



ČORMĀGŪN

ČORMĀGŪN (Mongol Čormaḡun; in Pers. also written Jūrmāḡūn), Mongol general and military governor in Persia, d. ca. 639/1242. His name, sometimes encountered as Čormaḡan, is a diminutive form of Čorman (see Cleaves). According to Rašīd-al-Dīn (*Jāmeʿ al-tawārīk*, Moscow, p. 150), he was a quiver bearer (*qorčī*) to Čengīz Khan and belonged to the Sōnit (Sūnīt) tribe; the designation “Ötegedei” found in the *Secret History of the Mongols* (par. 260) is apparently derived from *öteḡü boḡol* “tribal slave” and is not strictly speaking an ethnicon (see Pelliot and Hambis, p. 86). Following the enthronement of the great khan Ögedei (İktāy) in 626/1229 Čormaḡun was sent to Persia with an army, set by Jovaynī (ed. Qazvīnī, I, pp. 149-50) at 30,000 men, by Rašīd-al-Dīn (Moscow, p. 150) at four *tümens* (i.e., 40,000 men), and by Jūzjānī (*Ṭabaqāt* II, p. 158) at 50,000 men. These troops are described as *tama* (*tamā*); that is, they were intended as a permanent army of occupation. He was given overall command of the Mongol forces already fighting against the Khwarezmians; the last K̄ārazmšāh, Sultan **Jalāl-al-Dīn**, was killed in flight in 628/1231, and his followers moved into Mesopotamia. Čormaḡun secured the submission of the rulers of Fārs and Kermān (Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt* II, pp. 158-59) and later sent a force to besiege Isfahan, which held out until 633/1235-36 (Woods). His forces also appear to have skirmished frequently with those of the ‘Abbasid caliph (Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt* II, pp. 158, 189), though no major campaigns were launched against Baghdad until some years after Čormaḡun’s death. His principal achievements, however, were in the northwest, where he subjugated Azarbaijan and Arrān, the territories that would later form the kernel of Mongol dominion in Persia under the Il-khans, and in the years 633-37/1236-39



reduced to tributary status the Georgian kingdom and the numerous local dynasts in Greater Armenia. When the Mongol generals divided up Armenia among themselves, Čormaġun's personal share, according to the chronicler Vardan Arawelc'i (tr. Dulaurier, pp. 282-83), was Ani, Kars, and the neighboring country, although Grigor of Akner (p. 303) asserted that Čormaġun's headquarters were located at Ganja.

Čormaġun's sphere of authority, however, was steadily eroded during Ögedei's reign: First, in 630/1232-33, the great khan recognized Čin Temür (Čin Tīmūr) as governor of Khorasan and Māzandarān (Jovaynī, II, p. 222); and subsequently, in 637/1239-40, the fiscal administration of all the territories Čormaġun had conquered was transferred to one of Čin Temür's successors, the Uighur Kōrgūz (Kūrgūz), whose staff took over the levying of taxes in the regions south of the Caucasus from Čormaġun's officers and thus deprived them of a significant source of private income (Jovaynī, II, pp. 236, 237-38). In 639/1242 Čormaġun, incapacitated by a paralytic disease, was succeeded by his deputy, Baiju (Bāyjū), though his wife *Altani for a time wielded considerable influence. He appears to have died soon afterward. Čormaġun's son Širemūn (Šīrāmūn) later served in Persia under the Il-khans Hülegü (Hülāgū) and Abaqa.

Čormaġun emerges from the limited sources available as a simple soldier, with little concern or aptitude for administrative responsibilities. Jovaynī (II, p. 219) accused him of neglecting the proper subjugation of Khorasan, a task fulfilled by his rival Čin Temür, and referred later (p. 244) to the ill effects of his predatory policy and that of Baiju in the Tabrīz region. In 1246-47 John of Plano Carpini, the first papal ambassador to the great khan, heard an exaggerated account of the conquests of "Chirpodan" (ed. Van den Wyngaert, pp. 67, 74-75; *Historia Tartarorum*, p. 21).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

G. Altunian, *Die Mongolen und ihre Eroberungen in kaukasischen und kleinasiatischen Ländern im XIII. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1911, pp. 29-37.



Camb. Hist. Iran V, pp. 334-36.

John of Plano Carpini, “Itinera et Relationes Fratrum Minorum Saeculi XIII et XIV,” in A. Van den Wyngaert, ed., *Sinica Franciscana* I, Quaracchi and Florence, 1929.

F. W. Cleaves, “The Mongolian Names and Terms in the History of the Nation of the Archers,” *HJAS* 12, 1949, pp. 419-20.

A. G. Galstyan, *Armyanskie istochniki o mongolakh*, Moscow, 1962, *passim*.

Grigor of Akner, tr. R. P. Blake and R. N. Frye as “History of the Nation of the Archers (the Mongols),” *HJAS* 12, 1949, pp. 297-303.

Historia Tartarorum C. de Bridia Monachi, ed. A. Önnersfors, Berlin, 1967.

P. Jackson, “The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 22, 1978, pp. 216-17.

Jovaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, II, pp. 182-86, 188, 222, 236, 237-38, 244; tr. Boyle, pp. 190, 452-56, 486-87, 499, 501, 507-08.

Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt* II, pp. 158-59, 189-90; tr. Raverty, pp. 1117-19, 1226-27.

Kirakos Ganjakec’i, tr. L. A. Khanlaryan as *Istoriya Armenii*, Moscow, 1976, esp. pp. 165-66, 174, 175, 178, 181-82.

P. Pelliot, “Les Mongols et la papauté,” pt. 2, *Revue de l’Orient Chrétien* 24, 1924, pp. 246-47.

Idem and L. Hambis, *Histoire des campagnes de Gengis Khan*, Leiden, 1951.

Rašīd-al-Dīn, *Jāme’ al-tawārīk*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 150-51; tr. A. A. Khetagurov, in *Sbornik letopisei* I/1, Moscow and Leningrad, 1952, pp. 98-99.

Secret History of the Mongols, tr. Igor de Rachewiltz, *Papers on Far Eastern History* 30, September 1984, pp. 99-100 par. 260; 31, March 1985, p. 30 par. 274.

Spuler, *Mongolen*⁴, pp. 33-36.

Vardan Arawelc’i, tr. E. Dulaurier in “Les Mongols d’après les historiens arméniens,” *JA* 16, 1860.



J. E. Woods, “A Note on the Mongol Capture of Isfahān,” *JNES* 36, 1977, pp. 49-51.