

holders during the first half of the Dynasty's reign in the forward area facing the Eastern Wei. Here we find local power-holders being vested with considerable authority as an expedient to win them over to the Western Wei.

A feature common to all *xingtai* during that time is a lack of permanency. In this respect they differed markedly from their permanent counterparts that existed from the late Northern Wei through to the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi Period, when they turned into permanent institutions. One could say that the Western Wei *xintang* had returned to the original form as a temporary office of the Ministry of State.

The *da xingtai* of Yuwen Tai was, along with the Office of the Councilor-in-chief (Chengxiang Fu 丞相府), the most important government agency under the Western Wei Dynasty. It was not a full-fledged administrative agency, but functioned more like an office for accommodating Yuwen Tai's personal staff, involved in deciding on policy and government institutions. Whenever Yuwen Tai set out on a military campaign, it would be invested with the powers of the Ministry of State in the field, with no particular restrictions on its area of jurisdiction, and was also involved in managing the campaign in conjunction with the Chengxiang Fu.

It was in this way that the Western Wei Dynasty made flexible use of *xingtai*, by adjusting the scale of its area of jurisdiction and its powers to suit the circumstances. In addition, although the relationship of the *xingtai* to the Commander-in-chief (Dudu 都督) has hitherto been regarded as a subordinate relationship, since in actuality their respective areas of expertise differed, they should to be considered to have stood in a parallel, mutually complementary relationship to each other.

Rethinking the Foundation of the "Qazaq Khanate":
From the Left Hand of the *Ulūs-i Jūchī* to the "Qazaq Khanate"

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The so-called "Qazaq khanate" was founded around the late 15th century by Jani Beg and Giray, who claimed descent from Oros of the left hand of the *ulūs-i Jūchī*. The foundation of the "Qazaq khanate" has been the subject

of animated discussion, which, unfortunately, has been marred by a historical view about the ethnic origins of the present "Kazakh nation." The aims of this article are 1) to reconstruct the historical record from the time of the left hand of the *ulūs-i Jūchī* to the foundation of the "Qazaq khanate," based mainly on Qādir 'Alī Beg's *Jāmi'al-Tawārīkh* written at the beginning of the 17th century as a historical account of the successive polities of the *ulūs-i Jūchī*, and 2) to reconsider the foundation of the "Qazaq khanate" in relation to the disintegration and reorganization of the *ulūs-i Jūchī*.

The left hand of the *ulūs-i Jūchī* was revived by Oros of the Tuqa Timurids in its disintegration and reorganization of whole *ulūs-i Jūchī*, which began in the late 14th century, and proceeded to dominate the eastern *Dasht-i Qipchāq* again during the time of Baraq in the early 15th century. Although it is said that the "Qazaq khanate" was founded as a new polity during the time of Jani Beg and Giray in the late 15th century, it was actually a nomadic polity which succeeded to the left hand of the *ulūs-i Jūchī* revived by Oros. According to the sources, Jani Beg and Giray acted like "qazāq"s in their rivalries with the Shibanids, and therefore came to be called "qazāq." However, the descriptions in "*Jāmi'al-Tawārīkh*" and other sources reveal that they were historically identified as the Orosids who succeeded to the left hand of the *ulūs-i Jūchī*, rather than as "qazāq"s, and thus within the Juchids. Therefore, the "Qazaq khanate" should be considered as a nomadic polity with Orosids taking over the left hand of the *ulūs-i Jūchī* at its core, in the process of the disintegration and reorganization of the *ulūs-i Jūchī*.

Regional Prosopography of the "Biographical Local Histories" Compiled
in the Medieval Islamic World: Its Character and Purpose

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The many Arabic local histories compiled between the latter part of the 10th and the first half of the 13th century AD throughout the Islamic World mainly consist of "who's whos" among 'ulamā' (especially ḥadīth scholars) associated with the regions concerned. This article calls these histories "biographical local histories." The research to date has discussed the biographical