The Jalayirids

Wing, Patrick

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The Jalayirid dynasty takes its name from Jalayir, the name of a Mongolian tribe from which it was descended. In order to understand the historical factors that led to members of the Jalayir establishing an Islamic sultanate in Iran and Iraq in the fourteenth century, we need first to examine some aspects of tribal society in inner Asia. Foremost, we need to address the question, what do we mean when we talk about ‘tribes’? This chapter provides an overview of scholarship on inner Asian tribes, particularly those in Mongolia on the eve of the empire of Chinggis Qan. In addition, the impact of the Chinggisid empire on the tribes, and particularly on the Jalayir, is explored. The foundation of the empire resulted in a Jalayir diaspora, as members of this group were redistributed across Eurasia in accordance with new imperial political and social institutions.

**Tribe and State Formation under the Mongols**

Mongol society was tribally organised. That is, society was divided among several identity groups that are mentioned in sources like the *Secret History of the Mongols* and that have been characterised as tribes or clans by modern scholars. The literature on tribes in the fields of anthropology and history is vast, and the precise definition of ‘tribe’ is the subject of an ongoing scholarly debate. While it is impractical to try to sort out all of the various arguments of the literature about tribes since the nineteenth century, we need to address some key issues in order to deal with the specific case of the Jalayir tribe and the history of this group from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. These issues include clarifying some of the major interpretations of the characteristics, functions and ideology of inner Asian tribes.

One of the most salient characteristics of tribes in inner Asia and elsewhere is that they are conceived of by their members as describing kinship relations. That is, tribes are groups defined by real or imagined blood relationships, in the same way that craft guilds are defined by
one’s profession, or citizenship is defined by one’s national homeland. The fact that the ties of kinship within a tribe are not necessarily genetic has been understood by scholars of tribal societies for some time. Anthropologists have described tribes as ‘ideal types’ that are essentially imagined or constructed, and represent a ‘state of mind’ and model for organisation and action. In general, while acknowledging the constructed or imagined nature of tribal identity, most scholars have maintained that the idea of kinship was central to tribal identity. An exception to this notion is the recent work of David Sneath on inner Asian states, which emphasises the importance of recognising groups, such as the Jalayir and other Mongol tribes, not in terms of kinship at all, but as ‘aristocratic orders’, in which elite families ruled over subjects who were not thought to be related. In his book *The Headless State*, Sneath traces the history of western scholarship on tribal societies of inner Asia to demonstrate that the category of kin-based tribe was conceived as a preliminary stage in the natural development of human societies, for which the European nation state was the ultimate outcome. This scholarly baggage has continued and has, according to Sneath, led to apparent paradoxes when tribal steppe societies formed large imperial states on the steppe. However, if we conceive of groups like the Jalayir, Sulduz and Merkit not as large family groups but as a ruling nobility and its subject population, such imperial states seem less mysterious. While there do seem to be some problems with Sneath’s interpretation, his suggestion that the names of the Mongol tribes, found in sources like the *Secret History of the Mongols*, described individuals’ identities within a complex political hierarchy is useful when we begin to examine the history of the Jalayir tribe, and particularly the ancestors of the Jalayirid sultans of the fourteenth century.

It would, however, be a mistake to completely discount kinship as a significant feature of tribal society. Even though tribal elites may not have thought of themselves as related by blood to their subjects, as Peter Golden has pointed out, kinship terminology provided at least the vocabulary of tribal society. Crucial to maintaining tribal relationships was genealogy, which affirmed and legitimised kinship. Every Mongol kinship group had a male ancestor as a focal point of veneration. Genealogies, while defining the limits of a tribe through reference to common ancestors, were not static or absolute. Rather, they provided the ideological means for many groups of nomads to smoothly incorporate and adopt outside groups into their own ranks, without making any essential structural changes. Tribal genealogy thus was not fixed and closed, but rather frequently amended. Such amendments were reflections of changes in economic and political
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circumstances that necessitated the fusion of multiple tribal groups. It is in this sense that tribes, including the Mongolian tribes such as the Jalayir, must be considered political groups, whose shared memory of kinship affiliation was the result of specific historical circumstances.

