire, and adopted strategies very similar to the Xies, including using a Chinese-style surname. See my comments on the Lian family above.

[67] Wang Meitang, "Yuandai neiqian weiwuerzu shijia," 3–4. Zhedu's daughter's marriage is confirmed in the tomb inscription written by Huang Jin, "Weijun furen Weiwushi muzhiming," *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji* 13a.

[68] This raises questions about marriage patterns among *Semuren* in general: Whom did they marry? Where did they live? Were similar marriage patterns practiced by *Semuren* of national and local prominence? Hong Jinfu's and Wang Meitang's studies of these few cases provide tantalizing suggestions that marriage alliances among *Semuren* were routinely practiced. Much more research, especially

Zhedu's marriage to Yuelunshihudu highlights multiple narratives of identity that framed the lives and worldviews of Uyghur *Semuren* like the Xie family. Zhedu's identity as a Confucian-oriented *Semuren* official would have been strengthened by marrying a woman who shared his Confucian orientation, and as we have seen, all the evidence points to his wife's deep familiarity with the Chinese tradition. It would also have been important for Zhedu to be married to a woman who could be the ideal mother, teaching his sons the Chinese cultural tradition. Again, Yuelunshihudu would have been the ideal partner to this rising star. Since Zhedu's home life at Liyang was praised as a model of Confucian family values and propriety by a prominent Liyang writer (see below), and if his wife acted at all like the model mother, who was responsible for instilling in her children the important social norms, then it seems clear that Wenzhi made the right choice.

At the same time, this marriage also enabled Zhedu to maintain connections with his own ethnic group. We do not know the level of cultural adaptation or sophistication of the Gusulu family, but if they found Chinese culture as congenial as the Xies, then the marriage between these two Uyghur families becomes less important as a statement of ethnic solidarity, and more important as an alliance of like-minded *Semuren* families. This was almost certainly the case with the marriage between Zhedu's daughter and Lian Yaoyao. Since Zhedu's social connections influenced his political power, it would have been to his advantage to maintain his ties to other powerful *Semuren*.

One of the most important primary sources we have for Zhedu's activities at Liyang is a vivid description of his family life written by the prominent Liyang writer Kong

diachronic studies of *Semuren* families in China, needs to be done, however, to definitively answer these questions.

Keqi 孔克齊 (fl. 1350s; a.k.a Kong Qi).[69] Kong Qi came from an eminent family, descended from the sage Confucius, but his own father was a lowly clerk and had to live frugally. According to Paul Smith, this made Kong Qi particularly aware of the exigencies of life in general.[70] As a result, Kong Qi began a record of his impressions of life in Liyang and southeast China in response to the breakdown of social and political order that began in the 1350s. It is a curious mix of essays that reveal the hopes, intrigues and workings of this locality, and in which Kong rants against immoral behavior and social chaos of the time.

Kong Qi's rather detailed description of Zhedu's family life at Liyang was entitled simply "Mr. Xie Zhe of Gaochang." By the time Kong had made his visit sometime in the 1350s, Zhedu had managed to build a reputation in Liyang as the head of an exemplary family, known for its members' propriety and literary accomplishments. It was Zhedu's family regimen that caught Kong's attention, for, as Smith makes clear, Kong believed that the family unit was the ultimate guaranty against disorder: "The family was the only hope for long-term multi-generational protection, by protecting property, transmitting core values to young men and women, and restraining their natural unruliness."[71] Of all the people in Liyang, Zhedu's family stood out as the exemplary model for Kong, and thanks to that, we have a unique record of Zhedu's personal life there.

[69] Kong Keqi is usually known as Kong Qi; the "Ke" 克 part of his name was the generational name used in all names of the 55th generation lineal descendants of Confucius. Wang Deyi, et al., *Yuanren zhuanji ziliao suoyin*, Vol. 1, 43–47, points out the use of these generational names in the Yuan era descendants of Confucius. I am grateful to Frederick Mote for this insight.

[70] See Paul J. Smith, "Fear of Gynarchy," for information on Kong and his family, as well as descriptions of Liyang and southeast China in the last decades of the Yuan dynasty. I draw from Smith's article for the following discussion.

[71] Paul Smith, "Fear of Gynarchy," 52.

> Xie Zhedu, also known as Shinan (世南), used [his knowledge of] Confucianism to advance his career. In Jiangxi where he lived, he and five of his brothers all attained the *jinshi* degree, and this brought them great honor. ... Shinan had nine sons, all of whom were highly talented. At this time his eldest son, [Xie] Dao [Xie Boliaoxun] was still a young man, not yet an adult, and his second son was only 15 or 16 years of age. Every day at dawn all the sons would stand outside the door of the inner quarter of the house to present themselves to their father and mother. If they did not have anything to report then none of them would dare to go in, and this was repeated in the evening. One day I paid a visit to Zhedu's study hall (書館) and a guest was staying there.... I saw Zhedu's sons and younger brothers all in correct order. They all seemed to be of good disposition, they wore elegant and refined clothing and they studied assiduously everything in nature.[72]

When Kong Qi wanted to have a personal audience with Zhedu, he was told that he would have to follow a certain procedure set by Zhedu's strict rules, which he laid down in order to preserve order in his house.

> "If there are officials who approach the gate and inquire about entering, then those in charge send them in. After awhile other people are admitted. All of the students here do not dare go in in a disorderly fashion." At first I doubted this, but then I was told: "there is really a logic to [Zhedu's] household; just as the servants cannot enter without a reason, likewise his sons cannot enter without a reason. Since I am staying in the hall, I have seen that students who are residing outside observe this rule."... I had to admit

[72] Kong Qi, "Gaochang Xie Zhe" 高昌偰哲, in *Zhizheng zhiji* 至正直記 [True records from the Zhizheng era] (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 116–17. I am grateful to Paul Smith for pointing out Kong's essay to me.

> that [Zhedu's] rule had a logic to it, and I came to admire him greatly and tried to adopt his admonitions.... The restraint [in family life] brought about by Zhedu's regulations is not accomplished all of a sudden. [Thus Zhedu] goes into the village every day and with great respect teaches others.[73]

Kong's essay is interesting because he reveals Xie Zhedu's activities as a Liyang literatus. We know from this essay that Zhedu had established a study hall that was important enough that other prominent Chinese studied or visited there (curiously, Kong never refers to Zhedu's hall by the sobriquet "Hall of the Family of Three Worthy Ones and Six *Jinshi*"). He also tells us how Zhedu organized his own family! Kong paints a picture of the ideal household, where Zhedu enforced strict rules regarding his sons' behavior. As Smith argues, this was one of the few living examples in Liyang of what family life should be like, which would, in Kong's view, bring substantial real benefits to people in an age of social and political chaos. He would have known something of these benefits, being a direct descendant of Confucius. But interestingly, Kong says, "In my own household the rules have been passed down from our ancestors, but are only applied to sons and younger brothers who live outside of the household, and does not extend to those people living within [the household]."[74]

[73] Kong, *Zhizheng zhiji*, 116–17.

[74] Kong, *Zhizheng zhiji*, 117. As Scott Pearce reminds us, outsiders often use tradition more rigorously than natives. See his "Form and Matter: Archaizing Reform in Sixth-century China," in *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200-600*, ed. Scott Pearce, Audrey Spiro and Patricia Ebrey (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), 149-78. I thank Scott Pearce for this reference.

