



GAYKĀTŪ KHAN

GAYKĀTŪ KHAN, fifth Mongol Il-khan of Persia (690-94/1291-95); his coins also bear the name Īrinjīn Dūrjī (Tibetan *Rin-chen rDo-rje* “Jewel Diamond”) bestowed upon him by Buddhist lamas. He was the son of the Il-khan Abaqa (q.v.) by Nūqdān Kātūn of the Tatar tribe; the date of his birth, which is garbled by Rašīd-al-Dīn (p. 230), is unknown. On the accession of his brother Arġūn (q.v.) in 683/1284, Gaykātū was sent to govern Anatolia (Rūm). After Arġūn’s death in 690/1291, his candidature carried the day against his nephew Ġāzān (q.v.) and his cousin Bāydū (q.v.), who had initially enjoyed majority support, and he was enthroned near Aklāṭ on 24 Rajab 690/23 July 1291. A second enthronement at Alātāġ on 12 Rajab 691/29 June 1292 (Rašīd-al-Dīn, p. 236) possibly signals the arrival of confirmation from Gaykātū’s nominal suzerain, the great khan Qubilai in China.

In external relations, the reign was undistinguished. Gaykātū’s relieving force arrived too late to prevent Qal’at-al-Rūm from falling to the Mamlūk Sultan Ašraf Kālīl in June 1292, though the Mamluks did not follow up their victory and there were no further hostilities with them during the reign. Peace overtures were received from another enemy, Toqta’a, khan of the Golden Horde (q.v.), in the spring of 693/1294 (Rašīd-al-Dīn, pp. 238-39).

Gaykātū is uniformly described in the sources as an extravagant and debauched monarch, much given to sexual intercourse with the children of the Mongol nobles (continuator of Bar Hebraeus, p. 494; *Tārīk-e Waṣṣāf*, pp. 268, 275): indeed Abu’l-Fedā (pp. 18, 24) blames his overthrow exclusively on the hostility aroused by these practices. But his neglect of the government,



together with his generosity and clemency, were clearly instrumental in his downfall. He was influenced by the verdict of soothsayers that Arġūn had reigned for only seven years because he had shed so much blood (*Tārīk-e Waṣṣāf*, p. 267). The ringleaders in a conspiracy to replace him with a cousin, Anbārjī, were therefore spared: one of them, the amir Taġāčār, was given a military command and another, Ṣadr-al-Dīn Zanjānī, became *ṣāḥeb-e dīvān* and vizier, acquiring unprecedented control over financial affairs (*Tārīk-e Waṣṣāf*, p. 268); it was under Ṣadr-al-Dīn's aegis that the ill-starred experiment with paper money (see ČĀV) was made in 693/1294.

Gaykātū's greatest blunder was to insult Bāydū while drunk and then, out of remorse, to seek to placate him, contrary to the advice of amirs who urged him to destroy his cousin (*Tārīk-e Waṣṣāf*, pp. 275-76; continuator of Bar Hebraeus, pp. 494-95). Bāydū seized his opportunity to revolt in the winter of 694/1294-95, killing Gaykātū's governor of Baghdad. Taġāčār was sent against him, but went over to the enemy. Instead of taking refuge in his power-base in Rūm, the Il-khan made the mistake of fleeing to Ahar and Pīlsovār, where he was seized by supporters of Bāydū whom he had imprisoned in Tabrīz but who had been released on Taġāčār's orders. Gaykātū was put to death on 6 Jomādā I 694/24 March 1295, apparently without Bāydū's knowledge or approval. Of his three sons, Alāferang, who was executed in the reign of Öljeitü (Ūljāytü), was the father of the later Il-khan Jahān Temür (1339-40).

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