Perspectives on the Global Past

Jerry H. Bentley and Anand A. Yang
SERIES EDITORS

Interactions: Transregional Perspectives on World History
Edited by Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Anand A. Yang

Contact and Exchange in the Ancient World
Edited by Victor H. Mair

Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges
Edited by Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Kären Wigen

Anthropology's Global Histories: The Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea, 1870–1935
Rainer F. Buschmann

Creating the New Man: From Enlightenment Ideals to Socialist Realities
Yinghong Cheng

Glamour in the Pacific: Cultural Internationalism and Race Politics in the Women's Pan-Pacific
Fiona Paisley

The Qing Opening to the Ocean: Chinese Maritime Policies, 1684–1757
Gang Zhao

Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change: The Mongols and Their Eurasian Predecessors
Edited by Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran

Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change

The Mongols and Their Eurasian Predecessors

Edited by Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran

University of Hawai'i Press
Honolulu

SEVEN

The Mongols and Nomadic Identity
The Case of the Kitans in China

Michal Biran

One of the salient aspects throughout the Eurasian steppes during and after the Mongol conquest was a major shift in ethnicity and identity. This chapter examines this phenomenon through the prism of the later history of the Kitans. My principal argument is that Mongol imperial policies played a crucial role in determining the direction of identity change among their mixed subject population,[1] and contributed to the Kitan assimilation in China more than "the cohesive force of the Chinese nation"[2] that often gets the credit for nomadic "sinicization."

The Mongols and the Ethnic Configuration of Eurasia

Peter Golden and Thomas T. Allsen have persuasively argued that the Mongol period basically reshaped the ethnic configuration of Eurasia. The crucial factors in this process were the devastation left in the wake of the initial Mongol drive; the formation of new ethnic and political taxonomies under the Mongol empire; the empire's policy of ruling via foreigner administrators; and the imperial disintegration, which forced many new collectivities to refashion their identities. These factors led to the uprooting of many hitherto well-established peoples (such as the Tanguts, the Uighurs, the Qipchaqs, and the Kitans) and to the emergence of new groupings, which form the basis of many contemporary Central Asian nations (e.g., the Uzbeks and Kazakhs). The majority of pre-Mongol steppe peoples lost their identity as ethnic groups. As a result, they were either reduced to clan or tribal units in the new collectivities that took shape in Mongol and post-Mongol Eurasia, or assimilated into the sedentary civilizations surrounding them.[3] Fascinating as it may be, this phenomenon has yet to attract a thorough investigation.[4] This study endeavors to shed light on this shift by tracing the fate of the Kitans both during and after the Mongol era.

The Kitans are indeed an illuminating case study for Eurasian identities. Throughout their pre-Mongol history, the Kitans displayed a unique ability to preserve their distinct identity. Additionally, their far-flung geographical dispersion on the eve of the Mongol invasion enables scholars to compare acculturation and identity change in different parts of the empire. Although the focus of this chapter is on the Kitans in China, it will occasionally draw insights from their counterparts in Iran.

The Kitans

The Kitans, a tribal confederation that originated in the Xianbei 鮮卑 and rose in the Mongolian-Manchurian borderland, near the Liao 遼 River, appear in historical sources from the fourth century CE onward. Falling within the orbit of both the nomadic states of Mongolia—most notably the Turk and Uighur realms—and the Chinese empire, particularly the Tang dynasty, the Kitans were consecutively subject to one or another of these polities from the sixth to ninth centuries. In the early tenth century, exploiting power vacuums in both China and Mongolia, Abaoji 阿保機 (r. 907–926) united the Kitan tribes, transformed himself into an emperor (as opposed to the loose, rotational leaders of the preimperial Kitans), and aspired to conquer both steppe and sown. In time, Abaoji founded the Liao 遼 dynasty, which ruled over Manchuria, Mongolia, and parts of north China for over two centuries (907–1125). His transition from tribal chieftain to emperor prompted substantial changes in the lifestyle and culture of the Kitan elite. However, befitting their Inner Asian character, they did not relinquish their native traditions, such as the Kitan language, shamanic rituals, origin myth, nomadic lifestyle, and elevated status of women. Instead, the Kitans added new layers to their heritage, thereby creating their own, nuanced imperial tradition. Within this framework, the royal clan adopted a surname, Yelü 耶律, and its members married exclusively women from the Xiao 蕭, a clan of Uighur origin (with its subclans of Shulü 述律 and Yaoli 姚里) that became the Liao consort clan. In parallel, the Kitans started embracing the Chinese imperial tradition, not least its trappings, including its reign titles, calendar, and the Chinese language, which they used alongside Kitan and Turkish. Other major changes were the invention of two Kitan scripts; intensive urbanization, which did not prevent the Kitans from maintaining their nomadic lifestyle (for example, the royal court's seasonal movements continued throughout the Liao dynasty); patronage of Buddhist institutions, for the purpose of enhancing the Kitans' own legitimacy; the modification of their burial customs; and the emergence of a unique and sophisticated material culture that revolved around gold. They also set up a dual administration, in

which the southern branch was responsible for the sedentary population and the northern branch for the nomadic sector.

Moreover, it was during the Liao period that Chinggis Khan's forefathers migrated to Mongolia. Kitan rule in this realm, especially the unprecedented scope of urbanization and the strength of its garrisons, made a deep impression on the local nomads. In a similar vein, Kitan cities served as a platform for introducing Chinese and Kitan concepts to the Mongolian steppe. In consequence, the Mongolian word *Kitad* became the designation for north China. Moreover, the word *Cathay*—the term for China in medieval Europe as well as Western and Central Asia—derived from the ethnic affiliation (*Khitai*) of the Liao's rulers. Put differently, while preserving much of their pre-imperial traits (first and foremost the nomadic way of life) and cultivating their own imperial tradition, the Kitans were also able to portray themselves as no less Chinese than the Song both within and outside their realm.[5]

In the early twelfth century, with the fall of the Liao at the hands of the Jurchens (another wave of Manchurian invaders), most of the Kitans remained in north China under the rule of the Jurchen Jin 金 dynasty (1115–1234). However, a small group, estimated at 20,000 men, followed a Kitan prince, Yelü Dashi 耶律大石, to the west, where he swiftly established the Qara Khitai (i.e., the Liao Kitans) or Western Liao (Xi Liao 西遼) empire in Central Asia (1124–1218).[6]

The Jin Kitans reportedly numbered between 750,000 and 1.5 million men, and were treated as a separate ethnic group along with Chinese and other non-Jurchen people.[7] A handful of these Kitans, refusing to acknowledge Jin rule, moved to the forests of northern Manchuria, where they hunted for subsistence and yearned to revive the Liao.[8] That said, most of this populace placed themselves at the Jin's disposal, serving primarily as border guards.

The Kitans also played an important role in shaping the Jurchen polity, as some rose to senior positions in the Jin bureaucracy. Donning the hat of cultural agents, the Kitans introduced Chinese culture to the Jurchens. For instance, most Jurchen translations of Chinese works derived from Kitan renderings. Kitan fluency in Chinese, Mongol, and naturally their own language also qualified them for jobs as translators and emissaries.[9]

Be that as it may, relations between the Kitans and the Jurchen were not always peaceful, as Kitan rebellions were a common occurrence. The largest insurgency erupted during the reign of Jin monarch Hailing wang 海陵王 (r. 1150–1161). This confrontation was provoked by Hailing wang's forced conscription of Jin Kitan troops for his attack against the Song and by his 1161 decree calling for the liquidation of all male progeny of the Yelü clan and the Zhao 趙 (descendants of the Song royal house)—last-gasp measures aimed at neutralizing attempts to undermine his legitimacy. The rebels, though not well organized, even established their own dynasty before they were quelled by the new Jin emperor Shizong 金世宗 (r. 1161–1189). In the immediate aftermath of the failed "coup," many of the Kitan military units (*mengan mouke* 猛安謀克) were dismantled, and the troops were divided among various Jurchen units. While the regime allowed the Kitan herders to maintain their tribal divisions, the elite were ordered to change their surnames: Yelü became Yila 移剌 and Xiao became Shimo 石抹. The Jin also transferred more Kitans from the empire's northwestern frontier—one of the rebellion's strongholds—to the east, with the objective of negating the possibility that they would join forces with the Qara Khitai. In parallel, the regime consciously promoted Kitan assimilation by, say, encouraging them to marry Jurchens. These steps notwithstanding, Kitan mutinies recurred in 1177, 1183, and 1195. The insurrection of 1177 even entailed the proclamation of an independent Kitan state. Not only were all these revolts smashed, but the Jurchens subsequently carried out mass slaughters and population transfers to the east. These heavy-handed measures were accompanied by acculturation programs. In the early thirteenth century, for instance, the Jin passed several laws that were designed to abrogate the differences between Jurchen and non-Jurchen soldiers. However, these gestures were late in coming: by this time, the Kitans were well aware of the approaching Mongol storm, and many of them saw this as a golden opportunity to exact their revenge against the Jin.[10]

In the meantime, the Qara Khitai managed to build a powerful empire in Central Asia (ca. 1124 or 1131 to 1218). At its height, this polity stretched from the Oxus River in western Uzbekistan to the Altai Mountains in northeastern Xinjiang. Until 1175, the state's borders ran even further east into the Naiman and the Yenisei Kyrgyz on the fringes of western Mongolia. The population of this vast empire was heterogeneous. Besides the Kitans, who constituted but a small minority in their own domain, there were Turks (Uighurs included), Iranians, Mongols, and a few Han Chinese. While most of the populace was sedentary and Muslim, there was an appreciable nomadic component (led by the Kitans themselves) as well as flourishing Buddhist, Nestorian, and even Jewish communities.[11] The Qara Khitai's religious tolerance, their by and large indirect form of rule, their shrewd use of the Kitans' Chinese and nomadic cultural capital, and the relative prosperity and stability that they brought to Central Asia enabled the empire to govern this diverse land effectively, up to the rise of Chinggis Khan. While the original intention of the polity's above-mentioned founder, Yelü Dashi, was to restore the former boundaries of the Liao, the geopolitical

situation dictated a steady westward advance, into the Muslim world. That said, the Qara Khitai continued to send spies and even small forces to the Jin border throughout the 1100s. Likewise, several Kitan rebels from North China tried to enter its territory and/or collaborate with the regime.[12] In fact, recent archaeological discoveries and philological research suggest that the Kitan character of the Qara Khitai was more pronounced than previously thought.[13]

Kitan Identity on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion

While political and geographical differences existed between the various Kitan groups, the Jin branch and the Qara Khitai shared more than a few discernible identity markers. To begin with, the Kitans in China and Central Asia were referred to and referred to themselves as Kitans or Qara Kitans (the Liao Kitans).[14] Moreover, they had a common origin myth: a man riding a white horse along the Muddy River and a woman traveling along the Huang River in a small cart drawn by a gray ox met at the confluence of these waterways by the Muye 木葉 Mountain. The two married and their eight sons became the forefathers of the eight original Kitan tribes. With the passage of time, the patriarch and matriarch were deemed to be incarnations of the god of heaven and goddess of earth. In deference to this myth, a white horse and gray ox were commonly sacrificed by Kitans before any important decision or enterprise, such as a pivotal military campaign.[15]

