



## BILGETIGIN

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**BILGETIGIN** (Turkish *bilge* “wise man, counselor,” an element found in the onomastic of the Orkhon inscriptions, e.g., Bilge Kağan, plus *tigin* “prince”; cf. Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish*, Oxford, 1972, pp. 340, 483), in the sources written Belkātekīn.

1. The name of a Turkish governor in Ġazna in the years before the assumption of power there by Sebūktigin (q.v.), founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty. After the death in 352/963 of the Samanid general [Alptigin](#), who had established himself in Ġazna on the far eastern periphery of the Samanid empire, his son [Abū Eshāq Ebrāhīm](#) succeeded him briefly as leader of the Turkish troops there; then, when Abū Eshāq Ebrāhīm died in 355/966, the troops elected one of their number, Bilgetigin, who had been a *ḡolām* of Alptigin’s, as their commander. Bilgetigin ruled in Ġazna as a virtually independent ruler; Šabānkāra’ī records that an army was sent out from Bukhara by the general Fā’eq to bring Bilgetigin back to obedience but was defeated by the latter. After this, Bilgetigin was left alone, although on the evidence of two coins of his which are extant he continued to acknowledge the Amīr Manšūr b. Nūḥ as suzerain (M. Nāẓim, *The Life and Times of Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghazna*, Cambridge, 1931, pp. 26-27; C. E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, pp. 38-39). Bilgetigin was killed during the siege of Gardīz in eastern Afghanistan in 364/974-75 or shortly thereafter, fighting against the local ruler of that town, who may have been the dispossessed Abū ‘Alī Lavīk, master of Ġazna before Alptigin’s arrival (Bosworth, “Notes on the Pre-Ghaznavid History of Eastern Afghanistan,” *Islamic Quarterly* 9, 1965, pp.



17-18). Bilgetigin was succeeded briefly by another *gōlām* of Alptigin's, [Bōri or Bōritigin](#), who proved an incompetent leader and was succeeded in 366/977 by Sebūktigin.

2. Bilgetigin is also the name of one of the Turkish commanders of Maḥmūd of Ġazna and his son Mas'ūd, frequently mentioned in the accounts of warfare, e.g., against the Qarakhanids, in Transoxania and Khorasan given by the historian Bayhaqī, see his *Tārīk-e mas'ūdī*, ed. Ġanī and Fayyāz, index; as Mas'ūd's commander-in-chief (*ḥājeb-e bozorg*), he died at Nīšāpūr in 426/1035 (ibid., p. 468).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Given in the text. See also, of primary sources, Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-e nāšeri*, ed. 'A. Ḥabībī, 2nd ed., Kabul, 1342-43 Š./1963-64, I, p. 227, tr. Raverty, I, pp. 71-73.

Ebn Bābā Qāšānī, *Ketāb ra's māl al-nadīm*, tr. in Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids*, pp. 134, cf. 145.

Šabānkāra'ī, *Majma' al-ansāb*, MS Yeni Cami 909, fols. 164a-165b.

An anecdote in Faḡr-e Modabber Mobārakšāh, *Ādāb al-molūk*, ed. A. Sohaylī Kāvānsārī, Tehran, 1346 Š./1967, pp. 246-47 (cf. I. M. Shafī, "Fresh Light on the Ghaznavids," *Islamic Culture* 12, 1938, p. 191, and Bosworth, "Early Sources for the History of the First Four Ghaznavid Sultans (977-1041)," *Islamic Quarterly* 7, 1963, p. 16), records Bilgetigin's death in battle; the author himself claimed descent from Bilgetigin.