Another characteristic of inner Asian tribes, in addition to the centrality of an ideology of kinship legitimised by genealogy, was the flexibility of tribal structures. In terms of organisation, tribes were characterised by an openness and fluidity that allowed for the incorporation of outside kin groups and clients, as well as for the segmentation and division of the tribe. Eurasian nomadic tribes were open to all who were willing to subordinate themselves to its chief and who shared common interests with its tribesmen.

These characteristics of kin-based ideology and fluidity of organisation served certain economic and political functions. Economically, the nature of the nomadic economy, based on movable and divisible animal stock, lent itself to the mobility and segmentary nature of tribal social organisation. Politically, flexible tribal structures allowed for protection of groups threatened by other tribes, or by sedentary polities. In fact, the economic and the political functions of tribal organisation were closely related, and could contribute to the formation of what are often referred to as ‘supra-tribal’ states, or steppe empires. A common interpretation of the formation of supra-tribal empires like the Xiongnu, Türk and Uyghur confederations included the challenges posed by confrontation with sedentary, agrarian states to the south of the steppe. The need for protection in the face of the ‘outside world’ (to borrow a phrase from Anatoly Khazanov) was motivation and cause for tribes to enter into more complex, hierarchical organisations. Such formations were extensions of the pattern of social protection that were afforded by all tribes. Tribal formations presupposed the existence of another society, which was threatening in some way. The formation of larger, supra-tribal confederations proved to be an effective way to defend against other large states, as well as to extract wealth from agrarian societies. In an alternative interpretation, Nicola Di Cosmo has challenged the idea that supra-tribal empires emerge only as the result of encounters with sedentary neighbours. Di Cosmo has argued that the instability and relative poverty of the inner Asian steppe economy led to chronic low-level violence and social upheaval on the steppe. The ‘crisis’ of this upheaval led to increased militarisation and the formation of new political organisations, based around allegiance to a supra-tribal leader.

In general, most interpretations of inner Asian tribal and supra-tribal organisation recognise tribes as socio-political units, maintained by an ideology of common family ancestry, functioning to allow nomadic
populations to best take advantage of the pastoral economy and defend themselves against common enemies. The flexibility and open nature of tribes allowed for the incorporation of outside groups, which could be legitimised through the construction of genealogies. Thus, it seems most useful to think of tribes not as static, rigid and egalitarian extended families, but rather as political units that defined relationships of social power among nomads, and provided the framework for allegiance to a ruling elite that legitimised its authority by appeals to a common history and kinship.

**The Tribes of Mongolia on the Eve of the Empire of Chinggis Qan**

There is little historical record of the tribes that became part of the Chinggisid Mongol empire before the twelfth century. The Mongols used a number of words to describe social and political categories. These include *irgen* (people),14 *yasun* (bone),15 *oboq/oboqgh* (clan-lineage)16 and *aymagh* (tribe).17 It is difficult to provide precise definitions for these categories, and to apply more theoretical categories to groups mentioned in historical sources, such as the *Secret History of the Mongols*. Scholars have disagreed about the political and social organisation of Mongol tribes such as the Jalayir. One of the major disagreements in historical discourse on Mongol tribes is over the degree of social stratification or egalitarianism among members of the tribes. One view is that before Chinggis Qan, the Mongolian socio-political structure was quite simple, with few ‘aristocratic and feudal features’.18 In other words, the tribes, while having individual political leadership, were generally equal and independent of one another. Another view emphasises the divisions within society, which gave rise to elite ruling lineages to which the other tribes were subordinate.19

A more nuanced approach is that of İsenbike Togan, who has identified two types of tribes in the pre-Chinggis Qan period. In one group were those that had multiple chiefs and favoured decentralisation and sharing of political power, including the Qongqirat, Ikeres and Mangqut. Another group displayed some political and administrative centralisation and hereditary leaders (*khāns*), including the Kereyit and Nayman.20 Togan’s work on the Mongolian tribes indicates that there was variation in the degree of social and political hierarchy among different groups, and that this variation helps to explain the success that Chinggis Qan achieved in bringing together various tribes under his leadership.