Another facet of this identity was the Kitan language and scripts. The Kitan language is defined as an Altaic, para-Mongolian tongue. While closer to Mongolian, it features significant Tungusic elements. The two Kitan scripts, which were created in the early 900s as part of the Liao dynasty's formation, are both Sinitic. Despite considerable progress on the small Kitan script in recent years (thanks mainly to the unearthing of tomb inscriptions), neither script has yet been fully deciphered.[16] Even in the heyday of the Liao dynasty, however, other scripts were also employed, with Chinese serving as the principal diplomatic and administrative language. Both the Qara Khitai and the Jin Kitans continued to use the Kitan scripts (in Jin China up to 1191, when it was banned), side by side with other languages and scripts: mainly Chinese and Jurchen under the Jin and Chinese, Persian, and Uighur among the Qara Khitai.[17]

The Kitans continued to wax nostalgic for the halcyon days of the Liao and its original center—the land of the pines and deserts (*songmo* 松漠) along the Liao River. These sentiments could easily arouse antagonism toward the Jurchens for having destroyed the Liao. Regardless of their location, Kitan members of the royal and consort clans retained their prestige, standing,

selective connubial patterns (though they also took non-Kitan spouses), and distinct surnames. Furthermore, the royal clan upheld its nomadic social norms, including the high position of women in politics.[18] Another part of the Liao legacy that was preserved by the Kitans in China and Central Asia was their reverence for the Chinese imperial tradition. The extent of this dedication is hard to gauge, but the upper-class Jin Kitans and Qara Khitai were certainly familiar with Chinese trappings and exhibited a command of the language.[19]

The Jurchens were well aware of the affinity between the two Kitan groups. In fact, the fear that they would one day unite loomed large over the Jin's foreign and domestic policies.[20] While this threat never materialized, the existence of the independent Qara Khitai was apparently meaningful to the Kitans in the Jin. Kindling their hope to restore the Liao, it also buoyed their Kitan identity. For instance, upon accompanying Chinggis Khan to Central Asia in the 1220s, Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材, a Kitan from the Jin, collected every bit of information he could find about the Qara Khitai.[21]

On the eve of the Mongol conquest, the Kitans in China found themselves in a unique position. As Rashīd al-Dīn observed, the Kitans were "adjacent to the Mongol nomads, and their language, physiognomy and customs are quite similar."[22] Put differently, the two groups shared a resemblance in terms of their nomadic lifestyle, combat tactics, rituals, and language.[23] Another Kitan advantage was their expertise in the sedentary culture of China. This dual nomadic–Chinese identity made the Kitans extremely useful to the Mongols during their expansion. What is more, it would ultimately facilitate their assimilation into one of the two societies.

The Mongol Conquest of the Kitans

By dint of the Mongol conquests, the assorted Kitan groups all found themselves under the same authority. However, instead of leading to their unification, this turn of events scattered their communities throughout the Eurasian continent.

Both the Qara Khitai and the Jin Kitans were subsumed by the Mongol empire in the early thirteenth century, during the first stages of its expansion. Mongol assaults into Jin territories began in 1211. Within four years, they had entered the Jin capital of Zhongdu 中都 or Yanjing 燕京 (near modern Beijing), compelling the Jurchens to take flight southward to Kaifeng. However, Chinggis Khan soon turned his attention to the west. In 1218, his forces seized the Qara Khitai territory in what was a swift and uncharacteristically benign campaign, before proceeding into Central Asia. Although Chinggis Khan dispatched General Muqali (in 1217–1223) to

reengage the Jin, this rather bloody affair was only completed in 1234 (by Ögödei, Chinggis Khan's son and heir). While a fair share of Kitans died in battle against the Mongols, most of them chose to switch over to the juggernaut at an early stage of the conquests.[24] By so doing, they averted the catastrophe that befell several of their contemporaries—the Tanguts, the Qipchaqs, and Khwārazmians included. More specifically, the Kitans became allies of the Mongols and heavily influenced the formation of the world empire.

The Database

Before exploring the ramifications of the Mongols' ascent on Kitan identity, a few words about the database that undergirded this study are in order. Yuan sources cite the names of over two hundred Kitans who were active in Mongol China. About half of these figures surface in the dynastic history, the *Yuanshi* 元史, whereas the remainder are scattered in, above all, Yuan literary collections (*wenji* 文集), epitaphs, and local gazetteers. A few prominent Kitans also turn up in Muslim sources, foremost among them records from the Ilkhanate. Some of these individuals are explicitly referred to as Kitans or "Liao people" (Liao ren 遼人), while others have been identified on the basis of their distinctive surnames: Yelü/Yila, Shimo/Shulü, and Xiao. Since the last is also a Chinese surname, if a Xiao is not specifically described as a Kitan or Liao, s/he was excluded from this survey.[25]

It bears noting that the information about many of these Kitans is limited to their name and occasionally their position or the odd biographical note (e.g., son of so and so, filial son, died young). For the more important figures, however, there are more detailed sources that allow us to track certain families over several generations.[26] In addition, the data is elite-biased. Since most of the rank-and-file Kitans lacked surnames, their identity has evidently passed under the radar. Although a few women appear in the sources, the list is male dominated. The Kitans in China practiced a wide range of professions (most exotically, a *fengshui* expert and a sculptor specializing in Buddhist images), yet most of the well-documented Kitans were military men.[27] Notable exceptions are Yelü Chucai (1189–1243), Chinggis Khan's astrologer and Ögödei's chief minister, and Yelü Youshang 耶律有尚 (d. 1320), a celebrated Confucian scholar.

Main Factors behind Identity Change

Over the next few pages, we will explore two developments that had a major impact on the Kitan identity: the loss of the Kitans' political frameworks and their geographical distribution. This will be followed by a discussion of the two main paths of Kitan assimilation, each of which roughly corresponds to its own period. The first phase is the absorption into the Mongol ranks, which was most salient in the conquests period, from the united Mongol empire period (1206–1260) to the fall of the Song (1279). During this time, the Kitans played a more active role in the Mongol army and administration, so that they feature more prominently in the relevant sources. Throughout the postconquest period (1279–1368), the main thrust of Kitan assimilation was in the Chinese realm. The primary impetus behind this shift was that the Mongols were now less dependent on the Kitans and thus less willing to accept them in their midst. Accordingly, the number of Kitans mentioned in the source material decreases significantly, but this drop-off might also stem in part from the nature of the documents rather than the processes under review.[28] In the pages to come, we will take stock of the main incentives behind identity change at each of these stages and the manifestations of this trend.

The Breakup of the Kitan Political Framework: The Rise and Fall of Yelü Liuge's State

Identity in China and, all the more so, on the steppe was largely political. For this reason, the mere existence of the Qara Khitai empire and the pining for the Liao significantly bolstered Kitan identity among the Jin Kitans. Soon after Chinggis Khan invaded the Jin, a Kitan commander established a short-lived Kitan state in Manchuria (1213–1233 or 1236), under Mongol dominion. The founder was Yelü Liuge 耶律 留哥 (1174–1220), a descendant of the Liao royal family who had served as a commander of a thousand in the Jin army. While heading an army totaling an estimated 100,000 Kitans, Liuge surrendered to the Mongols in 1212. That said, he was not the first Kitan who submitted to Chinggis Khan. Among the ruler's closest supporters were several other Kitan noblemen, some of whom had joined Temüjin even before he assumed the title Chinggis Khan. However, while the other Kitans joined the empire as individuals, Liuge came as a leader who aspired to build a Kitan state.[29] After defeating Jin troops with Mongol help in 1213, his followers (allegedly 600,000 men!) enthroned him as the king of Liao (*Liao wang* 遼王) in the Kitans' ancestral land of Liaodong. The new state was called "the Great Liao" (Da Liao 大遼), thereby restoring its namesake after more than a century of Jin rule. The recently enthroned monarch chose a reign title and conferred Chinese honorifics on his wife and several of his leading followers. Most importantly, these steps were reminiscent of those taken by Yelü Dashi upon establishing the Qara Khitai dynasty in 1124.[30] What is more, the Great Liao featured many of the aforementioned

Kitan identity markers, such as the tribal religion, the trappings of Chinese imperial tradition (reign titles, seals, etc.), the elite status of the Yelü clan, and the lofty standing of women. Last but not least, a considerable portion of the state's residents was Kitan.

Symbolism aside, the Great Liao failed to attract most of the Kitans or forge a sustainable political entity. One of the reasons for these shortcomings was the domestic instability that plagued the new Liao dynasty. After a series of victories against the Jin in 1215, elements within the polity's top brass demanded that Liuge promote himself from king to emperor, so as to assume an equal footing with Chinggis Khan and his Jin counterpart. When Liuge declined, on the grounds that this contradicted the terms of surrender with the Mongols (not to mention the true balance of power), they mutinied against him, enthroned his viceroy as emperor, and raided Korea.

The rebels viewed themselves as the Liao's true heirs. For example, they demanded that the Koreans submit to the newfangled entity. In so doing, they were harking back to the Kitans' dominion over Korea from the tenth to the twelfth centuries.[31] Correspondingly, Liuge hastened to ask for Chinggis Khan's help in this "civil war." As a token of his allegiance, he presented the emperor with his eldest son, Xuedu 薛闍, as a hostage. Only in 1219, with the assistance of Mongols, as well as Korean and Jurchen defectors, did Liuge finally manage to stamp out the insurrection of this "fake Liao state" (*wei Liao guo* 偽遼國). However, by then, he and his state had lost much of their power.[32] Following the victory, some of the rebellious Kitans were given to the Koreans in return for their military services, while others chose to stay on the peninsula. In addition, a considerable portion of the defeated troops—reportedly 50,000 Kitans—was divided among various Mongol units.

