

More importantly, however, is the seemingly careless approach to reading and citing the Arabic sources. As a single example (of many), I mention p. 128, where “both Vaṣṣāf and the Mamluk historian, Ibn al-Dawādārī, claim that Aḥmad [Tegüder] was simply referred to as ‘Aḥmad Agha’ in his correspondence with the provinces.” Ibn al-Dawādārī actually says: “His [Abaqa’s] brother Aḥmad Agha took control of the kingdom [or rule], and he was a Muslim and loved the Muslims.” There is nothing about provinces or writing to them. The cumulative effect of this weakens our faith in the analysis based on such readings.

This study is primarily important for drawing our attention to the role played by senior officers and other members of the Mongol elite in Mongol and Ilkhanid politics, and for demonstrating to us the need to subject this topic to a sophisticated and subtle analysis. I was not convinced, however, by the evidence adduced and the arguments presented that there was a consistent or even discernible swing between two ideological positions, the patrimonialist and the collegial, or that this dichotomy characterizes the political dynamic for the period studied here. We still await the study that explains the complicated relations between the Mongol elite and their rulers in a cogent and comprehensive way.

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The Mongols’ Middle East: Continuity and Transformation in Ilkhanid Iran. Edited by BRUNO DE NICOLA and CHARLES MELVILLE. *Islamic History and Civilization*, vol. 127. Leiden: BRILL, 2016. Pp. xiii + 346. \$149, €115.

During the Ilkhanid period (1260–1335 or 1353), the areas under Mongol rule—including present-day Iran, Azerbaijan, and eastern Anatolia—underwent far-reaching and consequential transformations. These changes are evinced both in the breaking up of earlier patterns and imposition and rise of new formations, which would continue to shape the eastern Islamic world, particularly in Iran, in the centuries to come, as well as in the acceleration and reinforcement of earlier processes, especially since the eleventh-century Seljuk invasions. To date, the most detailed study of changes and continuities under Ilkhanid (as well as Seljuk) rule has been Ann K. S. Lambton’s *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia* (1988). In recent years, however, other studies have come to explore, though not as comprehensively as Lambton’s seminal work, various aspects of continuity and change under Mongol rule as well as among the Mongols themselves in the Ilkhanate, focusing especially on questions related to Mongol Islamization and acculturation. This recent edited collection under review is a welcome contribution to this promising line of inquiry. One of the merits of the volume’s articles is that they largely avoid the more frequently visited issue of Mongol conversion to Islam, offering instead more refined and small-scale explorations of the theme of continuity and change in and around the Ilkhanate. That said, however, the reader might find it difficult to reconcile these very diverse “snapshots” into a more comprehensive presentation of continuities and changes in the given period. This leaves Lambton’s ground-breaking study, three decades from its initial publication, still the most instructive discussion of the place of the Ilkhanate in view of the larger shifting patterns in greater Iran, even if the work is in dire need of major revision and updating.

The volume is thematically divided. The first part, “The Mongol Conquest of the Middle East,” comprises two chapters on Mongol warfare contributed by the leading experts, Reuven Amitai and Timothy May. In the second section on “politics, economy and religion,” Esther Ravalde examines the renowned vizier Juwaynī’s (d. 1284) patronage networks and political negotiations. She makes two significant observations: first, that the influence of the vizier under this new style of Mongol government “was invested more in his person than in the office itself” (p. 63), and second, agreeing with Lambton, that overall the Ilkhanid period witnessed the imposition of more limitations and restrictions on the position of the vizier. Bruno De Nicola follows this with a compelling investigation of the transformations in the economic status of elite Mongol women following upon the expansion of financial

opportunities and available resources in the Ilkhanate. He ends with the Ilkhan Ghazan's (d. 1304) decisive reforms and his appropriation of the resources of the royal women. In the next intriguing chapter, Florence Hodous examines methods of enacting the death penalty under Mongol rule in Iran. I found her argument about religious influences—Buddhist, Muslim, and other—on Mongol methods of execution less compelling, however.

In the third section, "Culture and the Arts," Michal Biran provides the translation and analysis of a colorful personal account of the Mongol conquest of Baghdad by the Abbasid court musician Ṣafī al-Dīn Urmawī (d. 1294). Examining the master musician's later prolific career and that of his students under the infidel Mongol government, Biran demonstrates the continuous flourishing of Abbasid musical culture after the fall of Baghdad. Judith Kolbas next looks into Juwaynī's celebrated history of the Mongols from a literary perspective and suggests that the author used the motifs of epic Persian prose to shape his message on Mongol rule. In the section's final chapter, Karin Rührdanz discusses developments in the pictorial repertoire of manuscript illustrations in the fifteenth century. She argues that this century, between the decline of the Ilkhanate and the rise of the Timurids, saw greater experimentation in the variety of illustrated themes, especially drawn from the genre of popular literature, before it gave way to a more streamlined repertoire of illustrated themes that were more appropriate for the rise in dominance of Sufi literature and poetry.

The fourth and last section deals with the Ilkhanate's relationship with their immediate neighbors (Anatolia, Armenia, Kurds) and distant polities. Aptin Khanbaghi argues that Mongol rule provided the conditions for the Persianized Turkish population of Iran to further expand the sphere of influence of Persian language and literature to Anatolia. Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog then explores the role of Mongol institutions, especially that of the *darughachi* (governor, resident commander), in incorporating new regions—in this case Armenia—into the Ilkhanate, on the one hand, and, on the other, facilitating the acclimatization of (Armenian) rulers to the new regime. George Lane takes us farther afield, to the Phoenix Mosque in the city of Hangzhou (built 1281) in Mongol-ruled China. Analyzing its location in the city as well as Persian and Chinese tombstones and inscriptions, Lane shows how the history of the mosque testifies to the growth and significance of the Persian Muslim community that arrived at this coastal region along with the Mongol takeover of the Song. Boris James next compares Ilkhanid and Mamluk policies and strategies vis-à-vis the mountainous "Kurdish zone" and their fundamental role in the shaping of Kurdish ethnicity and its "territorialization" during the period. Finally, in the epilogue, Charles Melville examines the reasons proposed for the relatively swift collapse of the Ilkhanate. He prefers the erosion of Chinggisid legitimacy as the leading cause for the political fragmentation of Ilkhanid society and elite.

All in all, this volume edited by Melville and De Nicola offers a fine collection of studies that offer new perspectives on the theme of continuity and transformation under the Ilkhans, and will surely be instrumental in any future research on the Mongols in Iran.

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The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion. By PETER JACKSON. New Haven: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017. Pp. xxi + 614. \$40.

The subject of the Islamization of the Mongol empire has been in the forefront of scholarship on the Mongol empire for the past two decades. Most of the studies have been isolated, with emphasis on the conversions of individual rulers and reactions to their conversion. While scholars have concluded that the conversion process was not top-down, i.e., the ruler converted and the rest of the Mongols followed, the actual process of conversion has not been examined in detail. Furthermore, no study has attempted to examine the topic across the empire in both time and space—at least none until the appearance of Peter Jackson's magnum opus, *The Mongols and the Islamic World*.