Kong also tells us that Zhedu "used Confucianism to advance his career."[75] This same phrase was also used to describe Zhedu's father, Xie Wenzhi, and brother Xie Yuli! The term "Confucian enterprise" (*ruye*) generally meant those things (texts) that Confucianists studied and became experts in, and this phrase conveys the image of these Uyghurs as experts in Confucian texts and ideology (probably also members of the Neo-Confucian Daoxue movement of the time?) who understood the importance of this position to their social mobility.

Kong was certainly aware that the Xies were Uyghur *Semuren*, as we can see by the reference to Gaochang in Kong's title of his essay. His high regard for the Xie family is thus especially remarkable since he lambasts the behavior of *Semuren* in other essays of his. Identifying Xie Zhedu as a *Semuren* undoubtedly served Kong's purposes, but it also acts to highlight once again the multiple networks of power that defined life for *Semuren* like Xie Zhedu; anyone who came from Gaochang would automatically have been part of the *Semuren* network, but this Uyghur and his family were also members in good standing of the social elite built around Chinese cultural (and textual) tradition.

Zhedu did not try to hide or excise his Uyghur or *Semuren* identity, and judging from Kong's piece, his association with Gaochang obviously did not do him any harm. In fact, it may have invoked images of a highly cultured, polyethnic family, and it was probably also a way for Zhedu and other Xie family members to assert their ties to other prominent Uyghur *Semuren* individuals and families.

But lest we think that Xie Zhedu was only known in Liyang, other prominent Chinese writers from different

[75] The text reads: "Yi ruye qijia" 以儒業起家. Kong, *Zhizheng zhiji*, 117.

parts of the country also wrote pieces in his honor, such as poems and essays that mention his appointment to local or regional office, or that document Zhedu's family and private life. Some of these provide unique information on Zhedu, and all of them illustrate the high esteem in which Zhedu was held by his Chinese contemporaries. In this regard, they furnish evidence of the extent to which the Xie family, and especially their most famous member, Xie Zhedu, traversed the different worlds of politics and culture, and functioned as a type of national literati in China .

For example, the Jiangxi scholar Zhao Pang 趙彷 (1319–1369) wrote a preface to a poem that marked Zhedu's appointment to an office that is nowhere else recorded, as a Vice-Minister in the Bureau of the Supervisor of Agriculture (*sinong shaoqing*).[76] This preface is an important piece in Zhedu's history as a *semu* official and as a member of the cultural elite. First, none of the official sources document Zhedu's appointment to this position in the agriculture office in Jiangzhe province in the late Yuan. The Mongols implemented the Office of Grand Supervisors of Agriculture to promote agriculture in north China after their conquest was complete. Originally known as the Office for the Encouragement of Agriculture, established in 1261, it became the Grand Supervisor of Agriculture in 1271. After the conquest of south China was completed, branches of this office were set up there.

[76] Zhao Pang, "Fu Sinong shaoqing" 赴司農少卿 [Sent as Vice-Minister in the Bureau of the Supervisor of Agriculture], in *Dongshan cungao* 東山存稿 [Collected works of Zhao Pang] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1971) 2.51a–52b. Zhao was known mainly for his erudition in the classics and likely knew the Xie family, having studied under a scholar who lived in Yuzhang, Jiangxi Province, the same place where Xie Wenzhi lived. Zhao did not hold office during the Yuan, but was one of the compilers of the *Yuanshi* in the first year of the Ming. Zhao was a prolific writer and several of his works exist in anthologies.

However, rather than promote new agricultural developments, the office in south China was focused on stopping the growth of large landlords at the expense of government and private lands. According to Zhao's preface, Zhedu was assigned to be Junior Lord in the agriculture office concurrent with his position as Assistant Grand Councilor in the Jiangzhe provincial government. We get some idea of his duties from this preface:

> [He] is in charge of arranging the affairs of fields and villages... tells everyone to cultivate trees and shrubs, to dredge out drains and ditches, to build public roads, and to loan out oxen and grain [to those in need].... In the Zhizheng era [1341–1368] this system of ranks of officials in the Grand Office of Agriculture was begun, and the officials managed both high officers and subordinate officials.... the master Xie [Zhedu] looks after both elites and commoners (士民), and his virtue is often praised [by the people], who sing songs of joy at their situation as they work in the fields.[77]

This preface tells us a great deal about Xie Zhedu and Yuan government. First, as we have seen above, Zhao gives us an exact date for his appointment in the Jiangzhe provincial government, something that was not reported in any gazetteer or other official source. Second, Zhao's review of the history of the agriculture office provides details on an obscure aspect of regional government in Yuan China, and some idea of what the tasks and responsibilities an official of Zhedu's rank may have been.

Another important literatus from south China who wrote in honor of Xie Zhedu was a Confucian scholar sympathetic to Daoism, Yu Ji 虞集 (1272–1348), who wrote a seven-character *shi*-style poem to honor Zhedu's

[77] Zhao Pang, *Dongshan cungao* 2.51a–52b.

promotion to the rank of censor.[78] Yu Ji had a long career as an official at the highest levels of government in the Yuan dynasty. He was appointed to be a director of the National University and also served in the Hanlin Academy. In 1329 he was appointed as a Writer-Academician in the Kuizhang Pavilion (*Kuizhang ge shishu xuesheng*), where he directed the compilation of the Yuan legal code, the *Jingshi dadian* ("Great Institutions of Statecraft").[79]

Yu Ji's poem, titled "In Honor of Xie Shinan's Appointment to the Western Censorate," is a paean to Zhedu.[80] In this short poem, Zhedu is portrayed as

[78] Yu Ji was also from Jiangxi Province and studied under the equally famous Wu Cheng. He was an eminent Confucian thinker and writer, but is especially interesting because of his support of a school of Daoism, Xuanjiao, that had been created by an edict issued by the Mongols. For information on Yu Ji and his role in Confucian-influenced Daoism in Yuan China, see K'o-K'uan Sun, "Yü Chi and Southern Taoism during the Yüan Period," in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 212–54; and John D. Langlois, Jr., "Yü Chi and his Mongol Sovereign: The Scholar as Apologist," *Journal of Asian Studies* 38 (1978): 99–116.

[79] The Academy of the Kuizhang Pavilion (*Kuizhang ge*) was established by the emperor Togh Temür (Wenzong, r. 1328–29, 1330–33) in 1329 to house his collection of Chinese art and books. Wenzong was very interested in Chinese culture, and strove to be educated in the classics. To that end he employed Chinese scholars to give lectures, and it was in this environment that the legal code *Jingshi dadian* was compiled by Chinese and *Semuren* scholars. For more information on this academy and the details concerning the compilation of the law code in 1331, see Jiang Yihan 姜一涵, *Yuandai Kuizhangge ji Kuizhang renwu* 元代奎章閣及奎章人物 [Yuan Dynasty Kuizhang Pavilion and personnel] (Taibei: Liangjing chuban shiye, 1981); Ch'en, *Chinese Legal Tradition Under the Mongols*, 33–35; and Farquhar, *Government in China*, 131.