Liuge died soon after the triumph (1220), without having consolidated his realm. Centered in Guangning 廣寧 (part of modern-day Liaoning), the Great Liao continued to exist under the rule of his widow and then his son, Xuedu. Fighting alongside Ögödei in Korea between 1230 and 1237, Xuedu "liberated" over 6,000 Kitan households and brought them to Guangning. However, the successes of both father and son were not enough to avert the downfall of their state. Already in 1227, when Chinggis Khan sent Xuedu back to Manchuria to head his father's state, he instructed him to share the command of his armies with the khan's younger brother, Belgütei (Bolugutai, 孛魯古台). In 1233 or 1236, Ögödei formally abolished the Liao entity, adding the Guangning region to Belgütei's appanage. Nevertheless, Liuge's sons and grandsons continued to serve in the Mongol army and acquitted themselves well in battles against Korea, the Jin, and the Song. They continued to lead the Guangning troops and administer the region until 1269 when it was placed under the purview of Liaoyang, the Jin's eastern capital. Henceforth, there would be no other attempts to set up a Kitan state under Mongol rule.[33]

All the blame for the abolishment of the Great Liao cannot be placed entirely on Liuge's failure to secure an alliance with fellow Kitans, for the consolidation of Ögödei's holdings in north China also played an instrumental role. So long as the Jin war raged on, the Mongols tolerated the handful of kingdoms that were established in Manchuria by various Jin defectors, who had exploited the temporary power vacuum in the area since 1214. When the Jin finally succumbed in 1234, these states were no longer of any use to the Mongols, and Ögödei preferred to subsume Manchuria—a region that was partly suited for nomadism and close to Mongolia—under his direct rule. "The time of the petty kings," as Rashīd al-Dīn put it, "was over."[34] As a result, the Kitans in China no longer had a political framework to help them retain their identity. Moreover, the termination of both the Qara Khitai and the Jin (the Kitans' foil and arch rivals) also accelerated the decline of Kitan identity and encouraged them to throw in their lot with the Mongols.

At around the same time, the remnants of the Qara Khitai royal house were manipulating the upheavals that were instigated by the Mongol invasion on the other side of the steppe for their own benefit. More specifically, Baraq Ḥājib, a scion of the Qara Khitai royal house, founded a Kitan state in Kirmān (a province in southern Iran) in 1222. While also bearing the name Qara Khitai, this incarnation had limited political and territorial ambitions, as its monarchy was subject to both the Mongols and the Abbasid caliph. Located in a comparatively marginal area of the Mongol empire, outside the steppe belt and far from Mongolia, the area was moderately conducive to transhumance.[35] It existed as a vassal of the united Mongol empire and then the Ilkhanate until 1306, when the polity was dismantled either for neglecting to pay its dues to the Mongols or as part of Ilkhan Öljeitü's efforts to centralize his administration. While retaining fewer Kitan markers (the most prominent of which was the elevated status of women) and despite its rulers' conversion to Islam (a step that the Qara Khitai had eschewed in Central Asia), the mere existence of this state enabled the Kitans to hang on to their identity, if only in name. However, their "Kitanness" frayed in the immediate aftermath of the Qara Khitai's dissolution, which only reinforced their assimilatory mind-set.[36]

Geographical Dispersion: Population Movements and Their Impact

As demonstrated in Allsen's chapter in this volume, one of the distinguishing features of Mongol rule was the colossal population movements that

were triggered by its armies' advance. In this respect, the Kitans were no exception. Due to their early incorporation into the Mongol ranks and their value as both nomadic soldiers and qualified administrators, Kitans were indeed dispatched across the Eurasian continent to serve the needs of the ever-expanding empire. However, even before their integration, Chinggis Khan's attacks against the Jin spawned Kitan refugees. Many escaped with the Jin court to Kaifeng in 1214, where they subsequently fought against the Mongols, and a few Kitans migrated to the lands of the Song.[37] With respect to those under the empire's rule, Chinggis and his successors transferred farmers to Central Asia with the objective of repopulating areas that were devastated by war. In addition, one of Chinggis Khan's earliest Kitan supporters, Yelü Ahai 耶律 阿海, was appointed governor of Transoxania, a position later held by his son.[38]

At any rate, the prime catalyst of Kitan relocation was military deployment. The Kitans indeed made substantial military and administrative contributions in the Jin campaigns (1211–1215, 1217–1223, and 1229–1234) as the Mongols took full advantage of their close familiarity with the terrain and its inhabitants.[39] Both as groups and individuals, they also took part in all the empire's other major battles: Korea in the 1210s–1230s, where some of the troops settled down following the mutiny against Liuge; Chinggis Khan's campaign in Central Asia (1220–1225); the Eastern European front during Ögödei's reign (1237–1241); the fighting in the Middle East under Hülegü during the 1250s; Möngke's battles in Sichuan (1258–1259); and Qubilai's conquest of the Dali kingdom (1253–1256) and the Song dynasty (1268–1279).[40]

Most of the Kitan-related information in the Chinese sources pertains to those who returned to China. However, it stands to reason that some fell on the battlefield and others remained in their new locations.[41] With respect to north China, while a substantial Kitan population indeed remained in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, after 1215, the region of Yanjing (or Zhongdu, near present-day Beijing) was by and large administered by Kitans and became a central destination for ordinary Kitan migrants as well.[42] In general, the later distribution, especially after the sixteenth century, of tribal names and toponyms across Eurasia bearing the word *Khitai/Khatai* is reflective of the magnitude of Kitan dispersion, which probably included the descendants of the Qara Khitai.[43] In the thirteenth century, this Eurasia-wide movement considerably thinned the original Kitans' ranks.

The division of the Mongol empire into the four khanates engendered a formidable shift in the patterns of Kitan mobility, largely confining its purview to the Yuan's borders where it assumed a southward trajectory. While south China's flourishing economy might have influenced this turn of events,

most recorded cases of migration were initiated by the Mongols, especially their military and administrative appointments. After the conquest of the Song, the empire returned the majority of its "ethnically" Mongol forces to the north, while garrisoning the new army (former Song units) and the Han army in the south. By this juncture, most of the Kitan troops were in the Han army, so that they were primarily serving in south and southwestern China.[44] Similarly, the lion's share of documented administrative appointments of Kitans after 1279 were in south China, particularly Huguang 湖廣, Yunnan 雲南, Sichuan 四川, Jiangnan 江南, Zhejiang 浙江, and Jiangxi 江西.[45] It is not uncommon to find several generations of one family spread out in various parts of China, with the last generation located in the south. For example, the family of the brothers Yelü Ahai and Tuhua originated in Inner Mongolia. Both men joined Temüjin in Mongolia before the Baljuna Covenant (1203) and took part in the early battles against the Jin in north China. Ahai accompanied Chinggis Khan to Central Asia and was assigned to administer Transoxania, where he died in approximately 1223. His son Miansige 綿思哥 inherited the post in Samarqand, but returned to China following the Ṭarabī rebellion (1238–1239) and then was appointed as *darughachi* (governor) of Zhongdu. In the meantime, one of his siblings became left prime minister of Liaodong, and another commanded the Kitan and Han army in Zhongdu. Miansige's son Maige 買哥 succeeded his father in Zhongdu; however, in 1258, he went to fight in Sichuan and was killed in action. Of his seven sons, only two left an imprint: Laoge 老哥 was a right prime minister, probably in the capital of Dadu (Beijing); Luma 驢馬, a *bitikchi* (scribe) in the guard, was stationed nearby. In 1288, Luma was sent to put down a revolt that was launched by Qadan (Hadan 哈丹 or Hadan tuolugan 哈丹禿魯干), a descendant of Chinggis Khan's brother who joined Nayan's rebellion in Manchuria. His post was inherited by one of his six sons. The other three sons for whom there is data were stationed to the south in Jiangxi, Huguang, and Zhejiang, respectively.[46]

Ahai's brother, Yelü Tuhua, was in the vanguard of both the first (1211–1214) and second (Muqali-led) waves of Mongol attacks on the Jin. His two sons resided in Shaanxi 陝西 during the 1230s and 1240s, where they filled military and administrative posts and sponsored Daoist activities. In the following decade, they took part in the campaigns against the Song in Sichuan. Apart from a grandson of a lesser wife who was sent to administer Weijinglu 衛輝路 in Henan 河南 during the early 1260s, the next generation of this family remained in Sichuan. Tuhua's grandsons continued to lock horns with the Song from 1260 to 1278 and some fell in action. His great-grandson Mangudai 忙古帶 (1250–1307) was born in Shaanxi, but migrated to Sichuan with his father before the age of ten. After proving himself in the battles of

Sichuan, Mangudai was transferred to Yunnan in the early 1280s. At this point in his career, he waged war against various minor kingdoms, invaded Vietnam, and put down local revolts. He died in 1307 while serving as both a general and left prime minister of Yunnan's mobile secretariat. Mengudai's two surviving sons (one of whom died young, leaving behind a pair of small children) also held positions in Yunnan. Reservations aside, some scholars consider Tuhua and his offspring to be the forefathers of the modern-day Yunnan Kitans.[47] From our standpoint, though, the crux of this narrative is that by the end of the 1200s, the fourth and fifth generations of this Inner Mongolian family were mostly settled in different parts of south China, and the same could be said for numerous other Kitan families.[48]

Paths of Identity Change

Mongolization

The abolition of the Kitan political framework and the people's geographic dispersion precipitated slippage in their ethnic identity. What is more, the empire's unprecedented success encouraged the Kitans, as well as many other groups, to identify with the victors and "become Mongols."[49] The above-mentioned similarities between the Kitans and Mongols in all that concerned language, physiognomy, and customs undoubtedly facilitated this process, as did the two groups' interaction in the military. This sense of unity comes across in the dialogue that was presumably held between Chinggis Khan and Yaoli Shi (姚里氏, i.e., "of the Yaoli clan," a subclan of the Xiao), Liuge's widow and successor.[50] Upon the emperor's return from Central Asia in 1225, Yaoli Shi, along with Liuge's younger sons, a grandson, and nephew, paid him a visit in the Tanguts' land. She asked Chinggis to accept her and Liuge's son, Shange 善哥, as a replacement for Liuge's eldest son, Xuedu—the above-mentioned hostage who was entrusted to him in 1216—so that the firstborn could succeed his father as head of the Liao state. Chinggis replied that

> Xuedu is already a Mongol. He followed us to the Western Regions; and when the Muslims surrounded the heir apparent in the city of Khwārazm,[51] Xuedu whisked him to safety with a thousand men, though he himself was wounded by a lance. He also fought with us against the Muslims in Bukhara and Samarqand and was struck by an arrow. Because he repeatedly rendered such services, he was given [the title] *Badoulu* [拔都魯 = Bagatur or Bahadur = Brave]. I cannot part with him; let Shange inherit his father's post instead.[52]

In sum, what makes one a Mongol, according to the great khan, is the bond between comrades-in-arms, excelling in warfare, and proven loyalty. Since most of the documented Kitans were soldiers, this path was readily available to them.