The tribal order of Mongolia underwent a dramatic change in the late twelfth century as the core of a supra-tribal empire began to form around Temüjin, later known as Chinggis Qan. Political power came to be
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concentrated in Temüjin’s hands, while other elite families either transferred their allegiance to him, voluntarily or by force, or were destroyed completely. The causes of this strengthening of central political authority have been attributed to both ecological/economic and political reasons. One theory is that amidst heightened competition between the nomadic and sedentary societies on the edge of the steppe in the late sixth/twelfth century, smaller nomad groups responded by reorganising into larger groups with definite political leaderships. The polity formed by Chinggis Qan can be viewed as part of these developments. Togan has argued that it was the larger, centralised tribes, such as the Kereyit and Nayman, that began to threaten the smaller, decentralised groups in the sixth/twelfth century. It was in this context that Chinggis Qan was able to emerge as an alternative source of political leadership.

It is likely that a combination of factors made it appealing for smaller tribes to pledge allegiance to Temüjin’s leadership early on. Temüjin’s first followers were individuals, who swore allegiance to him as nökers, or personal followers. After he had attracted a significant number of nökers, Temüjin’s successes in battle and raids contributed to a bandwagon effect, making it more appealing for the Mongol nomads, individually, and increasingly as larger groups, to join Temüjin and submit to his authority. In 602/1206, Temüjin was confirmed as supreme leader of all the Mongol tribes, as Chinggis Qan, or universal ruler.

What was the impact of Temüjin’s consolidation of power on tribes like the Jalayir? The major consequence was that it altered the contours of the political hierarchy. Chinggis Qan and his relatives, rather than any other powerful families, could impose his political will because of the military support he could command. From the point of view of Chinggis Qan’s subjects, one’s social status became tied to one’s proximity to the household of Chinggis Qan himself. The most important institution for achieving a status of privilege and authority was Chinggis Qan’s household bodyguard, the keshig.

The keshig was composed of units of day guards, night guards and quiver-bearers (qorchi), who were the only individuals allowed to carry their bows in the qan’s presence. As Thomas Allsen has shown, the keshig developed out of the qan’s household, and became the main pool for recruiting personnel for the imperial administration. The keshig was a springboard to power and influence for the qan’s tribal subjects. Many powerful Mongol commanders (noyans), including those of the Jalayir, began their careers in the keshig, either of Chinggis Qan or members of his family.

Another important development within Mongolian society during
Chinggis Qan’s time was the establishment of new, decimally organised military units. Chinggis Qan organised his subjects into units of ten thousand, one thousand, one hundred and ten. At the head of the larger units were commanders appointed by Chinggis Qan himself, and not traditional tribal leaders.27 Decimal military organisation was not new. Earlier steppe empires going back to the Xiongnu had used it as well.28 However, unlike earlier imperial elites, Chinggis Qan chose to ignore his own tribe, the Qiyat, and instead rely on his trusted personal retinue.29 Instead of deferring to the elite in his own tribe, Chinggis Qan channelled political authority through himself and his sons.

The promotion of individuals from all different tribal backgrounds ensured that one’s tribal identity no longer provided the primary principle for political action.30 Decimal unit commanders could bypass the channels of tribal authority, and instead act solely in the service of Chinggis Qan and his personal retinue. The effect of this development was the establishment of the person of Chinggis Qan – and, after him, his direct descendants – as the sole source of commonly recognised political authority in the generations to come. In this way, Chinggis Qan addressed the challenge that had traditionally faced supra-tribal leaders: the tension between the ruler and the tribal chiefs.31 In the newly founded Chinggisid empire, the institutions of the nöker, the keshig and the decimal military units ensured that loyalty to Chinggis Qan and his descendants was the path to power and prestige.

In addition to bringing tribal subjects more closely under his control, Chinggis Qan also sought to eliminate alternative centres of power. Tribes like the Kereyit, Nayman and Merkit, which had strong dynastic ruling hierarchies, were dismantled in a way that less politically stratified tribes like the Qongqirat, Sulduz and Jalayir were not.32 However, a question that this study will attempt to address is the degree of continuity in tribal identity among the Jalayir as a result of the reorganisation of society and political culture during Chinggis Qan’s time. İsenbike Togan has argued that in the seventh/thirteenth century, as the Mongol army of conquest came to identify with the interests of the empire, ‘tribalism’, the once dynamic social element, was pushed to the background as a ‘reserve identity’.33 However, in the eighth/fourteenth century, a retrbalisation took place, as kinship re-emerged as a political factor.34 While it is true that tribal loyalties are observable within the Chinggisid dynastic state in the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries, it is important also to recognise the ways in which tribes like the Jalayir had been fundamentally changed. Individuals maintained their tribal identities, but came to act within a different set of social and political parameters. These parameters
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were determined by the historic processes that shaped the Mongol empire and its successor states. For the descendants of the Jalayir tribe that founded a dynasty in Iraq and Azarbayjan in the eighth/fourteenth century, the tribe was replaced by the Chinggisid dynastic state as the source of political ideology and the context in which political action was taken.

