expressive impulse of traditional Chinese poetry or, rather, illustrates it. Prominent examples include the group of military campaign poems by Wang Can, discussed in chapter 3, or the many cases examined in the later chapters of the book in which more than one person was asked to write on the same topic.

An extended question concerns audience. Was the presumed patron, the imperial ruler, the sole reader? Or should the readership include at least all those who were present at the occasion and were asked to contribute? Is it possible to differentiate a secondary readership from the genre’s presumed primary reader, the emperor? Do we know anything about the reception of these poems outside the imperial palace and the immediate moment and circumstances of their creation, for example, when they entered into general circulation by their inclusion in literary anthologies such as the Wenxuan? These questions are important to ask because if the poems were not directed solely to the emperor, as an official memorial was supposed to be, and if their authors had a larger audience in mind while composing them, how would our understanding of the genre be affected? And how would this, in turn, change our conception of the larger poetic tradition, and the relationship between the two?

Despite these questions, Fusheng Wu has achieved the set goals of the book by providing a detailed treatment of the topic, a fine reading of the poems, and a balanced analysis of the historical background and human psychology behind the creation of the poetic texts. The book is an important and welcome addition to our growing knowledge of this pivotal period in Chinese literary and cultural history.

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INNER ASIA

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Michael C. Brose has written an important book concerning the period during which China was incorporated into the greater Mongol Empire (Yuan dynasty, 1260–1368). Brose’s book breaks new ground in the social history of the period by exploring immigrant families who served the Mongols. Known as semuren, literally “people of the various categories,” they ranked second in the official social hierarchy behind the Mongols. The first generation of immigrants came to China from elsewhere in Eurasia to serve as civil and military officials.
According to the conventional view of Yuan history, the Mongols employed *semuren* because they distrusted Chinese bureaucrats, and as a result, Chinese tended to withdraw from contact with the government. Brose complicates the standard understanding of the *semuren* through a study of the Uyghurs who served the Mongols in China. He argues that the barriers between Uyghurs and Chinese were far more permeable than we previously imagined. These multilingual Uyghurs cultivated identities as loyal *semuren* of Inner Asian descent, but they simultaneously espoused Confucian values and integrated into Chinese literati society. Brose’s argument profits from a grounding in social science theory of identity. Following the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, Brose contends that Uyghur families adopted “strategies” of training sons in multilingual literacy and bureaucratic skills that served as “cultural capital” to maintain status simultaneously in Mongol political and Chinese social hierarchies of power.

Chapters 3 and 4 investigate the histories of several Uighur *semuren* lineages. They originated as social and political elites in the Gaochang Uyghur kingdom, located at the Turfan oasis in present northwestern China. When the Uyghur king voluntarily submitted to Chinggis Qan in 1209, many of the Gaochang elite entered into Mongol service. The Mongols particularly valued the Uyghurs for their bureaucratic talents and literacy in multiple languages. The early adherence of these Uyghurs to Chinggis Qan became valuable “political capital” that allowed their descendants to inherit high status.

Chapters 5–7 focus on one Uyghur line that eventually adopted the surname of Xie. Their strategies of identity are particularly well documented in Chinese-language sources, including local gazetteers, epitaphs, eulogistic poetry and essays, and a family history. The progenitor of the Xie lineage, Eren Temür (1190s–1260s) is introduced in chapter 3. He entered Mongol service in typical Inner Asian fashion by joining Chinggis Qan’s personal bodyguards as a youth. Early in his career, he participated in military campaigns and later moved to Shandong to tutor the sons of Chinggis Qan’s youngest brother. Eren Temür’s son, Qara Buqa (1246–84), and grandson, Xie Wenzhi (d. 1340), held civil and military posts in north and south China. Xie Wenzhi eventually moved the family residence and ancestral graves from Shandong south to Jiangsu. He had five sons and a nephew who passed the prestigious Confucian *jinshi* civil service examination between 1315 and 1330 and pursued purely civil careers in the provincial and central governments. Members of this generation had excellent reputations as literati, but they continued to take public pride in their Uyghur heritage and serve the Mongols as *semuren*. The family’s adopted surname is an excellent example of their ability to straddle the worlds of Mongol power and elite Chinese culture. Xie is a homophone of a common Chinese surname, but the chosen graph had distinctly foreign connotations referring to the Selenga River in Mongolia, their supposed ancestral homeland.

The exclusive focus on the Xie in the later chapters enriches our understanding of their cultural strategies but sacrifices attention to the wider context. Brose argues that the dual identities of the third and fourth generations of the Xie reflected the general tendency of elite Uyghur families to maximize social and
political power and, more particularly, was a strategy to hedge against the potential fall of the Mongols. While this may partly explain Xie actions, some contemporary Uighur semuren made fewer accommodations to Chinese norms. For example, some families did not adopt Chinese-language surnames. What explains the differences? Were geographic or political factors involved? The Xie’s residence in the literati heartland of southern Jiangsu perhaps influenced their choices. Political alignments also may have played a role. The most prominent member of the fourth generation, Xie Zhedu, was appointed to high offices under the reformist Prime Minister Toghto (1340–44, 1349–55) but retired while the nativist Prime Minister Bayan was in power. What were the cultural strategies of Bayan’s semuren followers? An additional chapter on other Uyghur families in the early fourteenth century might have allowed a finer analysis of variations in semuren identity.

Although Brose has not issued the final word about the Uyghurs in Yuan China, he has written a pathbreaking book that offers valuable insights into identity and power in the Mongol Empire. Subjects and Masters should be an essential addition to the libraries of all scholars interested in premodern Chinese and Inner Asian social, cultural and political history.

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A study of the most famous and most important female incarnation line of Tibet, the Dorje Phagmo lineage of Samding Monastery, When a Woman Becomes a Religious Dynasty is essential reading for anyone who is seriously interested in Tibetan history and religion, Buddhist biographies, and the role of women in Tibetan Buddhism.

The centerpiece of When a Woman Becomes a Religious Dynasty is the recently discovered biography of the first woman in the Dorje Phagmo reincarnation line, the fifteenth-century Chokyi Dronma, who was a royal princess of the Mangyul-Gungthang kingdom of southwestern Tibet. Around an eloquent and highly readable translation of her heretofore overlooked biography, Hildegard Diemberger successfully weaves a much larger story that stretches from the fall of the Tibetan empire straight through to the contemporary revival of Buddhism in twentieth-century Tibet. The book thus offers both a strong synchronic element—an analysis of the significance of Chokyi Dronma’s life and biographical representation firmly situated in the social, religious, and political circumstances of her fifteenth-century era—and a diachronic element exploring the transformations of the Dorje Phagmo reincarnations over five centuries of