This dialogue also attests to Chinggis Khan's willingness to accept the Kitans into the Mongol ranks. The evidence strongly suggests that this path was open, above all, to those who had joined his army before the 1206 *qurilṭai* or during the Mongols' initial assaults against the Jin, where the Kitans' efforts were particularly valuable. Early defectors from the Jin were treated as *nökers* (companions, i.e., individuals who voluntarily detached themselves from their own clan to join the promising leader and become part of his tribe), and attained status and privileges that were on par with those of the Mongols.[53]

As a result, seniority in Mongol service, namely early capitulation to Chinggis Khan, became a valuable form of social capital for the Kitan elite families documented in the *Yuanshi,* in addition to high standing under the Liao or Jin, if there was any.[54] This sort of dedication, which was often the basis for a Kitan's appointment to hereditary posts, was also immensely appreciated by later Mongol khans, like Qubilai.[55]

The Mongol willingness to accept Kitans in their midst found expression in the bestowment of Mongolian names, nicknames, and titles on leading Kitan allies, although the conferring of Chinese titles was more prevalent even at the outset of the Mongols' expansion.[56] This in turn increased the popularity of Mongolian names among the Kitans, although quite a few Kitans bore both Mongolian and Chinese appellations in tandem.[57] While the conferred Mongolian names and titles appear mainly in the united empire period, the practice of taking Mongolian names lasted throughout the Yuan era and was also commonplace among non-Kitan segments of the Yuan polity, including its Chinese subjects. One reason for the popularity of adopting a Mongolian name was that it could help its possessor attain a job that was theoretically reserved for Mongols.[58]

There are also a few recorded cases of Mongols conferring Mongolian wives on their choice allies. These women often entered polygamous households. For instance, Chinggis Khan gave Yelü Ahai a Mongolian wife to compensate him for the Jin's detention of his original family after he crossed over to the Mongols.[59] Shimo Yexian, another early defector, had multiple spouses: a Mongolian, who was his principal wife; a Chinese woman from the Xiao 肖 clan (not the Kitan Xiao); and a member of the Kitan Yelü clan.[60] Yexian's son and one of his great-grandsons married Qonggirad Mongols.[61] Yelü Zhu 耶律鑄 (1221–1285), the son of Yelü Chucai, had six Mongolian wives (two from Chinggis' Kiyat clan), a Christian spouse (who might

have been also a Mongol), and another of indeterminate ethnicity, though not a Kitan. Two of his sons also took Mongolian wives. Unlike Yexian and Ahai, Zhu eschewed the Kitan custom whereby royal Kitans marry women from the Xiao clan.[62]

All the above does not mean, however, that, at this stage, the Kitans were eager to shed their identity or neglect its Chinese component. However, Yelü Zhu embodies the nuances of "Kitanness" during his age. Besides his six Mongolian wives, Zhu was born in Chinggis Khan's camp in Central Asia, grew up in Ögödei's guard in Mongolia, won fame as a rider and archer, and possessed a Mongolian nickname (Tughus, i.e., peacock). Moreover, thanks to his close ties with the khan, he played an important role in selecting the location of the imperial capital, Qaraqorum. His Mongolian bona fides notwithstanding, when Zhu was sent by Möngke to collect land taxes from Yanjing, he issued the following request: "All my ancestors read Confucian books; Confucian scholars (*rusheng* 儒生) dwell on the Central Plain. [Therefore,] I would like to take along my son to Yan[jing] so he can study with a distinguished teacher."[63] Möngke duly granted Zhu his wish. Both father and son (the latter, Yelü Xiliang 耶律希亮, was born to a Mongol women and married a Jalayirid Mongol) enjoyed illustrious careers in the Yuan civil administration and wrote Chinese literary collections.[64] By virtue of such expertise in Chinese language and culture, Kitans served as intermediaries between the Mongols and the Chinese. Many were given administrative positions in China. What is more, quite a few Kitan figures are credited with talking their masters out of destroying Chinese cities.[65]

It stands to reason that those Kitans who consorted primarily with Mongols, be it their fellow soldiers in the invading armies or their associates in Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia (parts of which remained under Mongol rule after the Yuan collapse in 1368), gradually assimilated into Mongol society. A reference from Qubilai's time (1284) indeed notes that, unlike "ordinary" Kitans (and Jurchens), those "who were born in the northwest and do not speak Chinese" should be treated like Mongols.[66] The appearance of the surname Yelü in Monggoljin and Juu Uda (areas of Inner Mongolia near the Kitan homeland) indeed reinforces this argument.[67] Similarly, the language of the Dagurs (Daurs)—a Mongolian-speaking minority currently inhabiting northeast Inner Mongolia and Manchuria—resembles Kitan. According to the Dagurs' tradition, they are of Kitan descent and might indeed be the progeny of these same Mongolized Kitans.[68]

From Mongols to Chinese

Once the empire stabilized, and certainly after the conquests, the Mongols were less in need of the Kitans' above-mentioned services as soldiers and

intermediaries, so that their willingness to accept the Kitans (and others) as full-fledged Mongols gradually declined. As a result, the Kitans turned to Chinese society as their target for assimilation. More than anything else, three Mongol policies are responsible for this development: their military reforms; the transfer of Kitans to South China; and, above all, the Kitans' classification as Hanren (Northern Chinese).

As discussed above, the army played a key role in identity change. While the military indeed constituted a melting pot that forged an imperial identity, especially for those Kitans in the Mongol guards or those scattered among different Mongol units, it concomitantly served as a framework for preserving the ancestral identity of those in Kitan units that remained intact or were commanded by fellow Kitans. In any event, within the framework of Chinggis Khan's reforms, military units replaced most tribal units as the lodestone of identity.[69] Quite a few of the early Kitan leaders of the anti-Jin insurgency joined the Mongols with their retainers, many of whom were probably Kitans. At least at the start, these figures continued to preside over their troops.[70] In fact, the modern-day Yunnan Kitans, a group consisting of approximately 150,000 people, claim to descend from the Kitan troops who arrived in the region under the command of Yelü Menggudai, Tuhua's grandson, in the 1280s.[71] Yuan sources also mention several units that featured a massive Kitan presence: naturally "the Kitan army" (Qidan jun 契丹軍), as Liuge's troops were sometimes called; the Black army (Hei jun 黑軍), a unit comprised of 12,000 "top soldiers," which was led by Shimo Yexian and his heirs; and the *Jiu* army (Jiu jun 乣軍, Mongolian Jüyin).[72] The literal meaning of *jiu* is "mixed" or "merged." Accordingly, the Jiu army consisted of a wide array of ethnicities (including Kitans, Jurchens, Tatars, Tanguts, and Ongguts). Living along and beyond the Jin frontier zone, they worked for the Jurchens as border patrol troops. In essence, the Jiu were comprised of several groups, which were primarily distinguished by their location along the border areas (e.g., the Jiu of the Northwest, etc.). Some of them, Kitans included, rebelled against the Jin as early as 1207, whereas others were incorporated into the Mongol army at various stages of the empire's conquest of the Jurchen realm.[73]

At any rate, these units were gradually disbanded. In addition, the lion's share of the Jiu army was dissolved and its troops were allocated to various Mongol units. For instance, upon defeating the "Juyin troops of the Qara Khidat and the Jurchen" in around 1214, Chinggis Khan divided them among his trusted allies Muqali and Bo'urchu.[74] A significant portion of Liuge's forces eventually underwent a similar process. As already noted, some fifty years later, his descendants would lose their command posts in the army of Guanning (where the Kitan army's troops had settled). Likewise, the

Black army was dispersed between 1295 and 1311, "for these were days of peace."[75]

In parallel, the standing of the Kitans' hereditary military leaders was compromised by the reforms of Ögödei and, above all, Qubilai. As the conquest of China proceeded, the number of non-Mongols, especially Chinese, in the imperial army swelled. Most of the Kitans were incorporated into the Han army, which Ögödei set up in the aftermath of his victory over the Jin. Nevertheless, some of the hereditary families still fought under the command of Mongol princes.[76] However, after putting down the rebellion of Li Tan (理談, a Chinese military leader who betrayed his new lords) in 1262, Qubilai introduced his above-mentioned reform: military and civilian power were separated; the relatives of officers were stripped of their military positions; authority over the conscription of troops and supplies was delegated away from the commanders; and the latter were placed under the direct supervision of imperial guards. In so doing, Qubilai substantially reduced the power of the non-Mongol hereditary lords, Kitans or otherwise.[77]

With the end of the conquest, the shared Mongol–Kitan military experience was significantly reduced. Following the defeat of the Song, the empire transferred its Mongol troops back to the north and stationed units of the Han army and the newly conquered army (Song troops) in the south. By then, most of the Kitans already belonged to the Han army, so that many were garrisoned in south China, especially Jiangnan, where they could not practice nomadism.[78] The steady decline of the Yuan army between the late thirteenth century and early to mid-fourteenth century further eroded the Kitan commanders' sway and diminished their contact with the Mongol brass. From Qubilai's time onward, the symbiosis between the Kitans and Mongols in the imperial army steadily gave way to a Kitan–Chinese bond.

The Mongols transferred not only military personnel to the south, but administrative officials as well. The only relatives that accompanied these officials to their new locations were their nuclear families, and these Kitans rarely came back north. Because south China was inhospitable to nomadism, most of these administrators (like their fellow Kitan soldiers) were forced to give up their nomadic way of life, which was a major facet of their Kitan identity. In addition, this trajectory ratcheted up their contacts with the Chinese, who vastly outnumbered all the other ethnic groups in the south. As demonstrated above, these policies also dispersed Kitan communities, thereby making it difficult for individuals to find a wife from the same background. Consequently, Kitan intermarriage with Han women skyrocketed toward the mid- to late Yuan period.[79]

A no less significant factor in the Kitans' absorption into Chinese society was their classification as Hanren. In the wake of the Song's elimination, the Yuan state divided its subject population into four classes: 1) Mongols; 2) people of various categories (Semuren 色目人); 3) northerners or northern Chinese (Hanren 漢人); and 4) southerners (Nanren 南人). The Kitans were classified as Hanren, together with the Jurchens, the Northern Chinese, and the tribes of Yunnan and Sichuan—all of which fell under the Mongol yoke before Qubilai assumed the helm in 1260. Most of the other steppe peoples, such as the Uighurs, Tanguts, Khwārazmians, and Qipchaqs, fell under the heading of Semuren—a more privileged class than that of the Kitan.[80] Put differently, the Kitans' official status was lower than that of the Mongols and Semuren. Although this division was not always clear-cut or rigorously enforced, many senior-level posts were now less accessible to Kitans.[81] The state's official hierarchy thus hindered their assimilation into the Mongols' ranks. In fact, from Qubilai's time onward, the number of Kitans that are mentioned in Yuan sources consistently drops.