Background to Mongol Expansion into the Islamic World

By the early 610s/mid-1210s, the Mongolian tribes were fully under Chinggis Qan’s control, and the nature of his military and political project changed. Having absorbed the peoples of the Mongolian steppe into a united military structure, Chinggis Qan could now project these forces more fully into the sedentary regions to the southeast and southwest. For the nomadic tribal peoples of the steppe, going back as far as the Xiongnu confederation in the second century BCE, the sedentary, agrarian societies of China, Transoxiana and Persia had represented sources of material wealth which could be acquired through raids and larger-scale military operations. Although exchange always flowed between the agrarian and nomadic ecological zones, a successful nomadic chief could become extremely powerful by forcing the terms of this exchange through the threat of violence. However, raiding was not the only or even always the most efficient means of exploiting the sedentary economy. Control of the Eurasian trade routes, especially the so-called ‘silk road’, the transcontinental network of markets, depots and middlemen that connected China and the Mediterranean, had long been the goal of steppe leaders. It is likely that Chinggis Qan also planned his expansion strategy with this in mind.35

Clearly, the spark that ignited the Mongol invasion of the Islamic world was related to economic issues. When members of a Mongol trade caravan were killed by the Khwarazmian governor at Utrar in 615/1218, Chinggis Qan launched an attack on the empire of the Khwārazmshāh, the largest and most powerful state in the eastern Islamic world. This initial campaign, which lasted until 620/1223, began the process of the establishment of Mongol political influence in the region roughly from the Jaxartes (Syr Darya) river in the east to the Euphrates river in the west. The administrative structure consisted mainly of imperial officials known as basqāqs or dārūghachīs, backed by troop garrisons.36 These officials were representatives of the great qan (Chinggis Qan until 624/1227; Ögödey Qa’an until 639/1241, and so on), in the citied regions of Eurasia. Transoxiana and Khurasan were represented by these imperial officials, while in western Iran, in the regions of Azarbayjan, Mughan and Arran, a less organised military governorship took hold. By the 660s/1260s, these regions had
become independent political entities in the form of personal appanages of Chinggisid princely families. However, in the initial phases of Mongol conquest in the 620s/1220s, an attempt was made to bring these areas, with their urban commercial centres, under the control of a centralised imperial administration.

The spread of Mongol soldiers and their families into regions of China, Transoxiana and Iran meant an increase in the territorial and material wealth for Chinggis Qan’s family as well as for the soldiers themselves. Chinggis Qan, his siblings, children and other close relatives embodied sovereignty for the new Mongol imperial enterprise. They were known as the altān urūgh, or ‘golden family’, and it would be through the lineage of Chinggis Qan’s sons that legitimate political authority would inhere, even after de facto Chinggisid power had collapsed. The acquisition of geographic, material and human resources as a result of the early Mongol conquests was considered an addition to Chinggis Qan’s personal household wealth, which would be distributed as inheritance to members of the altān urūgh after his death.

People, as well as territories, were divided primarily among Chinggis Qan’s four principal sons (that is, those sons born to Chinggis Qan’s wife Börte), and constituted their personal ulūs. The concept of ulūs was related to the household retinue, but constituted an expanded version that also included specific territory, as well as the people who resided in the towns and countryside there. The hereditary territory of this primary dispensation consisted mainly of the steppe lands extending from the Mongols’ original pastures in eastern Mongolia to as far west as could be conquered. Chinggis Qan’s sons received their share based on their ages. Thus, the youngest son, Tolui, inherited the Mongol homeland, while the older sons inherited territories further to the west. Each son also received an allocation of troops. This aspect will be addressed in greater detail below, with special attention paid to the distribution of Jalayir individuals among the various princely appanages.

