



GÜYÜK KHAN

GÜYÜK KHAN (r. 644-46/1246-48), Mongol great khan (*qaġan*), given posthumously the regnal title *Ting-tsung*. He was the eldest son of Ögödei (Ukadāy) by his chief wife Töregene (Turākina/ā Kātun), and was born in 1206 (Abramowski, p. 151). When his father ascended the imperial throne in 1229, he gave Güyük his own appanage in the Emil-Qobuq region (Jovayni, I, pp. 31, 191-92). He saw service in China (Jovayni, I, p. 151; Abramowski, p. 151), and from about 1236 participated in the campaign against the Qipčāq and other peoples of the western steppe, during which he quarreled with his cousin Batu (Bātu), the effective founder of the Golden Horde (q.v.), who was in command. The two men remained enemies, and after Ögödei's death in 1241, Batu, fearing that Güyük would succeed him, prevaricated and failed to attend the assembly (*quriltāy*) to elect a new sovereign. Consequently Güyük was not enthroned until 24 August 1246 (Carpini, p. 320). During the five-year interregnum Töregene, as regent, worked for her son's succession, though Güyük fell out with her and after her death instituted a purge of her advisers and appointees.

Güyük made fresh arrangements for the government of client states such as Rum and Georgia. Reinforcements were sent to the armies operating in China, and Carpini reported (p. 294) that Güyük was planning a new invasion of eastern Europe. Otherwise Güyük appears to have spent his brief reign in preparations for a struggle with Batu. The general Eljigidei (q.v.) was ordered to Persia to supersede or overthrow Batu's commanders in the Transcaucasus, and Güyük's own departure for the west with an army in 1247 was believed to



be directed against his cousin, who made ready to oppose him (Jackson, pp. 198-201). Güyük's death in April 1248 at Qum-senggir on the river Ürunggü (Rašid-al-Din, II, pp. 249-50; Jovayni, I, pp. 215-16; Pelliot, pp. 58-59) averted a major war in Central Asia. The Franciscan missionary William of Rubruck later heard rumors both that he had been poisoned and that he had perished in a drunken brawl with one of Batu's brothers (Jackson and Morgan, p. 167). According to Rašid-al-Din Fażl-Allāh (II, p. 244), Güyük had accepted the throne only on the stipulation that it would remain in his branch of the family. But in the event, this was ignored; his cousin Möngke (Mengü) was elected *qaġan* in 1251, and Güyük's widow Oġul Qaimiš (Oġul Ġāymeš), who had been regent, and many others of his family were executed.

The sources claim that Güyük favored Christians and was hostile to Islam. Jovayni (I, pp. 213-14) and Rašid-al-Din (II, p. 249) explain that he had been reared by his father's Christian minister Qadaq (Qadāq). Yet it is possible that his Christian sympathies, like those of other members of the Chingizid dynasty, have been overstated. According to Juzjāni (II, pp. 171, 173), Güyük was influenced by *toyins*, i.e., Buddhists, and it is also noteworthy that he maintained in office the imam 'Emād-al-Molk Moġammad Ƙotani, one of his father's ministers (Jo-vayni, I, p. 198). Güyük's reign was marked by severe dearth (Abramowski, p. 152), and his extravagant generosity, on which Jovayni comments (I, pp. 214-15), clearly undermined the government finances, but he was not necessarily a feeble ruler. He was feared for his severity, and at his accession he called in all edicts (*yarliġs*) and patents of authority (*pāyzas*) issued by the princes since his father's death (Jovayni, I, p. 211, III, p. 7).

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