On the other hand, the Kitans' acceptance into Chinese society was bolstered by their familiarity with the Chinese language and culture as well as the diversity of Mongol-ruled China. Furthermore, their integration was buoyed by their ability to retain Kitan age-old social norms, such as levirate marriages and the elevated status of military officers. Historically speaking, these norms were incompatible with Chinese traditions, but during the Yuan era they were partially countenanced thanks to Mongol influence.[82] Documented references to the Kitans as filial sons or chaste wives, that is, exemplary Confucians, also attest to their smooth assimilation into Chinese society.[83]

The most conspicuous sign of Kitan inroads into Chinese society was the adoption of local surnames. As opposed to their experience under the Jin, this transpired without any external pressure. Taking a Chinese family name was a shortcut to acceptance into Chinese ranks, for it negated the most glaring sign of otherness—a multisyllable surname.[84] In some instances, the name change had more to do with personal circumstances. For example, a Kitan surnamed Shimo was orphaned at the age of seven. Raised by a Chinese family, he took the name of his adoptive parents, Zheng 鄭.[85] More often than not, Chinese surnames were chosen with historical or phonetic considerations in mind. The most popular Chinese family name among Kitans was Liu 劉, on account of its vocal similarity to Yelü and its prestige as the surname of Han dynasty emperors. Other popular choices were Li 李 and Wang 王. While the former was the family name that Tang rulers had conferred upon the elites of their Kitan vassals, Wang literally means king

or prince, so that it preserved the memory of the Kitans' royal ancestry. Most families with the name Xiao 萧 simply held on to this appellation, for it is also a Chinese surname. Some Xiao who had changed their name to Shimo or Shulü eventually reverted back to the original. In Yunnan, the name Yelü was usually changed to Alu 阿律; thereafter, it was pared down to A 阿, in deference to the first character in the name Abaoji, the founder of the Liao dynasty.[86] At the outset of this symbiosis, the Kitan and Chinese family names were often used simultaneously, but the latter eventually supplanted their antecedents.[87] From the standpoint of the present study, the most important trend is that, with the exception of the Yunnan case, the surnames that the Kitans adopted rendered them indistinguishable from the Chinese. In contrast, the Uighurs adopted rare Chinese characters, such as Xie 偰 or Lian 廉, as their Chinese surnames, which continued to serve as ethnic markers.[88] For the Kitans, though, the use of Chinese surnames was both a sign of assimilation and an incentive to continue along this path. It also meant that the Kitans became almost untraceable in late Yuan sources. In fact, Ming sources (1368–1644) treat Kitan identity as a past affiliation that was no longer in force.[89]

Two cases of Kitans who retained their ancestral identity until the end of the Yuan era promise to shed light on the multicultural identities of Yuan society. The first is Shimo Yisun 石抹宜孫 (d. 1359). His great-grandfather Shimo Yexian was one of the northern Manchurian Kitans who refused to acknowledge Jin rule and wasted no time in switching his allegiance to Chinggis Khan. Yisun inherited his father's Black army post as *Yanhai shang fu wanhu* 沿海上副万户 (the vice-commander of 10,000 of the coast), before being transferred to Chuzho 處州, Zhejiang. In addition to his military pedigree, Yisun was famous for his erudition in all that concerned Chinese culture. He evidently acquired this learning from his father, also known as a general and scholar, who was well versed in, among other things, classics, astronomy, and geography. Moreover, both father and son had a Chinese-style name (*zi* 字). The younger Shimo was a talented poet, prolific reader, and close friend of preeminent Confucian scholars, not least Song Lian 宋濂 and Liu Ji 劉基. Beginning in 1351, Yisun took an active and highly commended part in repulsing a litany of anti-Yuan insurrections in the Zhejiang and Jiangsu regions. Unlike his Confucian friends, he refused to desert the Yuan for the emergent Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, who eventually founded the Ming dynasty. When Ming troops conquered Chuzhou in 1360, Yisun escaped to Fujian, where he sought to recruit an army with which to retake the city. Upon realizing that his efforts were in vain, the commander returned to Chuzhou where he was killed in defense of the Yuan cause. By virtue of his loyalty, Yisun was honored posthumously by none other than Zhu Yuanzhang himself.[90] In sum, Shimo Yisun was a scholar-general who was proud of his Liao descent, expressed his allegiance to the Mongol cause both in Confucian terms and on the battlefield, and was well-versed in Chinese literary tradition.

These same characteristics also apply to our second example, the Kitan general and poet Shulü Jie 述律傑 (d. 1357), who went by a handful of other names: Shulü Duoerzi (述律朵兒只 or 鐸爾直), a Kitan surname that he used in concert with a Mongolian first name; Shulü Cundao 述律存道, Shulü Zundao 述律 遵道, or Shulü Congdao 述律從道, which feature his Chinese-style name (Cundao with the variants Zundao and Congdao) instead of his Chinese or Mongolian first names; and, mostly among Chinese scholars, as Xiao Cundao 肖存道, a purely Chinese name, or in his literary name (*hao* 號), Heye 鶴野). In any event, between 1332 and 1340, Jie uncharacteristically changed the family name Shimo back to Shulü, an act that bears witness to abiding feelings for his Kitan origins.

Shulü Jie was the grandson of Shimo Anzhi, another early backer of Chinggis Khan. The family moved to Sichuan during Möngke's reign, and Jie inherited his father's post as commander of 10,000 in Baoning 保寧, Sichuan. Falling under his jurisdiction was the city of Chengdu 成都, where he built his home with his Yelü wife, established an academy for classical learning, and assumed responsibility for the imperial examinations that were conducted therein. After years of suppressing rebellions and getting involved in the succession struggles that roiled the area's capital cities of Shaanxi, Sichuan, and Yunnan, he was dispatched to the Yunnan in 1340. There he served as commander in chief (*Yunnan duyuan shuai* 云南都元帥) and was subsequently delegated administrative duties as well. While coping with yet another mutiny in 1356 (this time in Shaanxi), Jie perished on the field of battle. Apart for his military career, the Kitan nobleman was a highly regarded poet who was well versed in Chinese literature. Lastly, Shulü Jie was on close terms with a wide array of distinguished Yuan scholars (e.g., Su Tianjue 蘇天爵, Yu Ji 虞集, and Huang Jin 黃晉), many of whom referred to him in their writing.[91]

While retaining some ancestral characteristics, the late Yuan Kitans were deeply assimilated into Chinese society and culture. Accordingly, the modern-day Yunnan Kitans, who claim to derive from their Yuan namesakes, are presently classified as Hanren in China, rather than a separate minority.[92]

Conclusion

In summation, the Kitans embraced cultural pluralism long before the rise of Chinggis Khan. Upon first encountering the Mongols, they exhibited a

well-defined identity, with one leg in the Chinese world and another in the steppe nomadic realm. Imperial policies were the key factor behind the direction of Kitan assimilation. While some Kitans were pulled into the Mongols' ranks, most of those in China eventually immersed themselves in the local society. By dissolving the Kitans' state in Manchuria and their special military units; by dispersing Kitan troops in various Mongol military units throughout Eurasia and transferring their civilians all across China; and, last but not least, by classifying them as Hanren instead of Mongols or Semuren, the empire essentially pushed the Kitans into the bosom of the Chinese. However, it bears noting that this development was facilitated by the legitimacy of Kitan social norms due to the penetration of Mongolian customs into Yuan China. All told, these developments eclipsed the Kitans' ethnic identity and led to their full absorption into Chinese society.

On the other side of the steppe, most of these factors—the dissolution of a Kitan political framework, the collectivity's geographical dispersion, and the similarities between Kitan and Mongol social norms—also prompted assimilation into the surrounding sedentary population, as the Kitans were subsumed by the Turco-Iranian Muslims, a fate also shared by the Mongols in West Asia.[93] At any rate, the examples cited throughout this chapter demonstrate that the Mongols were indeed agents of cultural change in all that concerns Kitan identity.

Notes

This study was supported by the Israel Science Foundation (grant no. 818/03). I would also like to thank Yang Qiao and Andrei Gomulin for their research assistance.

1. For the role of the state in determining identity change in the Chinese context see, e.g., M. Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, 2001); D. M. Robinson, "The Ming Court and the Legacy of the Yuan Mongols," in *Culture, Courtiers and Competition: The Ming Court (1368–1644)*, ed. D. M. Robinson (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2008), pp. 365–421.

2. See, e.g., Qiu Shusen, "Lun Yuandai Zhongguo shaoshu minzu xin geju ji qi shehui yingxiang," paper given in the International conference on Mongol Yuan studies, Nanjing, 2002.

3. T. T. Allsen, "Ever Closer Encounters: The Appropriation of Culture and the Apportionment of Peoples in the Mongol Empire," *Journal of Early Modern History,* 1 (1997), pp. 2–23; P. B. Golden, "'I will give the people unto thee': The Chinggisid Conquests and their Aftermath in the Turkic World," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 3rd ser., 3/10 (2000), pp. 21–41; and M. Biran, *Chinggis Khan* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 101–102.

4. For the fate of several leading Uighur families under the Yuan see M. Brose, *Subjects and Masters: Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire* (Bellingham, WA, 2007).

5. For an in-depth look at the Liao see, inter alia, V. Hansen and F. Louis (eds.), *Perspectives on the Liao* (New Haven, CT, 2010); K. A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907–1125)* (Philadelphia, 1949); D. Twitchett and K.-P. Tietze, "The Liao," in *The Cambridge History of China,* vol. 6: *Alien Regimes and Border States 907–1368*, ed. D. Twitchett and H. Franke (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 43–153; Shen Hsueh-man (ed.), *Gilded Splendor: Treasures of China's Liao Empire (907–1125)* (New York, 2006); N. Standen, "What Nomads Want: Raids, Invasions, and the Liao Conquest of 947," in *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Outside World,* ed. R. Amitai and M. Biran (Leiden, 2005), pp. 129–174; N. Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossings in Liao China* (Honolulu, 2007); Liu Pujiang, *Song mo zhi jian: Liao Jin Qidan Nüzhen shi yan jiu* (Beijing, 2008); and Liu Pujiang, *Liao Jin shi lun* (Shenyang, 1999). D. Kane expounds on the Kitan language in D. Kane, *The Kitan Language and Script* (Leiden, 2009).

6. For more on the Qara Khitai see M. Biran, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History: Between China and the Islamic World* (Cambridge, 2005) and Wei Liangtao, *Kalahan wang chao shi, Xi Liao shi* (Beijing, 2010), pp. 204–383. For the Qara Khitai as meaning the Liao Kitans see D. Kane, "The Great Central Liao Kitan State," in *Perspectives on the Liao*, ed. V. Hansen and F. Louis (New Haven, CT, 2010), p. 7. Professor Kane convincingly suggests that the Mongolian term **hara-kida* was a derivative of the Kitan **xuri(s) kida(n)*—the Chinese equivalent for the Liao Kitans. Additionally, this was how the Kitans referred to themselves on the eve of the Jurchen conquest. Since "Qara/Khara" is the word for "black" in Mongolian and Turkic, the name was understood in both the Muslim world and Yuan China as meaning "the Black Kitans." Kane's interpretation implies that the Liao dynasty in China and Yelü Dashi's Central Asian polity went by the same name (both Rashīd al-Dīn and *The Secret History of the Mongols* indeed used the same appellation for both entities).

7. Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de qianyi yanjiu," *Anyang shifan xueyuan xuebao,* 1 (2010), p. 72. For more on the Jin Kitans see Liu Pujiang, "Liao chao wangguo zihou de Qidan yimin," *Yanjing xuebao,* 10 (2001), pp. 135–172; Chen Shu, "Da Liao wajie yihou de Qidan ren," *Liao Jin shi lunji,* 1 (1987), pp. 297–323; H. Franke, "The Forest People of Manchuria: Kitans and Jurchens," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia,* ed. D. Sinor (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 410–412; and S. Jagchid "Kitan Struggles against Jurchen Oppression—Nomadism versus Sinicization," in S. Jagchid, *Essays in Mongolian Studies* (Provo, UT, 1988), pp. 34–49.