The sedentary, agricultural zone south of the steppe was, for the most part, not included as personal inheritance for the princes, but instead remained under the control of the great qan’s representatives as part of the central administration. Conflict between two different spheres of authority — that of the princely appanages and that of the central administration — resulted in civil war by the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century. The basic cause of the conflict was rooted in the concept of political legitimacy prevalent among tribal-nomadic societies: the notion that sovereignty resided in the extended family of a leader. Ideally, succession was determined not by a strict pattern of lineal descent, but by the merits displayed
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by any member of that family by successfully keeping his predecessor’s followers through military and economic success.

Chinggis Qan chose as his successor his third son, Ögödey. When Ögödey died in 639/1241, sovereignty did not pass automatically to his son Güyük, but was held temporarily by Ögödey’s wife Töregene. It was not until an assembly (quriltay) could be held and the prominent members of the royal family agreed on the succession that Güyük was enthroned in 644/1246. When he died less than two years later, a challenge was made to Ögödeyid control of the great qanate and the central administration of the empire by an alliance of representatives of two other princely lines: those of Chinggis Qan’s sons Jochi and Tolui. The Jochids were led by Batu Khan, Jochi’s son and heir to his family’s ulūs on the western steppe. The Toluids were led by Tolui’s widow Sorqaqtani Beki, and her eldest son Möngke. The Jochid-Toluid alliance resisted continued Ögödeyid control of the empire, and by 649/1251 had succeeded in all but destroying the Ögödeyid family and weakening their allies, the family of Chinggis Qan’s second son Chaghatay. Möngke became great qan, and power within the empire was shared in practice by Möngke in the east and Batu in the west.

It was during Möngke’s reign (648/1251–657/1259) that the groundwork was laid for a fundamental change in the structure of political authority in the sedentary agrarian zone. The citied regions of Chinese and

Roman numerals indicate succession to the great qanate

Figure 2.1 The altān urūğ: Chinggis Qan and his descendants.
Perso-Islamic civilisation, which until that time had been administered by imperial representatives who reported to the great qan in Qaraqorum, were assigned as hereditary appanages by Möngke Qa’an to his brothers in a secondary dispensation of political authority. It was secondary in the sense that these regions had not been included in Chinggis Qan’s original disbursement of princely ulūses, but were assigned later as part of a division of Toluid family holdings. Möngke sent his brother Qubilay to China and another brother Hülegü to Iran in an attempt to extend Toluid power into the sedentary agrarian zone and virtually surround the descendants of Chaghatay who ruled Transoxiana and Semirechye. The purpose was to consolidate the power of the empire of the Toluids as a family, that is, Sorqaqtani Beki and her sons, but also to remove China and Iran from the central administration, and put them on par with other princely appanages. That is, China and Iran became the commonwealth of two separate branches of the Chinggisid royal family in the Toluid line, and eventually came to constitute separate and independent polities. China became the ulūs of the descendants of Qubilay, and, due to Qubilay’s succession as great qan, also the seat of the empire as a whole. Iran – or, more precisely, the region between the Oxus and the Euphrates – became the ulūs of the descendants of Hülegü, also known as the Ilkhanate.

The term īlkhān was a title first used to refer to Möngke Qa’an’s brother Hülegü following his conquest of the Abbasid caliphate and establishment of a political administration in the territory between the Oxus and the

![Figure 2.2 Ilkhan rulers.](image-url)
Euphrates. Several theories have been offered as to the precise meaning of this title. Definitions have included ‘tribal ruler’, ‘royal ruler’ and even ‘ruler of the Ili’ (the river that flows into Lake Balkhash). The generally accepted meaning is something like ‘peaceful, subordinate or obedient ruler’, reflecting a subservient position in relation to the great qan. The polity, or ulūs, established by Hūlegū was a branch of the Toluid-controlled Mongol empire, which had its capital in China. However, this title seems to have been given to Hūlegū after he had established himself in Iran, and not at the time of his dispatch by Möngke. The title īlkhān first appeared on the coins minted by Hūlegū in Iran in the year 658/1259–60, and the Mongol court in China continued to bestow titles on Ilkhan rulers until the end of Qubilay’s reign (693/1294). Hūlegū was formally invested by the Chinese court in 660/1262, when envoys arrived to recognise him as the ruler of the lands west of the Oxus river to the furthest reaches of Egypt and Syria. Increasingly after Möngke’s death, Hūlegū and his successors attempted to convert their status from that of a representative of the great qan to the head of an independent ulūs. During the reign of his brother Qubilay as great qan, the formal bestowal of titles served to confirm and legitimise Hūlegū’s independence, particularly vis-à-vis the Jochid khans to the north, who claimed Azarbajjan as their own.

