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0521842263 - The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History: Between China and the Islamic World

Michal Biran

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## The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History

The empire of the Qara Khitai, which was one of the least known and most fascinating dynasties in the history of Central Asia, existed for nearly a century before it was conquered by the Mongols in 1218. Arriving in Central Asia from China, the Qara Khitai ruled over a mostly Muslim population. Their history affords a unique window onto the extensive cross-cultural contacts between China, Inner Asian nomads and the Muslim world in the period preceding the rise of Chinggis Khan. Using an extensive corpus of Muslim and Chinese sources, Michal Biran comprehensively examines the political, institutional and cultural histories of the Qara Khitai for the first time. Her book explores a range of topics including the organization of the army, the position of women, the image of China in Muslim Central Asia, the religions of the Qara Khitai and the legacy they left for the Mongols. Crucially she asks why they did not, unlike their predecessors and successors in Central Asia, embrace Islam. The book represents a groundbreaking contribution to the field of Eurasian history for students of the Islamic world, China and Central Asia.

**Michal Biran** is Lecturer at the Institute of Asian and African Studies at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her previous publications include *Qaidu and the Rise of the Independent Mongol State in Central Asia* (1997) and *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (2005; co-editor with Reuven Amitai).

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Between China and the Islamic World

MICHAL BIRAN

*The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*



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For Yotam and Itamar

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## Acknowledgments xi

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## Note on dates and transliterations

Dates are generally given according to the Gregorian calendar. *Hijri* and Chinese dates are given only when they have a specific importance to the study.

Chinese names and terms have been transliterated according to the Pinyin system.

Arabic words, titles and names have been transliterated according to the system used in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. Words and names of Persian origin have usually been transliterated as if they were Arabic (e.g., Juwaynī, not Juvaynī, *nāmah*, not *nāme*). Common words and place names, such as Sultan, mamluk, Bukhara, Baghdad, are written without diacritical points. Well-known place names are given in their accepted English forms, e.g., Kashgar, Jerusalem.

Russian has been transliterated according to the system of the Library of Congress, except for the letter й, which is rendered as j.

Names and terms of Mongolian origin have been transliterated according to Antoine Mostaert's scheme as modified by F. W. Cleaves except for these deviations: *is* is rendered as *ch*; *as* as *sh*; *is gh* and *ǰ* is *j*.

Names and terms of Turkic origin have been transliterated either according to their reconstruction in Dankoff's translation of Kāshgharī's *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk* or in Boyle's translation of Juwaynī.

An asterisk (\*) to the left of a name represents an uncertain transliteration.

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## Abbreviations

AEMA “Alfi”	<i>Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi</i> Tattawī, Aḥmad, et al., “Ta’rīkh-i alfi.” MS I.O. 3291, vol.
AO Barthold, <i>Turkestan</i>	<i>Arkheologicheskie otkrytiia</i> V. V. Barthold, <i>Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion</i> . 4th ed., London, 1968
Barthold, <i>Turkestan-texts</i>	V. V. Barthold, comp., <i>Turkestan v epokhu ‘mongol’skogo nashestiva</i> . Vol. (texts), St. Petersburg, 1900
BSJ	Liu Yu, <i>Bei shi ji</i> . In Wang Guowei, ed. “Gu xingji si zhong jiaolu,” in <i>Wang Guowei yi shu</i> . Vol. 13, Shanghai, 1983
CAJ <i>Chang Chun</i>	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i> Li Zhichang, <i>Chang Chun xi you ji</i> , ed. Wang Guowei, in <i>Wang Guowei yi shu</i> . Vol. 13, Shanghai, 1983
CHC6	D. Twitchett and H. Franke, eds., <i>The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 6: Alien Regimes and Border States 907–1368</i> . Cambridge, 1994
CHEIA	D. Sinor, ed., <i>The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia</i> . Cambridge, 1990
CHI5	J. A. Boyle, ed., <i>The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol. 5: The Saljuq and Mongol Periods</i> . Cambridge, 1968
CSJC	<i>Congshu jicheng</i>
DJGZ	Yuwen Mouzhao, <i>Da Jin guo zhi</i> . Np, 1937
EI1	<i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> , 1st edition
EI2	<i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edition
EIr	<i>Encyclopedia Iranica</i>
EV	<i>Epigrafika vostoka</i>