[80] Yu Ji, "He Xie Shinan chu Xitai yushi" 和偰世南除西臺御史 [In honor of Xie Shinan on his assignment to the Western Censorate], in *Daoyuan yigao* 道園遺稿 [Collected works of Yu Ji] (Siku Quanshu ed.; rpt. Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1974), 3.10a. The

exceptionally well versed in the culture and the law of the day, and perfectly suited for his job in the censorate:

> For ten years at the Phoenix Well
> First in the exams, and now a seventh-grade official.
> Who can match his ability in eliminating the heterodox from that which he reads,
> His knowledge of literature and the law approaches that of the gods.
> Commoners and officials all met up with him often in the countryside,
> He came and went from the court without ceasing.
> Accused men come from myriad distances to his office,
> In their official vestments they lay before him their written petitions.[81]

This poem is interesting for several reasons. First, it reflects one of Zhedu's early official assignments, although the poem is not dated, and we only get a general sense of Zhedu's duties as an official in the censorate (relayed by stock images of the wise official that were commonly used in *shi*-style poems). Of more importance is the fact that such an important figure as Yu Ji wrote a poem that lauded Zhedu's knowledge and abilities. We cannot necessarily deduce from this poem that Yu Ji and Zhedu were personal friends. But it does reveal Zhedu's prominent reputation. The important point here, as with the other poems that we have analyzed, is that Xie family members were known by some of the most important Chinese writers and thinkers of their time. They had established reputations as men learned in the Confucian tradition, who were able to implement that learning in the public arena.

Western Pavilion of the Censorate (*Xitai yushi*) to which Zhedu had been assigned was located in Nanjing, and was in charge of the censorate in the four western provinces of Shaanxi, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan. See Farquhar, *Government of China*, 243.

[81] Yu Ji, *Daoyuan yigao* 3.10a.

It is also interesting to note that one of Zhedu's sons was appointed as an official in the Kuizhang Pavilion. Some of his more notable colleagues in the Kuizhang Pavilion included Ouyang Xuan and Xu Youren 許有壬 (1287–1364), who also wrote a poem in Zhedu's honor. The poems and essays written for Zhedu, if taken as a corpus, outline the intellectual and cultural community in which the Xies moved.

Last, but certainly not least, Xie Zhedu also participated in that most classic of Chinese literati activities, and a basic demand on all in official life, poetry writing. Like his elder brother, Zhedu wrote *shi*-style poems; three of them were included in the *Shi Yu ji* collection of Yuli's poetry that has been preserved in the comprehensive *Yuanshi xuan* (Anthology of Yuan Dynasty Poetry).[82] All three of Zhedu's poems are short poems written in the *shi* style favored by Yuan literati writers. They do not reveal much at all about Zhedu, or even about the subjects of the poems. They do, however, help fill in our picture of Zhedu as a Chinese-style literatus.

Two of Zhedu's poems, written as prefaces to be attached to paintings of nature, especially capture his image as Chinese gentleman. The first, "Colophon to Zhao Qianli's 'Painting of the Night Tide,'" is interesting not for its content but for what it reveals about Zhedu's activities as a Chinese-style *shidafu*, writing colophons to accompany paintings, in this case, a painting made by a descendant of the long-defunct Song ruling house. Zhedu's poem reads, "The sound of wind and the dashing of waves against myriad piles of snow, striking the shore and falling in the silver moonlight. Wild geese take flight over the river in

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[82] This section of the *Yuanshi xuan* is titled "Xie canzheng Zhedu" 偰參政哲篤 [Assistant Grand Councilor Xie Zhedu], followed by a brief biographical sketch of Zhedu. Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 4a. For background on this work, see my discussion above of Xie Yuli's poetry in the *Yuanshi xuan* anthology.

the autumn, and there are no clouds in sight, only a clear moon hanging in the sky."[83] Had a Chinese person written this, it might have been interpreted at the time as lingering sense of loyalty to the Song Dynasty. Since Xie Zhedu was the author, however, it is more likely that he was proving his artistic credentials and knowledge of Chinese history to his Chinese peers. In any event, however we interpret the poem, the fact that Zhedu wrote poetry to accompany these kinds of paintings indicates his activity as a cultured gentleman.

Zhedu's third poem in this collection was another colophon meant to accompany a painting of bamboo, and is similarly evocative of a visual scene.[84] "The roots of the old trees that are bent at an angle are coiled about a huge rock, and a clear frost coating the bark encases the green moss. Those unusual and rare painters of old are no longer, and who can appreciate their work now?"[85] While these poems do not reveal much of Xie Zhedu's life as a political elite, they do reveal his familiarity with Chinese poetic modes and painting. The fact that he wrote poems quite like those of any Chinese literatus, and which were thought good enough to include in this anthology of Yuan era poetry, also implies that he was conversant in this important marker of Chinese culture.

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[83] Xie Zhedu, "Ti Zhao Qianli yechao tu" 題趙千里夜潮圖, in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan, geng*, 4a. Qianli was the courtesy name (*zi*) of Zhao Boju 趙伯駒, a seventh generation grandson of Song Taizu, the founder of the Song Dynasty. Zhao Boju was known as a painter of landscapes and people in the Song period. This poem is also punctuated and annotated in Wang Shupan, et al., *Yuandai shaoshu minzu shixuan*, 144.

[84] "Ti Shang Defu Li Zundao zuo shutu" 題商德符李遵道作樹圖 [Colophon to the painting of bamboo done by Shang Defu and Li Zundao], in Gu, *Yuanshi xuan*, "Shi Yu ji," 4a.

[85] Xie, "Ti Shang Defu Li Zundao zuo shutu," 4a–b.

Conclusion

Xie Wenzhi's sons were the fourth generation of this Uyghur family to live permanently in China. By the time they were adults they had come a long way from their ancestors who first migrated to China under the supervision of the Mongols. Because of the path laid out by their father as a successful *Semuren* official and member in good standing in the communities into which he settled, every one of Wenzhi's sons had successful, if sometimes short, careers as officials and reputations as learned men who got along well with the most prominent of their Chinese contemporaries. Xie Wenzhi's decision to ultimately settle in southeast China was undoubtedly one of the most important sources of his family's well-rounded success.

Long before he retired and settled in Liyang, Wenzhi was aware of the potential benefits of associating more fully with Chinese culture and the Chinese literati. He carefully constructed an identity for himself and his family as cultured elites who had just as much in common with other Chinese literati as they did with their *Semuren* peers.

By the time his sons reached maturity, the Xie family had lived in China for four generations, and had sustained their status as powerful members of the *Semuren* political elite amidst a changing set of conditions that included the integration of south China into the larger Mongol empire, and changes in Mongol administration and Yuan society that allowed more Chinese to participate as political elites. But the quality of life in China also went into decline, especially in the last decades of Mongol rule (especially evident in the works of late Yuan writers like Kong Qi, who laments the breakdown of social order in southeast China). No doubt sensitive to these changes and to the possibility that their political relationships with the Mongol ruling elite may endanger their personal power and security, Xie Wenzhi's sons built on their father's success as a patron of Chinese community life and social values,

seeking ways to secure their futures that would complement their Semuren status. They did so by acquiring status as members of the social elite, who were recognized and accepted within the community of wealthy, renowned southern Chinese literati. Their success in this strategy can be measured by the wide recognition this family received as the "Family who had the Three Virtuous Ones and Six *Jinshi*."