The establishment of the Ilkhan ulūs had several effects on the history of the region, including an initial antagonism and exploitative attitude among the Mongol elite toward the agrarian population, a new wave of Mongol and Turkic-speaking people into Iran, and a shift in overland trade patterns after the conquest of Baghdad and establishment of a new urban capital at Tabriz. The effect of the establishment of the Ilkhanate on Mongol tribal society, and the Jalayir tribe in particular, will be addressed in Chapter 3.

**The Jalayir Diaspora**

Having outlined the dynastic history of the Chinggisids, including the division of the empire and the civil war that followed, we proceed now to explore the impact of these events on the Jalayir tribe in this period. Although the experience of the Jalayir was not identical to that of other tribes, we can identify a general trend that seems to hold for other tribes as well. That is, Jalayir individuals and their families were scattered across Eurasia as part of the military campaigns and imperial administrative apparatus under Chinggis Qan and his descendants. The Jalayir tribe, while continuing as a family identity, did not remain a coherent
political category after this process began. Jalayir individuals did not act within the bounds of a Jalayir political organisation, but rather within the framework of the *ulūses* ruled by members of the Chinggisid family. We can speak, then, of a Jalayir diaspora, in which individuals were sent to various corners of the empire, under the command of different Chinggisid princes.

Here we will discuss some prominent Jalayir amirs and officials who are mentioned in historical sources – particularly Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh* – who served Chinggisids in China, Transoxiana and the steppe. The Jalayir who served in the Ilkhanate in Iran will be discussed separately in Chapter 3. As will be shown, the Chinggisid empire transformed the social and political relationships of the Jalayir, ensuring that loyalties and interests would come to rest not necessarily with fellow Jalayir tribesmen, but with the Chinggisid royal family.

Perhaps the most prominent Jalayir individual of the early period of the Mongol empire was Muqālī, who became the supreme commander and virtual ruler of northern China by the time of his death in 1223. Muqālī had been given to Chinggis Qan as a personal servant by his father, and served in the Mongol campaigns to break the power of the steppe confederations of the Tatar, Kereyit and Nayman in the early 1200s. At the *quriltay* of 1206, Muqālī was named *tümen* commander, that is, commander of 10,000. Muqālī served in the Mongol campaigns in China in the 1210s, and in 1217 Chinggis Qan named him commander-in-chief of all of northern China, and granted him the hereditary titles of grand preceptor (*taishi*) and prince-of-state (*güi-ong*). In Persian sources, he was known as Muqālī Guyang, derived from this Chinese title. In his *tümen* unit, Muqālī commanded two *hazāras* (units of 1,000) of Jalayir troops, as well as Onggut, Qushiqul, Uru’ut and others. He was also assigned units of Khitan and Jürchen auxiliaries (*charīk*). Muqālī’s son, Bo’ol, succeeded him in his role of *güi-ong* in northern China.

In addition to Muqālī, other Jalayir individuals are mentioned in the *Secret History of the Mongols* as allies of Temüjin early on. These include Seche Domoq and his sons Harqay and Bala. Following the Mongol invasion of Khwarazm in the early 1220s, Bala was sent in pursuit of the fleeing Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn. Rashid al-Dīn also mentions that their relatives included a certain Ughān, a *hazāra* commander posted to Kirman in Iran. These were some of the first Jalayir tribesmen who came to the Muslim lands west of the Jaxartes river.

Members of the Jalayir and other tribes were also assigned to the service of the various sons and grandsons of Chinggis Qan. Both territory and personnel were distributed to these princes as part of their share in
the empire. One of the most important of the princely households during the early period of the Mongol empire was that of Chinggis Qan’s third son and heir to the imperial throne, Ögödey. The sons of one of Chinggis Qan’s Jalayir attendants named Qadā’an passed into Ögödey’s service as part of his inheritance. One of these sons, Īlūgā, had been Ögödey’s tutor (atabeg) during his childhood, and also commanded one of Ögödey’s personal hazāra units.54 Īlūgā’s son, Dānishmand, is also mentioned as the envoy of Qaydu to the court of the Ilkhan Abaqa (r. 663/1265–680/1282). Qaydu was an Ögödeyid who held the dominant power in the central Asian Chaghatayid ulūs during the last third of the seventh/thirteenth century.55 This seems to indicate that Dānishmand continued to serve the Ögödeyids after the accession of Möngke Qa’an in 649/1251 and the subsequent purge of many Ögödeyid princes.