8. Song Lian, *Yuanshi* (Beijing, 1976), ch. 149, p. 3512; ch. 149, p. 3529; ch. 150, p. 3541 (hereafter cited as *YS*); and Jagchid, "Kitan Struggles," p. 166.

9. J. Jahunhen, *Manchuria: An Ethnic History* (Helsinki, 1996), p. 140. Also see, inter alia, Tuotuo, *Jin shi* (Beijing, 1976), ch. 8, pp. 184–185; ch. 99, p. 2186; ch. 105, p. 2321 (hereafter cited as *JS*); and *YS*, ch. 150, p. 3548.

10. For instance see *JS*, ch. 132, p. 2825; ch. 133, pp. 2849–2851; *YS*, ch. 149, p. 3512; H. Franke, "The Chin Dynasty," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6, pp. 241, 243–244; Jagchid, "Kitan Struggle," pp. 38–43; He Junzhe et al., *Jin chao shi* (Beijing, 1992), pp. 266–273, 351–353; Chen Shu, "Da Liao wajie yihou," pp. 302–304; Liu Pujiang, "Qidan yimin," pp. 152–155; Feng Jiqin, "Jin Yuan shiqi Qidan ren xing ming yanjiu," *Heilongjiang minzu congkan,* 4 (1992), pp. 106–107. For the connection between the Kitan original names and their Jin variants see esp. Chen Lü, *An ya tang ji,* ed. Siku quanshu, ch. 6, p. 25.

11. For more on the Kitans in West Asia see Biran, *The Empire,* passim.

12. See the references in ns. 7 and 11 above.

13. Kane, "The Great Central Liao Kitan State," p. 7 (and see n. 6 above). For discussion on the archaeological remains see esp. V. P. Zaytsev, "Rukopisnaiia kniga bol'shogo kidan'skogo pis'ma iz kollektsii Instituta vostochnyx rukopisei RAN," *Pis'mennye Pamiatniki Vostoka,* 2/15 (Autumn–Winter 2011), pp. 130–150, or http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nova_N_176 (accessed September 18, 2012); and Franz Gernet, "Maracanda/Samarkand, une métropole pré-mongole: Sources écrites et archéologie," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales,* 59/5–6 (September–December 2004), p. 1064.

14. This chapter follows in the footsteps of the subjective view on the formation of ethnic identity, which was expanded on by Barth in his introduction to F. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Boston, 1969), pp. 9–39. According to Smith, "Ethnic community is a named human population with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity." A. D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations* (Oxford, 1986), p. 32.

15. For more on the Qara Khitai see Franke, "The Forest People," pp. 405–406; and Tuotuo, *Liaoshi* (Beijing, 1976), ch. 30, pp. 356, 357 (hereafter cited as *LS*). For more on the Jin Kitans see *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3512.

16. The Kitan language and scripts have attracted a great deal of scholarly research, especially on the part of Kane, *The Kitan Language,* passim; and Kane, "The Great Central Liao Kitan State," pp. 5–56. A large-scripted Kitan book was unearthed in Kyrgyzstan and recently published by V. Zaytsev, "Rukopisnaiia kniga," pp. 130–150.

17. Kane, *Kitan language,* pp. 3–4; Biran, *The Empire,* pp. 127–128.

18. Biran, *The Empire,* pp. 162–163; Hu Xiaopeng and Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidan ren hunyi yanjiu," *Xibei shidaxue bao,* 46/6 (2009), pp. 44–48; and *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3152.

19. For the place of Chinese culture in the Kitan identity see, inter alia, Feng Jiqin et al., *Qidan zu wenhua shi* (Heilongjiang, 1994); and the references in n. 5 above.

20. For instance, when Qara Khitai spies were spotted in Jin border markets in 1177, the Jurchens closed the markets for three years and exiled the Kitans living in the area to the east. Moreover, they severed relations with the Tanguts for presumably allowing these spies to enter the Jin through their lands. See, inter alia, *JS,* ch. 50, p. 1114; ch. 134, pp. 2870–2871; R. Dunnell, "The Fall of the Xia Empire," in *Rulers from the Steppe,* ed. G. Seaman and D. Marks (Los Angeles, 1991), pp. 161–162; and Biran, *The Empire,* p. 57.

21. Yelü Chucai is discussed by I. De Rachewiltz, "Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, Yeh-lü Chu, Yeh-lü Hsi-liang," in *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yuan Period,* ed. de Rachewiltz et al. (Wiesbaden, 1993), pp. 136–175.

22. Rashīd, ed. Karīmī, vol. 1, p. 321; and Rashīd, tr. Thackston, vol. 1, p. 214.

23. Rashīd al-Dīn's assertion as to the similarities between the Kitans and Mongols is backed by modern linguistics and other sources. See Biran, *The Empire,* pp. 143–145; and *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3151.

24. Allsen provides a fine description of these conquests in T. T. Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire and Mongolian Rule in North China," in *The Cambridge History of China,* vol. 6, pp. 348–372.

25. Yao Jingan's index of the *Yuanshi* (*Yuanshi ren ming suoyin* [Beijing, 1982]) includes 34 Yelüs (p. 94), 20 Yila (p. 175), 35 Shimo (p. 57), and 30 Xiao (p. 282); and de Rachewiltz and May Wang's *Repertory of Proper Names in Yuan Literary Sources* (Taipei, 1988–1996) includes 87 Yelüs (vol. 3, pp. 2293–2298), 22 Xila (vol. 1, pp. 972–973), 37 Shimo (vol. 2, pp. 1679–1680), 1 Shulü (vol. 4, p. 567), and 551 Xiao (vol. 1, p. 744–764), only three of whom can be positively identified as Kitans or Liao (though more appear as Kitans in the *YS*). Combined with those mentioned in the *Yuanshi* and subtracting those appearing in both indices along with those known by multiple names, our final tally is slightly over 200 names. This includes a few Kitans with other surnames (Wang, Liu, and Li—see below) or without one.

26. There is an abundance of information on the families of Yelü Chucai, Yelü Liuge 耶律 留哥, the brothers Yelü Tuhua 耶律秃花 and Yelü Ahai 耶律 阿海, Xila Nieer 移剌捏兒, Yelü Youshang 耶律有尚, Yelü Temo 耶律忒末, Shimo Yexian 石抹也先, Shimo Bodar 石抹孛迭兒, Shimo Anzhi 石抹按只, Shimo Mingan 石抹明安, Shimo Mingli 石抹明里, Shimo Gougou 石抹狗狗, Xiao Baizhu 蕭拜住, and Wang Xun 王珣.

27. Ma Mingda,"Yuan dai diaosujia gouchen," *Xibei minzu yanjiu,* 1 (1997), pp. 239–242; and Wang Deyi, *Yuan ren zhuanji ziliao suoyin* (Taipei, 1979–1982), p. 1980.

28. For Yuan sources on Toghon Temür's reign (1333–1368), including the limitations of the *Yuanshi* annals for this period, see Cang Xiuliang (ed.), *Zhongguo shixue mingzhu pingjie* (Jinan, 1990), vol. 2, pp. 223–245; Wang Shenrong, *Yuanshi tan yuan* (Changchun, 1991), pp. 1–283; and F. W. Mote, "A Note on Traditional Sources for Yuan History," in *The Cambridge History of China,* vol. 6, pp. 689–693.

29. Liuge is discussed in various works, such as the following: *YS,* ch. 1, pp. 16, 19, 20; ch. 149, pp. 3511–3514; *JS,* ch. 14, p. 314; ch. 102, p. 2245; ch. 103, pp. 2278, 2281; Rashīd, ed. Karīmī, vol. 1, pp. 327–328, and Rashīd, tr. Thackston, vol. 1, p. 221–222; Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shi ji* (Taipei, 1962), ch. 31, pp. 1–4; Ke Shaomin, *Xin Yuanshi* (Beijing, 1979), ch. 134, pp. 1–5; Yanai Watari, *Yuan dai jing lue Dongbei kao* (Taipei, 1963), pp. 76–90; Liu Pujiang, "Qidan yimin," pp. 158–160; H. D. Martin, *The Rise of Chinggis Khan and His Conquest of North China* (Baltimore, 1950), pp. 150–158, 195–203, 215–218, 236–237, 283–284; J. gchid, "Kitan Struggles," p. 180.

30. Liu Pujiang, "Qidan yimin," p. 159. Liuge's name and reign titles appear on four seals that were unearthed in Manchuria: three in Liaoning (during the 1910s and 1970s), and one in Heilongjiang (1984). All are dated to Tiantong 3 (天统, "heavenly rule," 1215), made of copper, and inscribed in Chinese. None of them contain any hint of submission to the Mongols. The *Yuanshi* calls Liuge's state "Liao" and its reign title Yuantong (元统, "original rule"); *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3512; Bayan, "Yelü Liuge zhi tiantong jinian," *Shehui kexue jikan,* 3 (1985), p. 92; and Xu Yucai, "Dandong diqu faxian Jinmo Yelü Liuge Da Liao zhengquan tong yin," *Wenwu,* 5 (1985). For more on the similar measures that were adopted by Yelü Dashi see *LS,* ch. 30, p. 357; and Biran, *The Empire,* p. 38.

31. Chŏng In-ji, *Gaoli shi (Koryŏsa)* (Seoul, 1990), vol. 1, ch. 22, p. 441.

32. According to the *YS,* Liuge commanded the force that defeated the Kitan rebels; *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3513; Yanai Watari (*Dongbei,* p. 79) casts doubt on this account, on the grounds that Liuge is not mentioned in the Korean sources (*Gaoli shi [Koryŏsa],* vol. 1, ch. 22, p. 441ff.; vol. 2, ch. 103, p. 261ff.).

33. See n. 29 above, esp. *YS,* ch. 149, pp. 3514–3515.

34. Rashīd, ed. Karīmī, p. 328, and Rashīd, tr. Thackston, p. 223.

35. For Kirman's topography, population, and economy see A. K. S. Lambton, "Kirmān," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd ed. Online. http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/kirman-COM_0521 (accessed at the National Library of Israel, July 13, 2012).

36. For more on the Qara Khitai in Kirman see Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, *Simṭ al-'ulā li'l-ḥaḍra al-'ulyā,* ed. I. 'Abbās (Tehran, 1328/1949); Anonymous, *Ta'rīkh-i shāhī-i Qarā Khitā'iyyān,* ed. M. I. Būstānī Pārīzī (Tehran, 1976–1977); G. Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (New York, 2003), pp. 102–122; and

Biran, "Kitan Migrations in Inner Asia 10th–14th Centuries," *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies,* 3 (2012), pp. 92–96.

37. Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu" (MA thesis, Northwest Normal University, Laozhou, China, 2010), p. 11. Also see, inter alia, *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3522; ch. 150, p. 3559.

