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of source materials written within his own region. In contrast to the detailed chronicles composed in the courts of the neighbouring khanates, only one work is known to have been written from within Qaidu's territory. This is Jamal Qarshī's Muḥaqqāt al-surāḥ ("Supplement to the surāḥ"), written in Kashgar in the early fourteenth century. It is essentially an appendix to Qarshī's Persian translation of Jawhari's dictionary. However, it is a supplement which does contain valuable historical information on Central Asian dynasties and biographical details of local notables.

Most of the detail of Qaidu's life must be gleaned from the sources written in the neighbouring Toluid states, Mamluk Egypt, the Caucasus or from travelogues compiled by Europeans. Unfortunately most of these sources, especially the Persian and Chinese material, are partisan and betray their hostility towards the ambitious prince, viewing Qaidu as a rebel and an enemy. Where the writers have a more objective view, as is the case with the Armenian and Mamluk chroniclers, their details are sketchy and their reports imply that Qaidu's territory and political manoeuvring are distant from their concerns. Even travellers like Marco Polo, who included a chapter on 'King Qaidu' in his narratives, were more concerned with grander matters to the east or south and did not grant the Öğödei aspirant his full dues.

Faced with these formidable obstacles Michal Biran has performed an admirable and meticulously accomplished task. Armed with an enviable knowledge of languages, including Persian, Arabic and Chinese, she has been able to retrieve an impressive amount of data from a wide range of sources and to present a convincing and radically new portrait of this remarkable medieval Mongol potentate.

In her book Biran correlates the various sources and succeeds in building not only a rounded picture of Qaidu, his deeds and motivation, but presents also a picture of the internal administration of his state in its formative stages and the relationship of this state with the rest of the Mongol world. She is able to show that Qaidu's driving motivation was not, as some would have it, to acquire the mantle of the Qa'an, nor to promote the return to the traditional values of the nomadic lifestyle and culture of the steppes in contrast to the 'progressive' sedentary regimes of the Il-Khans or the Yuan. Qaidu's motivation for seeking power, Biran convincingly argues, was to redress the wrongs done to his own branch of the royal family, the Ogodeids. He sought to retrieve an impressive amount of data from a wide range of sources and to present a convincing and radically new portrait of this remarkable medieval Mongol potentate.

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Michal Biran traces Qaidu's rise from his birth in 1235 in Öğödei's ordu, through his first territorial base in Qayaliq and then details
the intrigues and manoeuvring following the Qa'an Mongke's death in 1259. She shows how Qaidu was able to manipulate other such Mongol princes as Baraq to serve his own ends and that he was not averse to switching allegiances when it might suit his own purposes. Qaidu's confrontation with the Qa'an, Qubilai, which became not only a political conflict between the house of Tolui and the house of Ögedei but also one of personal enmity between the two men, is analysed in depth and the varied effects that the antagonism with the Il-Khans of Persia had on trade links and political exchanges between China and Iran are clarified. The decisive role of the Jochids in Qaidu's rise, even though this was eventually to result in the cessation of Jochid control over Transoxiana, is highlighted, and the commercial contacts with the Mamluks of Egypt are recognized. After carefully collecting, analysing and interpreting all the diverse sources, Michal Biran is also able to plot the shift of Qaidu's kingdom into a state dominated by the Chaghadids and the collapse of his Ögedeid regime after his death. The nature of his state and its internal administration is not overlooked and ample space is found for careful consideration of the role of the army, religion and the economy in the formation and development of the Ögedeid polity. Lacunae remain, but they are unambiguously acknowledged and their individual significance is reduced by Biran's ability to draw on so many different independent sources.

Michal Biran's study of Qaidu is complemented by a treasure-trove of detailed notes and references, a healthy bibliography, simple but perfectly adequate maps, a glossary of Chinese terms and a most welcome comprehensive collection of genealogical tables. Although, regrettably, the 46 pages of enticing notes are clumped together at the end of the book rather than positioned so much more conveniently as footnotes, they are fully reflective of the amount of work and painstaking research that must have gone into this short but comprehensive study.

GEORGE LANE


Any book that presents facsimile, transcription and translation of early Ottoman documents is of considerable importance for scholars working in the field. This publication presents the register of arrears in the customs dues of Caffa between 1487 and 1490, as well as eight other documents. The book also has a lengthy and detailed glossary and many tables giving detailed information on Caffa at a slightly later date, c. 1520 and 1542. There is a series of short essays on various aspects of the Black Sea trade.

While undoubtedly useful, the work is somewhat confusingly arranged. The text and translation of the customs register follow one another, but are separated from the facsimile which appears at the end. An index appears after the translation of the customs register, and is followed by a series of essays, followed in turn by a block of tables, more documents, more tables, a short piece on Ottoman and kefevi akgas, then a glossary, abbreviations, transcription system, maps and, at the end, facsimiles.

The lack of a main index is a disadvantage, and the index which appears after the transcription and translation of the customs arrears register is problematic in that, while apparently referring both to the transcription and the English translation, it in fact only gives references to Ottoman terms. Thus, for example, commodities which historians working in the Black Sea trade might well look for, such as black raisins, rice, hemp, silk, cotton, velvet, brocade, hides and skins, wheat, leather, slaves, carpets, alum, wine and honey do not appear at all, while meviz-i siyah, erz, kendir, ibri§im, penbe, kadife, kemha, post, gendüm, gön, esir, kah, şap, hamr and 'asel do. One of the entries is for linings of Bergama which appears under bitane of Bergama. This is a great pity as, presumably, one of the reasons for giving a translation of this document is to make it available to those who do not know Ottoman. The index, however, is of no help to them whatsoever. A similar problem arises with the glossary, which does not include Ottoman terms used in the text.

In the same vein, it would have been useful to give translations for each of the other documents published here. While some of them do have a translation (docs. iii, vi, vii, viii), for others there is a cross-reference to other parts of the book where a partial translation and commentary are given (eg. doc. i, iv), or reference is made to partial translation and summary in an entirely different work (doc. ii) or to a full translation elsewhere (doc. v).

Similarly, in the table of weights and measures, under kilo there is an entry 'okka-equivalents of kilo (for references see Inalcik, 'Rice cultivation', 119–120)' [p. 177], while for yak, 'for various yak, see Inalcik, "Yak". This cross-referencing back and forth through the book, or to other publications (particularly in the case of the glossary) together with the arrangement of the material, gives the book a rather un-user-friendly feel.

Some of the references are not at all clear. Thus, in the weights and measures table the entry for 1 endaze refers to Reg. 1298/1881, without any further explanation (p. 175), while the entry for 2 tak=1 beşge refers simply to Bursa court records (p. 175). On occasions, there is no reference at all, for example for arsfn of the mason, architect or carpenter (p. 175), one of the entries for one arsfn of the bazar (p. 175), the Venetian sacco or collo (p. 176) and one seped (p. 180). While some of the weights and measures from the 1750s