Unfortunately, by the time the last of these six Xie siblings died the long declining Yuan dynasty was on the verge of collapse. The social and political order began its final slide into collapse by the mid-1350s, just when their sons were entering service as *Semuren* officials. By 1356 Zhu Yuanzhang had captured Nanjing and made it his capital and base of operations. Places like Liyang were feeling the effects of the chaotic situation, and this is reflected in the histories of the next generation of Xie family members. Only three Xie men in that next generation received the *jinshi* degree; Zhedu's son, Xie Boliaosun 偰百遼孫 (1319–1360) in 1345, and two of Xie Shanzhu's sons, Zhengzong 正宗 in 1345 and Arslan 阿兒思蘭 in 1348. One of Zhedu's sons, Xie Si 偰斯, had a prominent career as a high official in the first decades of the new Ming government.[86] Xie Boliaosun emigrated to

[86] His first office after being admitted into the Yuan civil service via the *yin* inheritance privilege was as a magistrate in Suzhou, where he was when Zhu Yuanzhang took control of the area in 1366. Xie Si was made a vice director in the Ming Ministry of War (*bingbuyuan wailang* 兵部員外郎) in 1368, and then a Secretary of Seals in the Office of Palace Seals (*shangbaosi fubaolang* 尚寶司符寶郎). He was sent in that capacity as a Ming envoy to the Koryo court in 1370, and he retired from office in 1380. See Lienche Tu Fang, "Hsieh Ssu," in *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644*, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), Vol. ?, 559–61; and Gui Qipeng 桂栖鹏 and Shang Yanbin 尚衍斌 , "Tan Mingchu zhongchao jiaowang zhongde liangwei shizhe – Xie Changshou, Xie Si" 谈明初中朝交往中的两位使者 – 偰长寿，偰斯 [A Discussion of contacts between two envoys in the early Ming – Xie Changshou and Xie Si], *Minzu yanjiu* 1995.5: 65–69.

Korea sometime in the last years of the Yuan where he and his son became officials at the Koryô court. A branch of the Xie family, descendants of Boliaosun, still live in Korea today.[87] The six Xie *jinshi* were the last Xies who served their entire careers under the Mongols.

[87] For a history of Xie Boliaosun and his descendants in Korea, see Shang Yanbin 尚衍斌, "Weiwuer Xieshi jiazu yanjiu" 畏兀儿偰氏家族研究 [Research on the Uyghur Xie clan], in his *Yuandai Weiwuer yanjiu* 元代畏兀儿研究 [Research on Yuan Dynasty Uyghurs] (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1999), 253–62.

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Conclusion

One of the most intriguing aspects of the Mongol empire is the extensive use of captured or submitted personnel in military operations alongside the Mongols, as tutors and craftsmen who worked for the Mongol elite, and as administrators of other conquered populations. This was a necessary strategy if the relatively small number of Mongols wished to continue to extract the maximum amount of resources from the societies they had conquered (successfully argued by early advisors like the famous Jurchen Yelü Chucai). In fact, it may be argued that one of the main reasons the Mongols were so successful in establishing and maintaining their world empire was this use of foreign personnel as administrators over the various sedentary societies they conquered.[1] Such was certainly the case in China, where the *Semuren* personnel formed an indispensable core of the Mongol administration.

Since the *Semuren* played such an important role in Mongol China, it is imperative that we know who they were and what they did in order to really understand that period of Chinese history. This task, which is at the heart of this book, is not as easy as it seems, since it involves a somewhat new approach to the history of Mongol China. Rather than viewing China during the period of Mongol rule as a society roughly divided between two opposing groups of conquerors and conquered, let us see it as a complex terrain that consisted of a variety of partially overlapping networks of social power in which individuals could choose among a *repertoire* of options depending on

[1] It may also be argued that reliance on a large group of non-Mongol personnel, which made possible the existence of the Mongol world empire, was also ultimately the cause of its undoing, since the Mongols had thereby forsaken one of their chief sources of strength, their nomadic life and ways. This is a topic well beyond the scope of this book.

the situation.[2] At the broadest level, this approach seeks to uncover how Mongols, *Semuren* and Chinese all interacted in the web of networks of political and social power in China at that time. Because they occupied a kind of liminal political and social space as, simultaneously, subjects and masters, the stories of the prominent Uyghurs presented in this study provide an unusual opportunity to see how these networks of power operated at close range.

The *Semuren* were obviously part of the conquering political elite, and with the Mongols held all of the important positions of real power in China. But they were also subjects of those same Mongols, a fact constantly reinforced by the Mongol social classification scheme and legal code imposed in China, as well as the systematic retention by Mongols of all of the top civil and military positions.

Because they governed on the Mongols' behalf, many *Semuren* also came into regular contact with the native Chinese population, especially aristocrats. While generally excluded from the ranks of power, Chinese literati – especially those in the south – retained substantial social and cultural power in their own communities. And in the later Yuan, such men began to assume roles as scholar-officials, with appointment to some of the more important advisory and ideological imperial bureaus such as the Hanlin Academy. The question of the social power of the *Semuren* in this arena is much more complex than their political power; they certainly held real power over the

[2] Robert Hymes's description of culture as a *repertoire*, "not a smoothly coherent system but a lumpy and varied historical accumulation of models, systems, rules, and other symbolic resources, differing and unevenly distributed, upon which people draw and through which they negotiate life with one another in ways intelligibly related to their own experiences, places in society, and purposes" is especially pertinent to my description of life for the *Semuren* in Mongol China. See his *Way and Byway: Taoism, Local Religion, and Models of Divinity in Sung and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 5.

Chinese population, but as they became aficionados of Chinese culture and ways, they came increasingly under the sway of the most prominent Chinese scholars, writers and literati of the time.[3] At a fundamental level, their success in both realms depended on the kinds of resources available to them and how they used them.

This approach pays particular attention to the types of resources, or capital, that elites possess and the strategies they employ to maximize that capital to their advantage. It draws heavily on the work of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. As I have already described above, Bourdieu developed a "science of practices" that tries to uncover a person's actions meant to maximize his material or symbolic profit.[4] Bourdieu sees all action as "interested" or aimed at achieving a specific social goal, and central to this concept of interested action – or action as strategy – is the notion of the political economy of culture, where actions all have relevance to one's position in the social hierarchy, and depend on one's resources, cultural capital, social capital, economic capital, and symbolic capital (see my discussion of this above).[5]

Bourdieu's science of practices, especially his thesis that all actions are embedded in strategies that will maximize a person's place in existing hierarchies of power by tapping different forms of "capital", is a useful way to

[3] A third network of social power that this book cannot address is the competition for power and resources among the various constituent *Semuren* groups. Much further research of other groups of *Semuren*, as well as a fuller study of the Uyghurs themselves, will be required before we can adequately address this issue.

[4] See Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage, 1970; rpt. with new introduction, 1977), for an excellent restatement of Bourdieu's theory of the reproduction of elites in society.

[5] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1983; rpt. 1986), 241–58.

analyze Mongol China. Factors such as social connections and level of education are just as important as material wealth. Recognizing these hidden forms of capital allows us to conduct a much more nuanced analysis of the ways that elites were produced and reproduced than old models based on simple economic or class distinctions.

Moreover, this approach is applicable to the premodern world, as Michael Chamberlain has already demonstrated in his pathbreaking work on aristocrats in medieval Damascus.[6] In fact, he is perhaps the first scholar to apply Bourdieu's concept of cultural and social capital to premodern social history, and I have drawn from his study in my own work because of interesting similarities between the medieval Middle East and Mongol China. One of the most striking of these parallels is the patrimonial nature of medieval Middle East society, and the fact that there was a noticeable lack of formal institutions through which elites established and maintained their identity and power. Chamberlain studies how elites in Damascus acquired and passed on status, and some parallels can easily be drawn between the Middle East and Mongol China (or, for that matter, other parts of the Mongol empire).