Īlūgā’s brother, Īlchīdāy, also served Ögödey and his family, and was mentioned by Rashīd al-Dīn in his account of the civil war between the Ögödeyids and the Toluids after 1248. Īlchīdāy objected to Möngke Qa’an’s accession to the imperial throne by saying:

You all decided and said that as long as there remains a piece of flesh from the children of Ögödey Qa’an, [even] if he is wrapped in grass a cow would not eat that grass, and if he is wrapped in fat a dog would not eat that fat, we would accept him as qan, and another would not sit on the throne. How is it that you do otherwise?56

The lines in italics are spoken by Ögödey in the Secret History of the Mongols, during Chinggis Qan’s consultation with his sons about who should succeed him.57 Although one might assume that the appearance of this text in Rashid al-Dīn’s history is evidence that he had access to the Secret History, Thomas Allsen has shown that this was not necessarily the case.58 Rashid al-Dīn worked from a collection of chronicles and other historical documents, known as the Altan Debter, or ‘Golden Register’, which is no longer extant. Although the Secret History and the Altan Debter contained parallel passages, they were different texts. However, both preserve the Ögödeyid point of view that succession should have rightly continued with them, no matter how weak or unskilled their candidate may have been.

Rashid al-Dīn was writing in a context in which the Toluids had become the ruling family, and thus needed to account for the abrogation of the previous agreement made between Chinggis Qan and his sons. What is important to note for our purposes in examining the history of the Jalayir is that Īlūgā and Īlchīdāy’s fortunes were tied to the fortunes of Ögödey’s personal household. These Jalayir brothers served Ögödey
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as a result of their personal relationship to him. In addition, İlchidây’s interests continued to lie with Ögödey’s descendants, the inheritors of his personal share of human and territorial resources (ulûs or yûrt). When the position of this ulûs was threatened by the internal political struggles within the empire, İlchidây objected to the new rise of Toluid authority as a usurpation of Ögödeyid claims to the imperial throne, and with them his own status within the imperial system.

While İlûgâ and İlchidây sought to defend the Ögödeyids’ right to rule, another Jalayir, Mingâsâr Noyan, benefited from the Toluid ascendancy. Mingâsâr served as chief judge (yârghûchî) under Möngke Qa’an, as well as grand chancellor (chîngsâng), and oversaw the trials of the Ögödeyids and their supporters after Möngke’s accession in 649/1251. Mingâsâr owed his position to an earlier military assignment with Tolui Khan and Möngke on campaign against the Qipchaqs during the initial Mongol conquests. He later served with Möngke on campaign in southern China. After Möngke became qan, he sent Mingâsâr Noyan with 2,000 horsemen to meet the sons of Güyük and demand that they present themselves and their armies at Möngke’s court. Mingâsâr tried Oghul Ghaymish, the wife of Güyük Qan, and Qâdâgâch Khâtûn, the mother of Ögödey’s son Shîrâmun.

Mingâsâr’s attachment to Möngke Qa’an resulted in the appointment of his son Hindûqûr Noyan to Iran as a commander of a unit of 10,000. The establishment of the independent appanage meant that Hindûqûr Noyan entered the service of the Ilkhangs.

In addition to connections to the princely lines of Ögödey and Möngke, Jalayir amirs were also assigned to the ulûs of Chaghatay, whose hereditary appanage extended from the western Mongolian steppes to the Oxus river. One of these Jalayir amirs was Qûshûq Noyan Jalayir, although we know little about his life and relationship to the Chaghatayid rulers. Another was Mûngka Noyan Jalayir, commander of one of the four hazaras Chinggis Qan left to Chaghatay. Mûngka Noyan’s son, Yîsûr Noyan, became an amir in the army of Barâq, khan of the Chaghatayid ulûs from 664/1266–667/1269. In the case of Yîsûr Noyan, we see an example of how a tribal amir could cross between princely appanage states. Yîsûr Noyan was sent to the Khurasan frontier by Dû’a Khan (r. 681/1282–706/1306). He was captured there by the Ilkhanids and passed into the service of the Oyrat amir Hâji. Finally, at least two Jalayir amirs were in the service of the family of Arigh Böke, the fourth son of Tolui and Sorqaqtani Beki, and challenger to Qubilay’s claim to the qanate. The Jalayir Jângqî Kûrgân and Abûghân both served Arigh Böke’s son Malik Timûr.