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- Ḥaydarī/Schefer Ḥusaynī Rāzī Mīr Ḥaydar b. ‘Alī, *Ta’rīkh-i Ḥaydarī*, in C. Schefer, ed., *Description de Boukhara par Nerchakhy*. Paris, 1892, pp. 231–43
- HCCA4 M. S. Asimov and C. E. Bosworth, eds., *History of Civilizations of Central Asia. Vol. IV: The Age of Achievements: 750 AD to the End of the Fifteenth Century. Part One: The Historical, Social and Economic Setting*. Paris, 1998
- HJAS *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*
- Ibn al-Athīr Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-ta’rīkh*. Beirut, 1966, 13 vols.
- In the Service of the Khan* I. de Rachewiltz et al., eds. *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol–Yuan Period*. Wiesbaden, 1993
- JA *Journal Asiatique*
- JCS He Junzhe et al., *Jin chao shi*. Beijing, 1992
- JESHO *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
- JRAS *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
- JS Tuotuo. *Jin shi*. Beijing, 1975, 8 vols.
- Juwaynī Juwaynī, *Ta’rīkh-i Jahān-Gushā*, ed. M. M. Qazwīnī. London, 1912–37, 3 vols.
- Juwaynī, tr. Boyle Juwaynī, *The History of the World Conqueror*, tr. J. A. Boyle. Manchester, 1997
- Jūzjānī/Ḥabībī Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, ed. ‘A. Ḥabībī. Kabul, 1963–5, 2 vols.
- Jūzjānī/Lees Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, ed. W. Nassau Lees. Calcutta, 1864
- JY Li Xinchuan. *Jiānyan yilai xīnian yaolu*. Beijing, 1988, 4 vols.
- JZA 1984 Ji Zongan, “Taolun Yelü Dashi xiqian de yuanyin,” *Xibei shidi* 1984/4: 41–9
- JZA 1987 Ji Zongan, “Yelü Dashi xi xing ji lue,” *Xinjiang daxue xuebao* 1987/2: 47–54
- JZA 1994 Ji Zongan, “Guanyu Yelü Dashi he Xi Liao jian guo shiqi de ji ge wenti,” *Zhongguo gudai shi* 1994/2: 29–36
- JZA 1996 Ji Zongan, *Xi Liao shi lun: Yelü Dashi yanjiu*. Urumchi, 1996
- LJSL Liu Pujiang, *Liao Jin shi lun*. Liaoning, 1999
- LS Tuotuo. *Liao shi*. Beijing, 1974, 5 vols.
- LSG Shu Fen. *Liao shi gao*. Hubei, 1984
- LSHB Yang Jialuo, ed. *Liaoshi huibian*. Taipei, 1973, 10 vols.

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LYD	Liang Yuandong. <i>Xi Liao shi</i> . Beijing, 1955
<i>Majma' al-ansāb</i>	Shabānkāra'ī, <i>Majma' al-ansāb</i> , ed. M. H. Muḥaddith. Tehran, 1984
Marwazī/Minorsky	Marwazī, <i>Ṭabā'ī' al-ḥayawān (Sharaf al-Zamān Zāhir Marvazī on China, Turks and India)</i> , ed. and tr. V. Minorsky. London, 1942
MIAS	<i>Materialy i issledovaniia po arkeologii SSSR</i>
PH	Anonymous, <i>Histoire des campagnes de Genghis Khan</i> , ed. and tr. P. Pelliot and L. Hambis, Vol. 1. Leiden, 1951
QDZ	Ye Longli. <i>Qidan guo zhi</i> . Shanghai, 1985
Rashīd/Alīzādah	Rashīd al-Dīn, <i>Jāmi' al-tawārīkh</i> , ed. A. A. 'Alīzādah. Vol. 1, Moscow, 1953
Rashīd/Karīmī	Rashīd al-Dīn, <i>Jāmi' al-tawārīkh</i> . Ed. B. Karīmī. Tehran, 1959, 2 vols.
Rashīd/Khwārazm	Rashīd al-Dīn, "Jāmi' al-tawārīkh." MS BM Or 1684
Rashīd/Saljūq	Rashīd al-Dīn, <i>Dhikr ta'rikh Āl Selchūk (Jāmi' al-tawārīkh, Vol. 2 Part 5)</i> , ed. A. Atesh. Ankara, 1960
SBCG	<i>Sibu Conggan</i>
SC	Xu Mengxin, <i>San chao bei meng hui bian</i> . Shanghai, 1987, 2 vols.
SH	F. W. Cleaves, tr., <i>The Secret History of the Mongols</i> . Cambridge, MA, 1982
SHdR	I. de Rachewiltz, tr. and annot., <i>The Secret History of the Mongols: A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century</i> . Leiden, 2004, 2 vols.
SHY	Xu Song, comp., <i>Song hui yao ji qiao</i> . Vols. 7, 8, Shanghai, 1957
SKQS	<i>Siku Quanshu</i>
SMJW	Hong Hao, <i>Song mo ji wen</i> , ed. Zhang Bo. <i>Liaohai congshu</i> ed.
SS	Tuotuo. <i>Song shi</i> . Beijing, 1977, 40 vols.
SWQZL	Anonymous, <i>Shengwu qinzheng lu</i> , ed. Wang Guowei, in <i>Wang Guowei yi shu</i> . Vol. 13, Shanghai, 1983
VDI	<i>Vestnik drevnei istorii</i>
WF	K. A Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, <i>History of Chinese Society: Liao (907–1125)</i> . Philadelphia, 1949
XLSG	Wei Liangtao, <i>Xi Liao shi gao</i> . Beijing, 1991
XLSYJ	Wei Liangtao, <i>Xi Liao shi yanjiu</i> . Ningxia, 1987
XXJ	Dai Xizhang, comp., <i>Xi Xia ji</i> . Yinchuan, 1988
XXSS	Wu Guangcheng, <i>Xi Xia shu shi</i> . Taipei, 1968

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xvi Abbreviations

YLCC-XYL	Yelü Chucai, “The Hsi-yu lü by Yeh-lü Ch’u-ts’ai,” tr. I. de Rachewiltz, <i>Monumenta Serica</i> 21 (1962): 1–128
YLCC-ZR	Yelü Chucai, <i>Zhan ran jushi wenji</i> , ed. Xie Fang. Beijing, 1986
YS	Song Lian, <i>Yuan shi</i> . Beijing, 1976, 15 vols.
ZK	G. G. Pikov, <i>Zapadnye Kidani</i> . Novosibirsk, 1989