Chamberlain studies biographical materials of literati to inquire how those persons gained and maintained their status and power in Damascene society. He concludes that they had one especially important resource at their command, knowledge, and used knowledge, especially literacy, as types of social and cultural capital, to survive and thrive as members of the elite, and to pass their status to their descendants. He finds that the medieval Middle East was patrimonial in nature, and that status did not depend solely on one's place in formal institutions, such as a civil bureaucracy. One of the most interesting aspects of

[6] Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

his study (and model for this book) is the use of biography by the Damascene elite as the single most important method by which they manipulated and displayed their cultural capital, their knowledge. He concludes that biographies served as unique vehicles for the elite to imagine and construct their social universe.

Chamberlain's approach is applicable to studies of the *Semuren* in Mongol China, since they were clearly specialists in the same kinds of technologies of knowledge as their Damascene counterparts, and they engaged in similar literate pursuits, especially using biographically oriented writings to manipulate their identities. But perhaps most important, his approach suggests that "examining the practices of social reproduction enables us to establish interrelations between domains that historians have considered distinct."[7] Connecting what have been assumed to be separate networks of social power in Mongol China should help us see how the fusion of nomadic and sedentary social systems affected each of the several groups brought together by the Mongol conquest.

One of the major yet largely unexamined consequences of the submission of the Gaochang Uyghurs to the Mongols was the development by that diaspora elite of techniques and unique forms of capital by which they produced and reproduced their status. What happened when these largely sedentary, highly cultured personnel were assimilated into the Mongol nomadic social structure, with its very different orientation of hierarchies of power and ways of obtaining and transmitting status? Certainly, those members of the Uyghur elite who were physically relocated to serve throughout the Mongol empire now had to conform to a nomadic-oriented social system that originally had few entry points for outsiders. The Gaochang Uyghurs already had a well-established system of bureaucratic and

[7] Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice*, 22.

honorific titles of Turkic, Persian, Tokharian and Chinese origin that defined elite status and power. Once the Uyghurs submitted and were integrated into the Mongol hierarchy, they were subjected to a very different form of social organization within unfamiliar constellations of power relationships. In order to maintain even some semblance of their former status in this new social arena, the *Semuren* had to adapt to this new situation, and they did so by means of the only resources available to them as diaspora people, their social and cultural capital.

When the Uyghurs were sent into sedentary areas conquered by the Mongols as officials, the situation became even more complex for them. Now, the *Semuren* political elite had power over the natives, but if they wanted to integrate into local social circles in China, and compete in that arena of social power, they had to compete with the Chinese on terms other than the exercise of raw power. They could only become recognized according to terms laid down and accepted by the Chinese *shidafu*. One of the larger questions that frames this book is to compare the strategies used by *Semuren* to maintain and/or construct identities as political and social elites in the Mongol, and in the Chinese arenas.

The first Uyghurs inducted into service came from a largely urban society and controlled several different kinds of resources of value to the nomadic Mongols, including their writing system, their experience in administering an ethnically and socially diverse population that ranged from nomadic to sedentary groups, the troops that they could command on behalf of the Mongols, and their credentials as men of high culture. Their social capital included their explicit association with the Uyghur *idiqut* who had submitted voluntarily to Chinggis Qan, and their own network of relationships amongst themselves. Acquiring these men as advisors provided Chinggis Qan a certain degree of spiritual and ideological legitimacy as a grand

qan, but he also put them to good use in military campaigns, as administrators, and as imperial tutors.

This pattern of engagement is clear from the case studies examined here. All of the men associated with the Uyghur *idiqut* in 1209 were immediately inducted into the Mongol administration, which consisted mainly of members of the Mongol imperial clan. These men served in a wide variety of civil and military roles, but most of them were distinguished by their fluency in their native written language.

But this early pattern of *Semuren* duties changed over time, especially after the center of power shifted from Qarakhorum to China proper under the last grand qan Qubilai, who began his reign in 1260. When he completed the conquest of Song China in the 1270s, he reunited all of traditional China for the first time since the Tang period, and opened the south, long the economic and intellectual heartland, to foreign domination. Now the Mongols controlled all aspects of society in the south as well as the north, and the Chinese elites were cut off from their traditional avenues of social power as members of the imperial civil bureaucracy even there. Mongols and *Semuren* dominated the highest offices, and the Chinese personnel had to be satisfied with lower level positions. In fact, it was probably the imposition of the Mongol social and administrative system that had the most profound impact on the Chinese population at the time.

But while the Mongols and *Semuren* personnel now held political and military power throughout China and determined the fate of the Chinese population, the Chinese remained the arbiters of their own culture, at least within their communities in southern China. If the Mongols and *Semuren* in China wished to gain the acceptance and cooperation of the Chinese population in this new era, then they would need to rely on something besides the exercise of raw power. The Mongol qans adopted a *realpolitik*

stance in southern China, and the *Semuren* who were sent to south China shared in this shift.

In the cases examined in this book, virtually all of the Uyghurs who served in southern China saw their careers and lives change in some important ways, not least of which was a gradual distinction between the civil and military spheres of power. Members of the Uyghur families we have examined ended up serving exclusively in the civil bureaucracy by the time they had been in south China for one generation. This should not be read as evidence that all Uyghur *Semuren* became primarily civilian officials (since there are other examples of Uyghurs in Mongol China who continued to serve in military capacities). But it is interesting to note that by the early fourteenth century, the Mongol administration began to look more and more like the traditional Chinese system, with strict division between civilian and military spheres and a formal hierarchy of power where title of office correlated with one's power and duties.

Many of these same *Semuren* also began to interact in meaningful ways with Chinese aristocrats in the south, for example, by having their sons educated in the Chinese tradition, buying property, and establishing new permanent residences there. Among the cases examined in this book, this all happened after these Uyghurs had been transferred south. And why did they do this? Probably for several interrelated reasons. They were undoubtedly genuinely attracted to Chinese cultural modes and ways, as we can see in examples such as Xie Wenzhi, who is said to have got the bug as a very young boy. They were probably also canny, sensing a diminution of Mongol power in the south and over time. Perhaps they even sensed that Mongol rule of China would not last so very long, and were thus positioning themselves to be able to survive a future loss of Mongol political authority in China?

The stories of these Uyghur *Semuren* provide us with a unique view onto the process of elite production in Mongol China. First, these *Semuren* all seem to have built and sustained their status on a national level. Since *Semuren* were moved around regularly in their positions, it is not surprising that that group constituted a national political elite. But they also reconstituted a national social elite of the type that Chinese scholar-officials had not enjoyed since the days of the Northern Song. These Uyghurs circulated throughout the country in their postings, and maintained social alliances with other *Semuren* and Chinese literati in similar scope.

Most of the Uyghurs examined here had at least two marriages, one with a *Semuren* partner and one with a Chinese partner. In most cases, it does not seem these people married within their locality.[8] Rather than focusing on marriage within one's home district, marriage within a status group seems to have been the driving force behind those unions. This can be seen, for example, in the marriages entered into by members of the Lian and Xie families.

The Uyghur *Semuren* we have examined also associated with the most prominent Chinese literati of the time, regardless of where they lived. It is true that some relations forged between Uyghurs and Chinese were based on local community ties. For example, several Chinese writers from Jiangxi appear to have developed friendships with various Xie family members, not surprising since Xie Wenzhi and his family lived there for some thirty years. And on the other hand, while Uyghur *Semuren* may have tended to marry outside their own locality, it does not necessarily follow that Chinese elites also did this in any significant numbers. After all, *Semuren* probably would

[8] Much more work needs to be done to confirm whether this was the case, since there was relatively little data on the marriage partners of these Uyghur *Semuren*.

have been moved about much more frequently and more widely than their Chinese counterparts. Whether or not some members of the Chinese elite in Mongol China also adopted a more national strategy to retain and build up their own status and social power, the fact that this particular group of *Semuren* did so at least problematizes the assumption that all elites in Mongol China relied on purely localist strategies and relationships to assert their social power.

