



BĀYJŪ

BĀYJŪ (BAIJU or BAIČU), Mongol general and military governor in northwestern Iran (fl. 625/1228-657/1259). He belonged to the Besüt tribe and was a kinsman of Jengiz (Čingis) Khan's general Jebe ([Jaba](#)). He took part in an attack on Isfahan in 625/1228 (Nasawī, *Sīrat-e Jalāl-al-Dīn Mangbertī*, ed. M. Mīnovī, Tehran, 1343 Š./1965, p. 167), and is subsequently found operating in the Caucasus region under the authority of Čormāgūn (Jormāgūn), who had been sent to Iran by the great khan Ögedei (Ūgadäy, q.v.) in 626/1229; the Armenian chronicler Grigor of Akner describes him as Čormāgūn's second-in-command (tr. R. P. Blake and R. N. Frye, *HJAS* 12, 1949, p. 303).

By the latter half of 639/the spring of 1242 Čormāgūn had grown incapacitated owing to some paralytic disease and Bāyjū replaced him as commander of the Mongol forces in northwestern Iran and Iraq (see P. Jackson, *Central Asiatic Journal* 22, 1978, pp. 216-17). Almost immediately he began the expansion of Mongol dominion westward into Anatolia (Rūm) with the capture of Erzurum (Erzerum). The defeat of the Saljuq sultan Kaykōsrow II at Kōsedağ on 6 Moḥarram 641/26 June 1243 was rapidly followed by the reduction of important fortresses such as Sīvās and Caesarea (Kayseri), and the sultan was obliged to acknowledge Mongol overlordship. During 641-42/1244 smaller detachments were raiding northern Syria, where the Mongols for the first time demanded the submission of the Frankish principality of Antioch (Jackson, *English Historical Review* 95, 1980, p. 488). News of this advance was presumably what induced Pope Innocent IV, when dispatching embassies to the Mongols in the spring of 1245, to include a mission to the forces operating



in the Near East. Led by the Dominican friar Ascelin, this embassy reached Bāyjū's encampment at Sisian, south of the Araxes, on 24 May 1247 and infuriated the Mongols by its claims concerning papal authority and its refusal to perform the triple genuflection to Bāyjū as the great khan's representative. Bāyjū meditated executing the envoys but was restrained by members of his household, and the mission finally left him on 25 July, bearing an edict from the great khan Güyüg and a letter from Bāyjū himself for the pope (for this, and Innocent's reply of 22 November 1248, see K. E. Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste zu islamischen und mongolischen Herrschern im 13. Jahrhundert*, Vatican City, 1981, nos. 33, 35).

During the interregnum following the death of Ögedei in 639/1241 Bāyjū appears to have been subordinated to the late sovereign's nephew Batu (Ebn al-'Amīd, ed. Cl. Cahen in *Bulletin d'études orientales de l'Institut français de Damas* 15, 1955-57, p. 130), Güyüg's rival, who dominated the steppes north of the Caucasus (see [golden horde](#)). For this reason Güyüg transferred overall military command in the Near East to Eljigidei (Īčīkadāy) and Bāyjū was thereby demoted. Eljigidei's envoys to St. Louis, who arrived in Cyprus around this time in preparation for the Seventh Crusade, were at pains to explain Bāyjū's attitude toward Ascelin's party on the grounds that Bāyjū, unlike their new master, was a pagan and was surrounded by Muslim advisers (L. d'Achery, *Spicilegium sive collectio veterum aliquot scriptorum*, new ed. E. Baluze et al., Paris, 1723, III, p. 627); but there is little doubt that Bāyjū had been acting in the customary fashion and that Eljigidei was simulating friendship toward the Franks in order to deflect the crusade from any campaign near Mongol-occupied territory. In any event, Güyüg having died in April, 1248, Eljigidei was arrested and executed on Batu's orders in 649/1251 for his opposition to the election of the new great khan Möngke (Mangū), and Bāyjū was restored to his command. All we know of his military activities during this period is that he conducted a punitive campaign in Georgia in 647/1249 (Galstyan, p. 35) and in Rabī' I, 650/May-June, 1252, invested Mayyāfāreqīn, only to raise the siege on Batu's instructions (Ebn Šaddād, *al-A'lāq al-kaṭīra*, Bodleian Library MS Marsh 333, fols. 111v f.).

When Hülegü ([Hülāgū](#)) advanced westward, Bāyjū was among the generals placed under his orders. Rašīd-al-Dīn (ed. 'Alīzāda, pp. 38-39) depicts him as waiting upon Hülegü near Hamadān in the early spring of 655/1257 and being sharply upbraided for his slothfulness, in particular for his failure to move against the caliph at Baghdad. The interview is doubtless apocryphal and the



date certainly incorrect, for Bāyjū had already been obliged by this juncture to relinquish to Hülegü's forces his habitual camping grounds in the Mūgān (Mogān) steppe and had been sent forward into Anatolia. Here the Saljuq sultan Kaykāvūs II was routed in 654/1256 at Āqsarāy and fled into Byzantine territory, while Bāyjū razed the fortifications of the Saljuq capital at Qonya. Kaykāvūs was shortly restored to his throne on orders from the great khan Möngke, jointly with his more amenable brother Qilij Arslān IV, on whose behalf we find Bāyjū in the autumn of 655/1257 reducing the fortress of Malatya (Bar Hebraeus, p. 426). Later that year Bāyjū was recalled by Hülegü to participate in the campaign which took Baghdad in Şafar, 656/February, 1258, and in which he appears to have distinguished himself.

Bāyjū is last mentioned in the context of Hülegü's preparations in Ramazān, 657/September, 1259, for the invasion of Syria (Rašīd-al-Dīn, ed. 'Alizāda, p. 68). In his history of the Turkish and Mongol tribes Rašīd-al-Dīn says that he was executed and his command given to Čormāgūn's son Širemūn (ed. Romaskevič, p. 561). No date is supplied for this event, but it may be connected with Hülegü's move against the contingents from the Golden Horde which were operating in Iran alongside his own, and with the consequent outbreak of war in the Caucasus between himself and Berke Khan in 659/1261 (see Jackson, *Central Asiatic Journal* 22, pp. 232-33). Bāyjū must take the credit for the consolidation of Mongol rule in Azarbaijan, the area that was later to constitute the heartlands of the empire of the Il-khans, and his campaigns in Anatolia, effectively destroying the Saljuqs' power, were responsible for dramatic political changes which ultimately facilitated the rise of Ottomans.

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