



Heavenly Khan: A Biography of Emperor Tang Taizong (Li Shimin)

By Victor Cunrui Xiong

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Editorial Review

Review

A new historical legend to stand alongside Alexander the Great and Napoleon...Well-written and decently plotted... Filled with political scandals, court struggles, epic battles, and narrative drama, there is something here for readers of any genre...*Heavenly Khan* is an epic story of a legendary figure.

--***San Francisco Book Reviews***--

Heavenly Khan is a wonderful book. . . I believe the novel can be read with profit by undergraduates and the general public. It merits a wide notice. A fine film can be based on it.

-- **Lewis Pyenson**, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada--

A deftly written and truly riveting work from beginning to end, *Heavenly Khan: A Biography of Emperor Tang Taizong* is an extraordinary and solidly entertaining story that reveals author Victor Cunrui Xiong to be a exceptional and impressive novelist of the first order. Highly recommended for personal, community, and academic library Historical Fiction collections, *Heavenly Khan* is one of those literary works that will linger in the mind and memory long after the book itself has been finished and set back upon the shelf.

-- ***Midwest Book Review***--

An engrossing fictionalized history that examines an ingenious and powerful Chinese ruler.

--***Kirkus Reviews***--

***The book is at its best in its explanation of the "enlightened sovereign" and the "rule by benevolence." ... "Heavenly Khan" by Victor Cunrui Xiong succeeds in bringing these concepts to life, through the examples of Li Yuan and Li Shimin.

--***Reader Views***--***

Heavenly Khan is definitely a must read for readers everywhere. Overall, I highly recommend this historical novel to readers worldwide.***Urban Book Reviews***

From the Author

Excerpts:

1. The War of Daye 9

One morning in late March, Daye 9 (613), the Emperor Yang, a soft-skinned man in his 40s, was speaking to a gathering of leading civil officials and top military commanders in the assembly hall of the Daye Basilica in Luoyang the Eastern Capital. He was sitting on a yellow silk throne beneath an ornate yellow baldachin. The throne was positioned atop a marble dais above two flights of stairs at the northern end of the commodious hall.

In a stately but factual tone, He spoke about, among other things, the widespread drought in the North, especially in Shandong, which had given rise to insurgency, and berated His generals for failure to stamp it out. Pausing briefly He continued in a raised voice, "Now about the Koguryo? They are inferior barbarians. Still, they have managed to humiliate our superior state--the Great Sui. If we so desire, we can pull up the Eastern Sea and remove Mount Tai, to say nothing of crushing these small-time bandits. We must launch another war against them."

The audience listened in awe.

"This time," He resumed, "I will lead in person."

Silence gripped the hall for a while before a high-pitched, feeble voice from the audience said: "Your Majesty, in my humble opinion, the Kogury? bandits are not strong enough to withstand another assault by our mighty army." With an emaciated face and tall stature the speaker Yuwen Shucarried himself with a military bearing despite his advanced age of over 70. As one of the key commanding officers in the War of Daye 8 (612), Yuwen had been brought back to Luoyang in chains after it had ended in ignominious defeat for the Sui. Only recently had he been reinstated by the Emperor.

"Your Majesty," Yuwen Shu continued, "it would be hard to imagine that any foreign power would be foolish enough to challenge the might of the Sui with its more than 1 million men under arms. Least of all little Kogury?, a country the size of a Sui Commandery with a tiny military."

"We concur," several in the crowd said.

Others remained silent except for an elderly-looking man of stout physique, who said, "However, our Central Kingdom has yet to fully recover from the War of Daye 8. Furthermore, one does not shoot a rat with a bow of a thousand pounds. How can the sovereign of our country, one of ten thousand chariots, condescend to fight such a pitiful enemy in person?"

"I appreciate your frankness and loyalty, Mr. Guo Rong. But My plan is to bring an overwhelming force to bear against Kogury?, and awe her into submission without much of an engagement."

Addressing the entire audience, the Emperor asked, almost rhetorically, "I suppose there is no more objection?"

When no one spoke a word, He continued, "Very well, preparations for the Daye-9 War against Kogury? are now underway."

For more information, see heavenly-khan.weebly.com or goodreads.com/book/show/26135299-heavenly-khan

From the Back Cover

This historical fiction is based on the true story of Li Shimin (also known as Tang Taizong), the greatest sovereign in Chinese history. About 30 years younger than Muhammad, he grew up in a world of devastating upheaval that tore China asunder and was thrust into the role of a military commander in his father's rebel army while still a teenager. In the process of vanquishing his enemies on the battlefield, he proved himself to be a great military genius on a par with Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, and Napoleon. As emperor, he reigned over a period of *Pax Sinica*, which was to a large extent as a consequence of his willingness to listen to and adopt the critical suggestions of his court officials. To the religions of his day--Buddhism, Daoism, and Christianity--he showed a high degree of tolerance. The prestige he had won for Tang China was so high that the states of Central and North Asia honored him with the title of "Heavenly Khan." Although his father founded the dynasty, it was his reign that laid the groundwork for a brilliant empire that was to endure for centuries.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eleanor Williams:

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Ricardo Hayward:

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