What do these case studies of Uyghur *Semuren* reveal, in the final analysis, about the process of elite production and reproduction in Mongol China? In China, at any time, elites were formed in two ways. First, the imperial government had the power to name any individual it wished to positions of power and authority, and often did so. Elites generated by imperial fiat were acceptable to society because of the legitimacy of the imperial government in the eyes of the educated population. Those people entered the stream of upward mobility solely on the basis of imperial choice, though that imperial choice may well have been based on merit or ability, as well as on other factors such as ethnicity and clan or political alliances.

This method contrasted with the second way in which elites were formed in China, by a hierarchy of status that was generated by Chinese society itself on the basis of commonly accepted values and the ideal of merit and ability, which was in theory open to almost all men in China. In this system men achieved the highest level of status by meeting the *shidafu* qualifications. These were assessed by the state, especially from the Tang period on, primarily through the three-level examination system. The same *shidafu* qualities also determined men of slightly lower status who, while not passing the state examinations, imitated the *shidafu* in their lifestyles because of their wealth (derived mainly from land ownership).

The Mongols initially relied almost exclusively on the first pattern to generate elite groups, although even before they had conquered the south there was a half-hearted attempt to reinvigorate some of the traditional Chinese methods. In fact, they adhered quite closely to their own nomadic customs in generating elites, especially in such institutions as the qan's bodyguard and inheritance of office. Over time, and especially once the Mongols had brought all of China under their control, they began to use and reinvigorate some of the Chinese systems and hierarchies of status. Chinese, but also some *Semuren* and Mongols, also took advantage of these systems of upward social mobility. We have seen several examples of Uyghurs who were admitted into the bureaucracy and advanced in office on the basis of their having competed in the civil service examinations. But the Mongols continued to rely on their own power as the imperial government to select elites, even as they instituted some of the Chinese institutions. This dual system of producing elites and social mobility was one of the ways in which China under Mongol rule differed so dramatically from native Chinese dynasties.

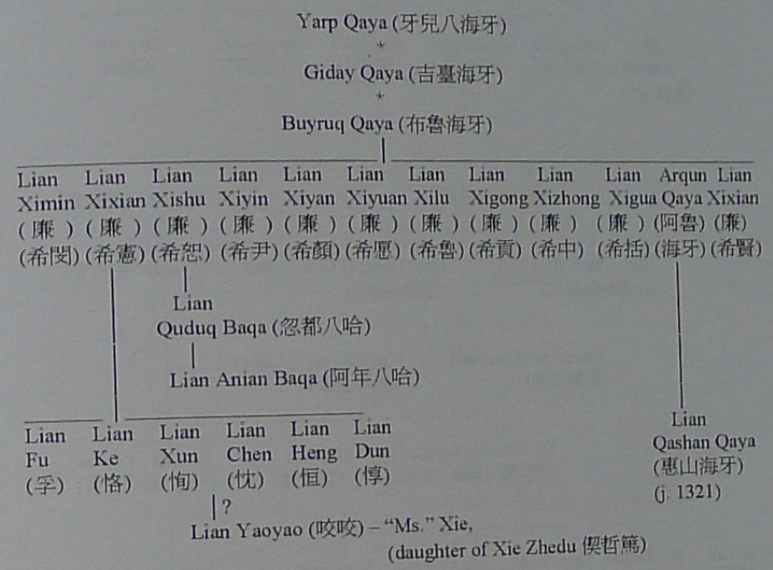
The question remains, why did any *Semuren* feel the need to compete in the Chinese system of elite production, and have their elite status determined by mechanisms and standards based on Chinese cultural norms and standards? After all, they already had preferential access to power simply because they were *Semuren*. Moreover, all of the individuals seen in this book could, and often did, claim office by inheritance.

If the stories of these Uyghur *Semuren* indicate larger patterns in Mongol China, then it appears that their liminal existence, which originated with their diaspora experience, prodded them to seek arenas in which they could garner the most social power. Since they already had the power invested in them by their Mongol masters as members of the political elite, they sought to develop

complementary loci of power as social elites among the Chinese population that could be exercised for different purposes among a different group. These Uyghurs were drawn to Chinese culture out of an apparently genuine interest, and their history and ongoing experience as men of culture and learning undoubtedly equipped them to satisfy the cultural, social and intellectual standards set down by the Chinese literati. By investing materially, socially and intellectually in that national community of Chinese literati, they became part of a group that survived and, to varying degrees, prospered in China long after their first benefactors, the Mongols, had departed the scene.

Genealogical Chart 1:

Yuan Dynasty Lian Family



["j" denotes year of *jinshi* degree.]

Genealogical Chart 2:

Xie Family according to Ouyang Xuan's history

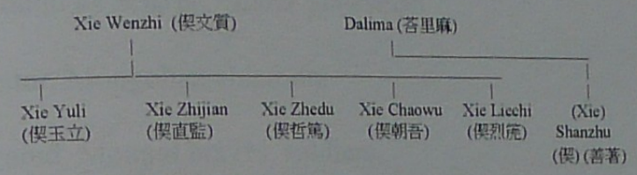


** j. = year of *jinshi* degree

[偰 is first syllable of 偰輦傑, Selenga River, putative ancestral home of this Uyghur clan]

Genealogical Chart 3:

Xie Family's "Six *Jinshi*"



Glossary

anda. M. Sworn brother.

ata dudu 阿大都督. "Elder Statesman."

ba'atur. Mongolian chieftain.

baγatud. Mongol braves, soldiers.

benji 本紀. Basic Annals; usually a section of a Chinese dynastic history.

bianxiu 編修. Compiler of the third class in the Hanlin Academy, rank 8.

bishechi 必闍赤; M. bichigechi. Scribe of the second class, or secretary.

boshi 博士. Erudite, rank 7, in the National University.

canzhi zhengshi 參知政事. Second privy councillor, or assistant administrator, in a secretariat, rank 2.

Chang [zhang] 丈. Unit of length; one zhang equals ten chi [ch'ih].

Chaoqing Dafu 朝請大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Twentieth Class."

Chengwu lang 承務郎. Honorary title "Gentleman of the Fourth Class."

chengxi 承襲. Recruitment by inheritance of a specific office.

Ch'ih [chi] 尺. Unit of length, commonly translated as a "foot."

