



BEGTOĠDĪ

BEGTOĠDĪ (Turkish, lit. “a prince has been born, has arisen,” Persian Baktoġdī), Turkish slave commander of the Ghaznavid sultans **Maḥmūd** and **Mas‘ūd**, d. 431/1040. His career must have begun in the reign of Maḥmūd, though it is only in the time of his son Mas‘ūd (421-32/1031-41) that he achieved prominence and commands. He was appointed commander-in-chief in Khorasan at a time when the depredations of the Oghuz Turkmen were becoming acute there and headed a powerful army, including Turkish, Indian, Arab, and Kurdish troops and a body of war elephants, which went from Nīšāpūr via Ṭūs towards Nasā and the steppes in 426/1035. After negotiations at a so far unidentified place called Sepandānqān (?), Begtoġdī rejected the Saljuq leaders’ offer of submission and in a battle lasting two days, though at first victorious, was in the end defeated, with an immense loss of baggage and materiel to the nomads. Begtoġdī himself fled back to the sultan, but his *katkodā* or adjutant, Ra’īs Abū ‘Abd-Allāh Ḥosayn b. ‘Alī Mikālī, from the leading Nīšāpūr family, fought on until captured by Čaġrī Beg Dāvūd, subsequently casting in his lot with the Saljuqs.

Begtoġdī was then replaced as commander in Khorasan by another general, Sübaši/Sobāši, but the two commanders were defeated together on the road to Saraḵs in 429/1038 by the Saljuqs, again through being impeded by heavy baggage as compared with the highly mobile steppe cavalymen. Begtoġdī was also a commander in Mas‘ūd’s army at the crowning disaster of **Dandānqān** in 431/1040, after which Khorasan was finally lost to the Saljuqs. Shortly afterwards the two generals and ‘Alī-e Dāya were executed by the sultan as



scapegoats for the defeat.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The main primary sources are Bayhaqī, *passim*, and Gardīzī, ed. Nazim, pp. 100-02, 108.

Of secondary sources, see Bosworth, *Ghaznavids*, pp. 181, 242, 247-49, and *idem*, *Later Ghaznavids*, p. 139.