



BAHĀDOR

BAHĀDOR, a Turco-Mongol honorific title, attached to a personal name, signifying “hero, valiant warrior.” In the form *bağatur* (from which *bahādor* derives) the term was in use among the steppe peoples to the north and west of China as early as the seventh century, according to the history of the Sui dynasty (589-619), and it is found as Old Turkish *batur* a century later in the Köktürk khanate. Further to the west, the Proto-Bulgars used *bağatur* in the ninth century. As an honorific formally conferred upon an individual by the ruler, *bağatur* (also *ba’atur*) was given currency by Jengiz (Čengīz) Khan (whose father was called Yesügei Bağatur), who awarded this designation to those members, reportedly one thousand in number, of his personal forces whom he wished to recognize for outstanding valor and service. This use of *bağatur/bahādor* was continued in the Mongol successor states. In the Ulus Chaghatay (Čağatāy), for example, according to the *Tārīk-erašīdī*, the chief figures of state around the khan included, alongside the great tribal chieftains, a large group of *bahādors*, men with no following of their own who were yet recognized by the khan for their personal qualities and achievements; and in the Indo-Timurid state established by Bābor the title was commonly conferred upon major men of state whose ties were primarily to the dynasty rather than to their own kin groups. *Bahādor* remained in use in India even under British rule.

Bahādor was also adopted as a regnal title by Muslim Mongol and Turkman dynasts. The first to do so was the il-khan Abū Sa’īd (716-36/1316-35), who had himself styled “al-solṭān al-’ādel Abū Sa’īd bahādor ḵān” in official documents.



This regnal usage was followed by the dynasts of the Jalayerid, Timurid, Qara Qoyunlū, Āq Qoyunlū, Safavid, Indo-Timurid, and, most particularly, Özbek states.

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