Congshi lang 從事郎. Honorary title "Gentleman of the Eighth Class."

dachen 大臣. Grand minister in the Chinese imperial court.

da chengxiang 大承相. Grand, or senior, councillor-in-chief, rank 1.

da duanshiguan 大斷事官. Grand judge.

da dudu 大都督. Chief military commissioner in charge of the military commission for Mongolian troops stationed in Shandong and Hebei provinces, rank 2.

daizhi 待制. Compiler of the first class in the Hanlin Academy, rank 5.

dajun 大郡. "Superior prefecture" in Yuan China.

dao 道. "Circuit" in Yuan China; ranked above the prefecture, or route see (see lu and fu).

darqan (C. dalahan 答剌罕). "Free noble"; honorary title originally conferred for military merit, but extended during the Yuan period to people with administrative skill.

darughachi 達魯花赤. An agent or overseer in Mongol China.

da zongzhengfu 大宗正府. High court of justice for Mongols in China; functional during period 1311-1336.

duanshiguan 斷事官. A judge in the Mongol Chinese civil administration.

dudu 都督 (T. tutuq). Commander-in-chief, or supervisor-in-chief.

duhufu 都護府. Court of justice for Uyghurs in Mongol China; begun 1281.

dutong 都統. Commander; sometimes also used for civilian regional governor.

duzhuan yunyanshi 都轉運鹽使. Superintendent of regional salt tax office.

du zongguan fu 都總管府. A headquarters for control of military forces at the Yuan capital Dadu, or the title of the supervisor of a nonmilitary or semimilitary agency in various places in Yuan China.

Fanyang junhou 范陽郡侯. "Marquis of Fanyang Prefecture"; a typical posthumous honorific title awarded to a man of distinction in Mongol China.

Fengyi Dafu 奉議大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Twenty-fourth Class."

fu 府. "Prefecture," or "superior prefecture"; only used in special cases to denote a Yuan prefecture. See also lu.

fudu yuanshuai 副都元帥. Assistant regional military commissioner.

gaimu 改墓. To transfer or move a tomb, usually an ancestral tomb, to a new place in order to establish one's presence in that new community.

ger. A round felt tent.

gongbu 工部. Ministry of Works in the Yuan court, in charge of all sorts of governmental works, including imperial artisans and workshops.

Guanglu Dafu 光祿大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Third Class."

guiji 桂籍. The imperial register of jinshi degree holders.

guizi 桂子. Lit. "branch of the cassia"; a term that denoted a jinshi degree holder.

guoshiyuan bianxiu 國史院編修. Compiler of the third class in the Imperial History Bureau, rank 8.

Guoxiang 國相. High state minister.

gürkhan. "Universal qan"; title claimed by Qara Khitai ruler.

gu-shi 古詩. Old style shi poetry.

Hanlin daizhi 翰林待制. Compiler of the first class in the Hanlin Academy, rank 5 in the Yuan administration.

Hanlin chengzhi 翰林承旨. Chancellor, or recipient of edicts, in Hanlin Academy, rank 1 in the Yuan administration.

Hanlin Guoshiyuan chengzhi 翰林國史院承旨. Chancellor, or recipient of edicts in the Yuan Hanlin and Historiography Academy, rank 1 in the Yuan administration (usually shortened as Hanlin chengzhi).

Hanlin xueshi chengzhi 翰林學士承旨. Chancellor and academician in the Hanlin Academy.

Hanlin zhi xueshi 翰林直學士. Auxiliary academician in the Yuan era Hanlin Academy, rank 3.

Hanren 漢人. Chinese person/people.

hao 號. A literary name, often adopted as an alternative name in China.

Hebei Hanmin 河北漢民. People from north China in Yuan social order.

Hubu shangshu 戶部尚書. Minister of revenue in the Yuan court, rank 3.

Huihui 回回. A Muslim; in Yuan era, usually refers to a person from Central Asia.

Hui Min 惠敏. "Kind and Intelligent." A typical posthumous style name of a person of high social standing in Mongol China.

idiqut; C. iduhu 亦都護. "Sacred Majesty." Title of Gaochang Uyghur rulers after 840.

jian 監. Director, in directorates, institutes and courts.

jiancheng 監承. A deputy director in the National University, rank 7.

jiaochao 交鈔. "Exchange note"; paper currency in Yuan China.

Jiayi dafu 嘉議大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Thirteenth Class."

jinchiyi 金螭椅. Gold dragon chair; sign of Mongol imperial authority.

jingli 經歷. Registrar; a low level service official in charge of the registry, through which all official documents passed, in a bureau headquarters, rank 5 to 9 in Yuan era.

Jingshi dadian 經世大典. "Great Institutions of Statecraft," also known as "Compendium for administering the empire," 1330-31.

jingyan 經筵. Emperor's classics colloquium.

jinhufu 金虎符. The golden tiger tablet, a sign of Mongol imperial authority.

jinshi 進士. "Presented scholar"; highest of the three civil service exam degrees.

jinzhisun 金直孫. Robe of gold-embroidered cloth; sign of Mongol imperial authority.

junmindu darughachi 軍民都達魯花赤. Agent overseeing civil and military affairs.

kebtegül. Mongol qan's nightguards.

keshig. Mongolian term for system of imperial bodyguards (see also suwei).

Kuizhang ge 奎章閣. Academy of the Kuizhang Pavilion, responsible for collecting scholarship on the Classics and Histories for the Yuan emperor's use.

Kuizhang ge shishu xueshi 奎章閣侍書學士. A writer-academician in the Kuizhang Pavilion, rank 2.

langzhong 郎中. A senior supervisor or director in a provincial bureau, rank 5.

Li 里. Unit of land area or distance measure.

lianfang shi 廉訪使. Surveillance or investigation commissioner, rank 3 in Yuan bureaucracy.

liang 兩. Unit of weight, equivalent to an ounce.

Libu shilang 吏部侍郎. Vice Minister in Ministry of Personnel in the Yuan court.

Lienü zhuan 列女傳. Biographies of Virtuous Women.

lingwangfu 領王傅. Tutor to Mongol imperial prince.

Liugui 六桂. "Six cassia"; reference to six people who hold the jinshi degree.

Liugui shi 六桂氏. The family or clan who had six jinshi degree holders.

liwen 理問. A judicial secretary or proceedings officer, rank 4, in provincial Judicial Proceedings Office, liwen suo.

liwen suo 理問所. Judicial Proceedings Office, in provincial, or branch, secretariat.

lu 路. "Route"; also used to denote a prefecture in Yuan China.

Lun Yu 論語. The Analects of Confucius.

lushi si 錄事司. Municipal Affairs Office, found in major cities of 100 Yuan circuits (dao), in charge of registering a city's population and carrying out various police duties.

maikhan. A low woolen tent.

Mengguren 蒙古人. Mongol person/peoples.

Menggumin 蒙古民. Mongol people in Yuan China.

ming 名. One's personal name, rarely used outside the family.

ming 銘. An inscription text, usually a eulogy.

minzu; J. minzoku 民族. Ethnic or nationality group.

mishujian cheng 秘書監承. Official in the Imperial Library bureau.

Mishujian zhuzuo zuolang 秘書監著作佐郎. An assistant staff writer in the Imperial Library, rank 7.

muzhiming 墓志銘. Tomb inscription, enclosed in the tomb of the deceased.

Naiman 乃蠻. Turko-Mongol steppe tribe, rivals of Mongol tribes in 12th century.

Nanren 南人. Person or people from southern China, area of Southern Song Dynasty.

Nantai 南臺. "Southern pavilion"; reference to the Censorate bureau or Censor-in-Chief.

Nantai zhishu yushi 南臺治書御史. A secretarial censor in the "southern pavilion" branch of the Yuan central censorate bureau.

nöker; pl. nököd. Close companion(s) of the qan.

Nü Xiaojing 女孝經. The Classic of Filial Women.

ong-qan. Prince-qan.

ortogh (T. ortaq, C. wotuo 斡脫). Merchant corporations funded by Mongol court.

pingzhang zhengshi zhongshusheng 平章政事中書省. Manager or privy councillor in the Yuan central secretariat, rank 1.