The Chinggisid empire changed Mongol society as much as it changed
the societies that were conquered by the Mongols. Tribes like the Jalayir constituted the social and political order of the steppe. This order came to an end in the early thirteenth century. The major consequence was that most tribes were dismantled as political organisations in a process of redistribution of land and personnel among Chinggis Qan’s family as the Mongol empire expanded. Individuals maintained their tribal identities and memories of their genealogies that traced the ties of kinship that went back many generations. However, by the middle of the thirteenth century, to be a Jalayir said more about one’s family’s past than about one’s political identity. Political allegiances had come to be defined by one’s place within the Chinggisid imperial order, which meant which Chinggisid prince one served. Thus, members of the Jalayir tribe served Chinggis Qan in China, Ögödey and his descendants, the Toluids and the Chaghatayids. A number of Jalayir families also came to Iran to serve the ulūs founded by Chinggis Qan’s grandson Hulegü in the 1250s. The following chapter is devoted to this aspect of the Jalayir diaspora, and examines how the ancestors of the Jalayirid dynasty began their rise to power in the late thirteenth century.

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30. The reorganisation of Mongol society under Chinggis Qan and his successors also gave rise to new tribal identities. Jean Aubin has shown how the origin of the Qarā’unas as a new ‘ethnicity’ on the central Asian frontier with India in the thirteenth century was a result of the creation of a new military unit, comprising representatives from different Mongol tribes from each of the four princely ulūses. See Jean Aubin, ‘L’Ethnogénèse de qaraunas’, *Turcica* 1 (1969): 74–8.


32. Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation*, 11–12, 137.

33. Togan, *Flexibility and Limitation*, 12.


35. Paul Buell has characterised Chinggis Qan’s campaigns in 616/1219–617/1220 in Transoxiana not as an accidental and sudden event, but as the logical continuation of a decade and a half of Mongol infiltration into the region. This infiltration, brought about through the process of political unification of the Mongol tribes around Chinggis Qan and the accompanying expansion of the newly formed Mongol polity, brought the nomads in closer contact with the sedentary societies of central Asia. With this contact came new interests in the affairs of that region including the control of overland trade between central Asia and China. See Paul D. Buell, ‘Early Mongol Expansion in Western Siberia and Turkestan (1207–1219): A Reconstruction’, *CAJ* 36 (1992): 30.


40. *TMEN*, 2:208; Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism*, 48; Reuven Amitai-Preiss,
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42. Amitai-Preiss, ‘Evidence for the Early Use of the Title īlkhān among the Mongols’, 353.
48. De Rachewiltz et al., In the Service of the Khan, 4.
49. De Rachewiltz et al., In the Service of the Khan, 5.
51. De Rachewiltz et al., In the Service of the Khan, 8.
52. The Secret History of the Mongols, §257, §264.
57. The Secret History of the Mongols, §255.
59. Juwaynī writes that ‘in the time of the reign of Chingiz Khan, the area of the country expanded. He assigned to everyone their place of residence (mawżi’-i igāmat) which they call yūrt.’ See Juwaynī, Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushāy, 31.
60. On the office of yārghūchī and aspects of the Mongol legal system, see Valentin A. Riasanovsky, Fundamental Principles of Mongol Law (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965).
63. Bar Hebraeus, The Chronography of Gregory Abû’l Faraj, the Son of Aaron,
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64. When Oghul Ghaymish was brought before the tribunal (yārghū), Mingāsār stripped her naked. She was tried and then wrapped in felt and cast into the river. See Rashīd al-Dīn/Jāmi’, 839.


66. One of the few references to Qūshūq Noyan credits him with bringing the secretarial skills of a Khitan named Vazīr to the attention of Chaghatay. See Rashīd al-Dīn/Jāmi’, 773–4.