38. Li Zhichang, "*Changchun xi you ji,*" in *Menggu shiliao sizhong,* ed. Wang Guowei (Taipei, 1975), p. 327. The English version of this work is Li Chih-chang, *The Travels of an Alchemist,* tr. A. Waley (London, 1963), p. 93. Also see *YS,* ch. 150, pp. 3548–3549; and P. D. Buell, "Yeh-lü A-hai, Yeh-lü T'u-hua," in *In the Service of the Khan,* pp. 112–120.

39. Kitans guided the Mongol troops on their first incursions into the Jin. Following the Jurchens' capitulation, Kitans administered the Zhongdu conquest of 1215. Lastly, five out of Muqali's ten *tumen* commanders in the Jin campaign (1217–1223) were Kitans.

40. See *YS,* ch. 149, pp. 3512, 3515, 3522, 3532, 3533; ch. 150, p. 3548; ch. 151, p. 3577; ch. 154, pp. 3641–3642; ch. 166, p. 3907; and ch. 179, p. 4156.

41. Life paths of this sort are well documented for those who saw action in Sichuan, e.g., *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3522ff.; and ch. 154, pp. 3460–3462.

42. e.g., *YS,* ch. 153, p. 3610; and Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu," p. 14.

43. Toponyms, including the name Khitai, exist/existed in the following settings: the lower Don region, near the Caspian sea, during the fourteenth century; the sixteenth century in the Ob region, western Siberia; modern-day Bashkiria on both sides of the Ural Mountains; the steppes of contemporary southern Moldavia, which were formerly inhabited by the Qipchaq tribes; and present-day Tajikistan. Tribes and clans bearing the name Kitan surface among the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, the Tatars of Crimea, Afghans, Kyrgyz, Nogais, and Bashkirs. See D. Sinor, "Western Information on the Kitans and Some Related Questions," *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 115 (1995), pp. 262–269; Biran, *The Empire,* pp. 89–90. For the later dispersion of the Qara Khitai see ibid., 86–90; and Biran, "Kitan Migrations," 92–97. While certain Qara Khitai reached Mamluk Egypt, the Delhi Sultanate, and the Ilkhanate (not only Kirman), none merited a biography in the *Yuanshi.*

44. Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA, 1978), p. 54.

45. See *YS,* ch. 23, p. 521; ch. 35, p. 790; ch. 149, p. 3537; ch. 150, p. 3542; ch. 154, p. 3640; ch. 166, p. 3906; ch. 179, p. 4156; ch. 183, p. 4209; ch. 188, p. 4270–4721, 4309; Yu Xilu (comp.), *Zhishun Zhenjiang zhi,* in *Song-Yuan difangzhi congkan* (Taipei, 1980), vol. 3, ch. 15, p. 2820; Zhang Xuan (comp.), *Zhizheng Jinling xinzhi,* in *Song-Yuan difangzhi congkan* (Taipei, 1980), vol. 6, pp. 5594, 5608; Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu," pp. 18–23.

46. *YS,* ch. 150, pp. 3548–3551; and Tu Ji, *Mengwu'er shi ji,* in *Yuan shi er zhong* (Shanghai, 1989), vol. 2, ch. 49, pp. 375–380; also see Buell, "Yeh-lu A-hai," pp. 112–120.

47. Zhou Qingshu surveys the various stelae and Daoist inscriptions that pertain to Tuhua's family in Zhou Qingshu, "Yuan Huanzhou Yelü jiazu shishi huizheng yu Qidan ren de nanqian," *Mengyuan de lishi yu wenhua* (Taipei, 2001), vol. 2, pp. 501–540. Cf. Meng Zhidong, *Yunnan Qidan houyi yanjiu* (Beijing, 1995), pp. 56–64, who claims that Mangudai is an ancestor of the Yunnan Kitans. However, Meng's account of the family's chronology is highly problematic.

48. For instance, the families of Shimo Yexian, Shimo Anzhi, and see below.

49. This observation was made by Rashīd al-Dīn, who expounded on this thought: "Now [presumably the early fourteenth century] it has come about that the people of Khitai, Jurchen, Nankiyas [i.e., south China], Uighur, Qipchaq, Turkmen, Qarluq, Qalaj, and all the prisoners and the Tajik races that have been brought up among the Mongols are also called Mongols. All that assemblage takes pride in calling itself Mongol." Rashīd, ed. 'Alīzādah, vol. 1, pp. 163–164; and Rashīd, tr. Thackston, vol. 1, p. 44 (also see Lane's chapter in this volume). Cf. the similar Kitanization process that the Chinese underwent during Liao rule; P. Crossley, "Outside In: Power, Identity and the Han Lineage of Jizhou," in *Perspectives on the Liao,* ed. V. Hansen and F. Louis (New Haven, CT, 2010), pp. 121–155.

50. Peng Daya and Xu Ting, *Heida shi lue,* in *Wang Guowei yishu* (Shanghai, 1983), vol. 13, p. 25a.

51. The *Yuanshi* text reads *Hemi* 合迷, which might be referring to Hami in Eastern Xinjiang. I am following Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shi ji* (Taipei, 1962), ch. 31, p. 294, who changed *Hemi* to *Heliqi* 合立𠯿, that is *Qurumchi*—the Mongolian name for Khwārazm. This version dovetails smoothly with the chronological and geographical context. For *Qurumchi* as Khwārazm see I. de Rachewiltz, tr. and annot., *The Secret History of the Mongols* (Leiden, 2004), vol. 2, p. 962.

52. *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3154. After Yaoli Shi explained that, unlike her son Shange, Xuedu was born to Yelü Liuge's principal wife and thus deserved the post, Chinggis Khan granted her request. Liuge's family members who accompanied Yaoli Shi on her visit remained in the Mongol army.

53. I. de Rachewiltz, "Personal and Personalities in North China in the Early Mongol Period," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient,* 9 (1966), pp. 88–144, esp. p. 129.

54. See, inter alia, *YS,* ch. 146, p. 3455; ch. 149, pp. 3511, 3529, 3532, 3534; ch. 150, pp. 3541, 3554, 3548; ch. 151, p. 3576; ch. 152, p. 3603; ch. 154, p. 3640; ch. 166, p. 3906; ch. 169, p. 3976; ch. 179, p. 4156; ch. 188, p. 4309; ch. 193, p. 4382; and Yu Ji, *Daoyuan xue gu lu,* ed. Wanyou wenku (Shanghai, 1937), ch. 10. Cf. *YS,* ch. 174, p. 4064. This source—the biography of the eminent Confucian Yelü Youshang—only mentions his family's relation to the Liao royal house.

55. A noteworthy example turns up in the biography of Shimo Mingli, a cook whose family had already joined the Mongols by Chinggis Khan's time and later served Tolui's household. Qubilai assigned Mingli to his heir apparent Zhenjin (真金 1243–1285). Sometime later, the khan asked his son to choose ten loyal servants who deserved a reward, and Mingli was among them. Qubilai remembered the chef and elevated him to a higher place on the list. Responding to doubts about this award, Qubilai said that "Mingli's grandfather Henu 曷魯 served Chinggis Khan, Tolui, and me and my brothers. Where were you people at that time?" *YS,* ch. 169, p. 3976. Also see Huang Jin, *Jinhua Huang xiansheng wenji,* Sibu conggan ed., ch. 27, p. 5bff. (hereafter cited as "Huang Jin").

56. For instance, Yelü Chucai was called Urtu Saqal, "long beard," by the Mongols; Wang Xun was dubbed Qara Yuanshuai 哈剌元帥, "the black general-in-chief" (the second word is Chinese) (*YS,* ch. 149, p. 3535); Yila Nieer merited the title Yeke Bitikchi, "grand scribe"; *YS,* ch. 149, p. 3529); both Yelü Xuedu and his brother Shange were promoted to *bagatur/bahadur* (*YS,* ch. 149, pp. 3514, 3515); and the Mongolian title of Yeke Noyan (也可那延 Yeke Nayan, "grand noble" or "grand commander") along with the Chinese titles Zongling 總領 and Taichuan 太傳 were conferred upon Yelü Tuhua (*YS,* ch. 149, p. 3532). Furthermore, every Kitan biography in the *Yuanshi* contains a wide range of Chinese titles that were imparted to Kitans.

57. e.g., Yelü Ahai named his elder son Mangutai 忙古台 [Mon: Mangghudai, "he who is Mongol"] (*YS,* ch. 150, p. 3548), and Mongolian names were popular in the families of Yelü Tuhua, Yelü Liuge, and Shimo Mingan (Mingan itself is a Mongolian name, meaning "a thousand"). As noted, it was common for the same person to have both a Mongolian and Chinese or Kitan names. For instance, Liuge's grandson Shouguonu 收國奴 took the name Shila 石剌 (i.e., Shira, Mongolian for "yellow"); Shimo Yexian was also known as Mangudai (Huang Jin, ch. 27, p. 5b); and Tuhua's descendants Tuomenda'er (Tumendar, a Mongol name) 禿滿答兒 and Mangudai also went by the Chinese names of Yuntong 雲童 and Baojian 寶劍, respectively (Zhou Qingshu, "Yuan Huanzhou Yelü," pp. 528–532). Also see, inter alia, Feng Jiqin, "Qidan ren xing ming," p. 110; *YS,* ch. 101, p. 2995; ch. 179, pp. 4156–4157; ch. 197, p. 4446; ch. 200, p. 4492; Yu Xilu, *Zhishun Zhenjang zhi,* ch. 15, p. 2820; and Huang Jin, ch. 27, p. 5b.

58. E. Endicott-West, *Mongolian Rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), pp. 82–83, 95; and H. Serruys, "Remains of Mongol Customs in China during the Early Ming Period," *Monumenta Serica,* 16 (1957), pp. 149–165.

59. *YS,* ch. 150, p. 3548.

60. Hu Zhihui, *Zi shan da quan ji* (Taipei, 1983), ch. 16, p. 4.

61. Huang Jin, ch. 27, pp. 7a–8a.

62. For an in-depth look at Yelü Zhu's life and wives see I. de Rachewiltz, "A Note on Yelü Zhu and His Family," in *Meng Yuan shiji minzushi lun ji: ji nian Weng Dujian xiansheng danchen yi bai zhou nian,* ed. Hao Shiyuan and Luo Xianyou (Beijing, 2006), pp. 269–281. Also see Hu Xiaopeng and Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi qidan ren hunyin yanjiu," pp. 44–48; and Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu," pp. 48–49.

63. *YS,* ch. 180, p. 4159; and Yelü Zhu, *Shuangxi zuiyin ji,* Siku quanshu ed., esp. ch. 2, p. 7a.

64. See de Rachewiltz, "Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai," pp. 172–175. Cf. Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu," p. 52, who deems Yelü Chucai's family to be a paradigm of Kitan Mongolization.

65. e.g., *YS,* ch. 149, pp. 3529, 3548; and Huang Jin, ch. 27, p. 5b. The most celebrated example is that of Yelü Chucai, who supposedly persuaded Ögödei not to convert all of north China into pastureland.

66. *YS,* ch. 13, p. 268.