Qara Khitai. C. Xiliao 西遼. Western Khitan Liao kingdom.Qara "black" is a geographical referent.

qianshi 僉事. An assistant official, second or third level, in range of agencies.

quriltai. Meeting of Mongol tribes for election of qan.

quti 忽底. "His Highness," an honorary title appended to a person's name.

Ruye 儒業. "Confucian studies"; denotes a person who is thoroughly knowledgeable about the Confucian classics and philosophy.

Sanjie Liugui 三節 六桂. Lit. "three virtues, or three virtuous ones, and six jinshi." A moniker for the Xie family in Yuan China.

Semuguan 色目官. A Semuren official, or an office reserved for Semuren personnel.

Semuren 色目人. People of various categories; personnel from Central and Western Asia.

shang qingche duwei 上輕車都尉. "Supreme Master of Light Chariots"; one of ten special titles granted to members of the aristocracy who had helped to found the Yuan dynasty or their descendants.

shangshu 尚書. Grand Minister, in Yuan State Affairs bureau (shangshu sheng); three ministers were appointed to each ministry within the bureau of State Affairs during Mongol period.

shangshu sheng 尚書省. Ministry of State Affairs in Mongol Yuan central government.

shi 詩. A poem; also a particular style of Chinese poetry popularized during the Tang era.

shidafu 士大夫. Chinese literatus or elite.

shiniu yinyin 獅鈕銀印. Silver seal with embossed lion; a seal of Mongol imperial authority.

shizu 氏族. Clans and people groups, or ethnic groups.

shouzhang. 守長. A magistrate.

shumiyuan dushi 樞密院都事. A secretary in Yuan military affairs bureau, rank 7.

Sinong shaoqing 司農少卿. A vice-minister in the Bureau of the Supervisor of Agriculture.

suigong ruli 歲貢儒吏. Annual recommendation of people for appointment to civil office who were learned in intellectual (Confucian) and administrative or clerical areas or skills.

suwei 宿衛. System of imperial bodyguards in Mongol China.

suzheng lianfangsi 肅政廉訪司. Regional Investigation Bureau, associated with the censorate in eight regions of Yuan China.

taishi 太師. "Grand preceptor," rank 1, largely ceremonial title in the Yuan court.

Tängri. Mongolian Sky god.

tangming 堂名. Name of an ancestral hall.

Tanguts 唐兀. Inhabitants of Xixia empire, rivals of early Mongol empire.

Tongyi dafu 通議大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Twelfth Class."

tongzhi 同知. A vice prefect,or associate prefect, usually assigned at the prefectural level, rank 6 to 7.

touxia 投下 (M. ayimagh). System of estates granted to members of the Mongol imperial clan. known as appanages.

tu 圖. A drawing.

tuntian 屯田. Agricultural colony, or a state farm, staffed by either civilian or military personnel.

turγaγ. Mongol qan's dayguards.

uluγ ayγuchi (C. wulu aiwuchi 吾魯愛兀赤). A grand minister in the Uyghur court at Gaochang; equivalent to C. dachen.

ulus. A Mongol tribe.

Umay. Mongolian mother goddess.

wang 王-qan. See ong-qan.

Weiwu 畏兀 or 畏吾; Weiwuer(ren) 維吾爾 (人). Variant renderings of Uyghur person or ethnic group.

Wengjila shi 甕吉剌氏. Mongol Onggirat clan.

wenren 文人. Literati; a person educated in the literature of China.

wugui fang 五桂坊. Pillar or arch commemorating those families of a community who had produced five jinshi degree holders.

xian 縣. "County," or "district" in Yuan China, below the prefecture.

xianjia 仙家. An immortal, or a fairy.

xiao 孝. "Filial piety," or one who observes or maintains filial piety.

Xiaojing 孝經. Classic of Filial Piety.

xingdu caoyun shi 行都漕運使. Superintendant in provincial grain transport bureau.

Xiliao 西遼. Western Khitan Liao kingdom. See also Qara Khitai, above.

Xitai yushi 西臺御史. "Western pavilion" branch of the Yuan Censorate Bureau.

Xiyu 西域. Western Regions, area traditionally west of China.

Xiyuren 西域人. Person or people from the Western Regions.

xuanfu 宣撫. Pacification or control bureau; one of the earliest local government office in the Mongol administration in China.

xuanfu shi 宣撫使. Pacification or control commissioner, rank 3, oversaw a regional control office (xuanfu si).

xuanfu si 宣撫司. Regional control office.

xuanwei fushi 宣慰副使. Assistant pacification commissioner, rank 4.

xuanwei shi 宣慰 使. Pacification commissioner, rank 2, in Yuan Pacification Bureau.

xuanwei shi du yuanshuai 宣慰使 都 元帥. Concurrent assignment as a pacification commissioner and general regional military commander, rank 2.

Xuanzheng yuanshi 宣政院使. Commissioner in the bureau of Tibetan and Buddhist affairs.

yaomin 徭民. Forced laborers.

yin 蔭. "Protection" privilege; recruitment to office by virtue of prior service of one's close family member.

yingfeng 應奉. A writer in the Hanlin Academy, rank 7.

yir-sub. Mongolian elements of earth and water.

Yunzhong junhou 雲中郡侯. Posthumous honorary title "Marquis of Yunzhong Prefecture."

Zhaowen guan daxueshi 昭文館大學士. Grand academician in the Institute for the Glorification of Literature, rank 2 in the Yuan central administration.

zhen 真. "Uprightness"; "truthfulness."

Zhengyi Dafu 正議大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Eleventh Class."

zhenlie 真烈. "Chaste and staunch"; "upright and steadfast"; category used to classify certain widowed women in imperial China.

Zhida yinchao 至大銀鈔. "Silver-based note of the Zhida era [1308-1311]," a paper currency that circulated in Yuan China.

Zhiyuan chao 至元鈔. "Paper note of the Zhiyuan era [1264-94]," a paper currency that circulated in Yuan China.

Zhizheng chao 至正鈔. "Paper note of the Zhizheng era [1341-68]"; alternate name for Zhongtong jiaochao paper currency.

zhong 忠. "Loyalty"; also a title for one who is loyal.

zhong 種. Type or group of people (sometimes used to mean ethnic group).

zhonglie 忠烈. "Loyal and Meritorious." An honorific title or moniker given to a person or a family.

Zhongshu canzhi zhengshi 中書參知政事. Second privy councillor in the central secretariat, rank 2.

Zhongshu pingzhang [zhengshi] 中書平章[政事]. Short form for pingzhang zhengshi zhongshusheng.

Zhongtong jiaochao 中統交鈔. "Exchange note of the Zhongtong era"; also known as Zhizheng chao; paper currency circulated in Yuan China.

Zhongtong yuanbao jiaochao 中統元寶交鈔. "Primary treasury exchange note of the Zhongtong era [1260-63]," paper currency circulated in Yuan China.

Zhongxiang 忠襄. Posthumous honorary name "Loyal and Assisting."

Zhongxun Dafu 中順大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Nineteenth Class."

zhujiao 助教. Preceptor in the National University, rank 8; subordinate to the erudites, see boshi.

zi 字. Chinese courtesy name, given to people of social standing at coming of age in traditional China.

Zide Dafu 資德大夫. Honorary title "Grandee of the Fifth Class."

zongguan neiwai zangshi 總管內外藏事. Official in charge of royal storehouses in the capital region.

zongli caibi 總理財幣. Superintendent of monetary affairs.

zu; J. zoku 族. Lineage or descent group.

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