67. C. P. Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (New York, 2004), p. 319.

68. For more on the Dagurs and their connection to the Qidan see, inter alia, Sun Jingji and Sun Hong, *Qidan minzu shi* (Guilin, 2009), pp. 267–270; Janhunen, *Manchuria,* pp. 144–148; Batubaoyin et al. (eds.), *Dawo'er zu yuan yu Qidan lun* (Beijing, 2011), passim. That said, the Dagurs are only portrayed as a distinct group in the seventeenth century, and their current status and identity has much to do with China's twentieth-century minority policies.

69. See Biran, *Chinggis Khan,* pp. 41–42.

70. e.g., Yelü Temu and his son defected to the Mongols in 1214, along with 30,000 men (*YS,* ch. 193, p. 4382); Shimo Axin, also known as Shimo Yexian, led 12,000 men over to the empire (ibid., ch. 152, p. 3603); Yila Nie'er joined Chinggis with over a hundred men (ibid., ch. 149, p. 3529); and Wang Xun surrendered on behalf of his 100,000 troops, though those troops, coming from Xun's prefecture, were not necessarily Kitans (ibid., ch. 149, p. 3534).

71. For more on the Yunnan Kitans see Meng Zidong, *Yunnan Qidan* (Beijing, 1995), passim. Some researchers cast doubt on their "Kitanness," noting that the lion's share of Menggudai's force was Chinese or, at best, mixed (Zhou Qingshu, "Yuan Huanzhou Yelü," pp. 536–540; Sun Jingji and Sun Hong, *Qidan minzu shi,* pp. 263–666). That said, it seems plausible that a group in a relatively secluded place like Yunnan, where some nomadism was possible and other Kitan commanders were stationed, would embrace their commander's identity and call themselves Kitans. Whether these same people, if they actually existed, were indeed the forefathers of the modern-day Yunnan Kitans is a different matter.

72. For data on the Kitan army see *YS,* ch. 98, pp. 2508, 2509; ch. 118, p. 2931; and ch. 149, pp. 3511, 3513; and Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, *Military Establishment,* pp. 74, 174. In any event, the *Yuanshi*'s terminology is rather ambiguous. For the Black army see Huang Jin, ch. 27, p. 5a; *YS,* ch. 152, p. 3603; ch. 150, p. 3542. There are several contradictory accounts regarding the provenance and composition of the Black army. Some believe that it was comprised of retainers, with whom Shimo Yexian defected to the Mongols. Others claim that it was a unit of elite soldiers who were recruited immediately following the Mongol conquest of Zhongdu in 1215 (Huang Jin, ch. 27, p. 5a). Lastly, there are scholars who contend that the army mainly consisted of the troops of Jin commander Zhang Jing, a defector who subsequently mutinied against his new lords. Jing's insurrection was put down in 1215 by Shimo Yexian (and other Kitans), who then appropriated the rebel troops (*YS,* ch. 150, p. 3541).

73. Cai Meibiao, "Jiu yu Jiujun zhi yanbian," *Yuanshi Luncong,* 2 (1983), pp. 1–22, esp. p. 13ff. He also discusses the various Jiu groups. Some of the Kitan commanders that switched over to the Mongols also belonged to this group.

74. Tr. de Rachewiltz, *The Secret History,* para. 248, vol. 1, p. 175; and para. 266, vol. 1, p. 198. Also see vol. 2, p. 893–894, 972.

75. Huang Jin, ch. 27, pp. 4b–5a.

76. For more on the Han army see esp. Sun Kekuan, *Menggu Han jun ji Han wenhua yanjiu* (Taipei, 1958).

77. e.g., Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, *Military Establishment,* pp. 12–14. Rossabi, among others, examines the rebellion of Li Tan, a Chinese commander in M. Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 62–67.

78. Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidanren de yanjiu," p. 36, and the table therein; and Su Pengyu, "Meng-Yuan shiqi Qidan ren de qiaoyi," *Anyang Shifan Xueyuan Xuebao* 安陽師範學院學報, 1 (2010), p. 75.

79. Hu Xiaopeng and Su Pengyu, "Mengyuan shiqi Qidan ren hunyi yanjiu," pp. 44–48.

80. For discussion of the Yuan system see, inter alia, F. W. Mote, "Chinese Society under Mongol Rule," in *The Cambridge History of China,* vol. 6, pp. 616–664, esp. 627–635; Yanai Watari, *Yuan dai Meng Han Semu daiyu kao* (Taipei, 1963); and Meng Siming, *Yuandai shehui jiezhi zhidu* (Beijing, 1938). The most granular description of these categories turns up in the literary collection of Tao Zongyi (fl. 1360–1368), a southern Chinese who enumerates 72 names of Mongolian tribes or clans, 31 groups of Semuren, and 8 groups of Hanren, Kitans included. Tao Zongyi, *Chuo geng lu* (n.d. rpt. Taipei, 1987), "Shizu," pp. 24–28. Elliot delves into the meaning of Hanren in the northern dynasties; M. Elliot, "Hushuo: The Northern Other and the Naming of the Han Chinese," in *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation and Identity of China's Majority,* ed. T. S. Mullaney et al. (Berkeley, 2012), pp. 173–190.

81. For a recent criticism of the perceived wisdom surrounding Yuan classification see Funada Yoshiyuki, "Semuren yu Yuan dai zhidu, shehui- Zhongxin tantao Menggu, Semu, Hanren, Nanren huafen de zhiwei," *Yuanshi luncong,* 9 (2004), pp. 162–174. Funada claims that the division was not initiated by the Mongols, but was the handiwork of their Chinese advisers. Moreover, he concludes that it was not tightly kept until the early fourteenth century. The most glaring example that he cites is from the Nanjing gazetteer of 1290 in which both Kitans and Mongols(!) are classified as Semu, another subdivision of northerners (Beiren 北人); the other subdivision of northerners is called Hanren (ibid., p. 174) and Zhang Xuan, *Zhizheng Jinling xinzhi* in *Sung-Yuan difangzhi congshu* (Taipei, 1980), vol. 6, pp. 5a–12b. Regardless of the system's provenance, it was clearly used by the Yuan administration from the 1320s onward. For example, the quotas for examination candidates were divided according to these classifications. Also see the references in n. 80 above.

Concerning senior-level posts, Qubilai, for instance, dismissed the Kitan, Jurchen, and Han *darughachi* (*daluhuazhi*, local commissioners) in 1268, but allowed the *semu* to keep their posts; *YS*, ch. 6, p. 118. Other incidents of this sort point to the fact that this rule was not always strictly observed. That said, it eventually had an impact on Kitan mobility, inter alia. Also see *YS*, ch. 21, p. 458; ch. 92, p. 2052; and Endicott-West, *Mongolian Rule,* pp. 79–83, 95, including the references therein.

82. Hu Zhiyu, *Zi shan da quan ji* (Taipei, 1983), ch. 16, p. 3. For discussion on the Kitans' leviratic customs see, inter alia, Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society,* pp. 207, 211; and J. Holmgren, "Marriage, Kinship and Succession under the Ch'i-tan Rulers of the Liao Dynasty (907–1125)," *T'oung Pao,* 52 (1986), pp. 44–91. The levirate among the Mongols in Iran is documented, inter alia, in Rashīd, ed. ʿAlīzādah, vol. 3, pp. 96–98, and Rashīd, tr. Thackston, vol. 3, pp. 515–516 (the marriage arrangement of Abaqa Khan). For the complex denouement of leviratic marriage in Yuan China see, inter alia, Bettine Birge, "Levirate Marriage and the Revival of Widow Chastity in Yuan China," *Asia Major,* 3rd ser., 8/2 (1995), pp. 107–146. The Kirmanid Kitans also preserved the group's traditional marriage patterns. Both the dynasty's founder, Baraq Ḥājib, and his heir, Quṭb al-Dīn, adhered to leviratic custom, marrying the wives of their predecessors. The same can be said for the two Kirmanid queens, Terken Khatun and Padshāh Khatun. The latter also took two "infidel" husbands: Ilkhan Abaqa (r. 1265–1282) and then his son Gaikhatu (r. 1291–1294). Leviratic marriages are forbidden according to Islamic law, and women are prohibited from taking a husband from outside the faith. However, since these are Kitan and Mongol norms, the Kirmanid historians depicted both queens as exemplary Muslims. See Biran, "Kitan Migrations," pp. 94–95.

83. For example, *YS*, ch. 197, p. 4443, 4446; ch. 200, p. 4492; and Huang Jin, ch. 27, p. 7a.

84. P. Ebrey, "Surnames and Han Chinese Identity," in *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan,* ed. M. J. Brown (Berkeley, 1995), pp. 11–36.

85. Su Tianjue, *Yuan wenlei* (Beijing, 1958), vol. 1, ch. 55; cited in Feng Jiqin, "Qidan ren xing ming," p. 109.

86. Feng Jiqin, "Qidan ren xing ming," pp. 106–110.

87. See the example of Shulü Jie 述律傑 below. A much earlier case involves Yelü Chucai, who in his literary collection refers to the same man as both Yila Zichun 移剌子春 and Liu Zichun 劉子春 (Yelü Chucai, *Zhan ran jushi wenji* [Beijing, 1986], ch. 2, p. 38, ch. 3, p. 48; ch. 10, p. 231; cited by Feng Jiqin, "Qidan ren xing ming," p. 108).

88. For more on the Uighurs see Brose, *Subjects and Masters,* esp. pp. 122–163.

89. See, e.g., Zhang Tingyu, *Ming shi* (Beijing, 1974), ch. 179, p. 4756; ch. 320, pp. 8279, 8280; ch. 328, p. 8504.

90. An account of Shimo Yisun turns up in the *YS*, ch. 188, pp. 4309–4311; also see J. W. Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy* (Berkeley, 1983), pp. 117, 124, 133.

91. For more on Shulü Jie see Fang Linggui, "Yuan Shulü Jie jiaoyou kaolüe," in *Mengyuan shi ji minzu shi lunji,* ed. Hao Shiyuan and Luo Xianyou (Beijing, 2006), pp. 242–268; Fang Linggui, "Yuan Shulü Jie Shiji Jikao," in *Yuanshi Congkao* (Beijing, 2004), pp. 247–274; and Chen Shisong, "Yuandai Qidan 'Shishu mingjiang' Shulü Jie shiji," *Ningxia shehui kexue,* 2 (1996), pp. 79, 80–86. There is no biography of Shulü Jie in the *Yuanshi,* but he does merit a few mentions therein. See, e.g., *YS*, ch. 44, p. 922; and ch. 183, p. 4209. The main sources on Shulü Jie are to be found in the writings of his associates, esp. Yu Ji, *Daoyuan,* ch. 10; Chen Lü, *An ya tang ji,* ch. 6; and the Yunnan gazetteer.

92. See Meng Zidong, *Yunnan Qidan,* passim; and n. 71 above.

93. For the Kitans in Western Asia see Biran, "Kitan Migrations," pp. 95–97.