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IRAN ii(2), continued

THE SALJUQIDS (1040-1194)

The plains of Central Asia, northwestern China, and western Siberia were breeding grounds for nomadic people, who kept multiplying and searching for new pastures. Both Iranian lands and China were the targets of their periodic inroads. When the waves of Saka andHephtalite invasions subsided, a fresh wave of Turkic nomads began to threaten the Iranian borders. The first appearance of the Turks on the northeastern borders of Persia occurred in the 6th century. The first clash between the Iranians and the Turks took place under the Sasanian Hormozd IV (579-90), when the Turks were defeated and pushed back by Bahrām Čubin, the Iranian general. The penetration of the Turks in Central Asia, however, continued, and the Qaraḵānids (see ILAK-KHANIDS, known to their contemporaries as Āl-e Afrāsiāb, 992-1212), who embraced Islam in the mid-10th century, were able to form an empire and captured the Samanid domain beyond the Oxus, when together with Maḥmud of Ghanza they put an end to the Samanid rule and divided their lands (see CENTRAL ASIA).

A Turkic nomadic people called Oḡuz (Ḡozz in Arabic and Persian sources) began to penetrate into the regions south of Oxus during the early Ghaznavid

period. Their settlement in Khorasan led to confrontation with the Ghaznavid Masʿud, who could not stop their advance. They were led by the brothers Tōḡrel, Čaḡri, and Yināl, the grandsons of Saljuq, whose clan had assumed the leadership of the incomers.

Tōḡrel, an able general, who proclaimed himself Sultan in 1038, began a systematic conquest of the various provinces of Persia and Transoxiana, wrenching Chorasmia from its Ghaznavid governor and securing the submission of the Ziyrids in Gorgān. The Saljuqids, who had championed the cause of Sunnite Islam, thereby ingratiating themselves with the orthodox Muslims, were able to defeat the Deylamite Kākuyids, capturing Ray, Qazvin, and Hamadān, and bringing down the Kurdish rulers of the Jebāl and advancing as far west as Ḥolwān and Ḵānaqayn. A series of back and forth battles with the Buyids and rulers of Kurdistan, Azarbaijan, and Armenia ensued; and, although the Saljuqids occasionally suffered reverses, in the end their ambition, tenacity, and ruthlessness secured for them all of Persia and Caucasus. By the time Tōḡrel triumphantly entered Baghdad on 18 December 1055, he was the master of nearly all of the lands of Sasanian Iran. He had his title of Sultan confirmed by the caliph, and he now became the caliph’s protector, freeing the caliphate from the bond of Shiʿite Buyids.

After nearly 200 years since the rise of the Saffarids in 861, this was the first time that all of Persia and its dependencies came under a single and powerful rule which did not dissipate and disband after a single generation. Tōḡrel (1040-63) was followed by his nephew Alp Arslān (q.v.; 1063-73). He was a warrior king. In his lifetime the realm of the Saljuqids was extended from the Jaxartes in the east to the shores of the Black Sea in the west. He captured Ḵottalān in the upper Oxus valley, conquered Abḵāzia, and made Georgia a tributary, and he secured Toḵārestan and Čaḡāniān in the east. In 1069 he crowned his triumphs with his defeat of the eastern Roman emperor, Romanos Diogenes, by sheer bravery and skillful planning; after extracting a huge tribute of 1,500,000 dinars he signed a peace treaty with the emperor for 50 years. This victory ended the influence of Byzantine emperors in Armenia and the rest of Caucasus and Azarbaijan, and spread the fame of the Saljuqid king in the Muslim world.

Alp Arslān was succeeded by his son Malekšāh (1073-92). Both were capable rulers who were served by the illustrious vizier Neẓām-al-molk (d. 1092). Their rule brought peace and prosperity to a country torn for more than two centuries by the ravages of military claimants of different stripes. Military

commands remained in the hands of the Turkish generals, while administration was carried out by Persians, a pattern that continued for many centuries. Under Malekšāh the Saljuqid power was honored, through a number of successful campaigns, as far north as Kāšḡar and Khotan in eastern Central Asia, and as far west as Syria, Anatolia, and even the Yemen, with the caliph in Baghdad subservient to the wishes of the great Saljuqid sultans.

The ascent of the Saljuqids also put an end to a period which Minorsky has called “the Persian intermezzo” (see Minorsky, 1932, p. 21), when Iranian dynasties, consisting mainly of the Saffarids, the Samanids, the Ziyarids, the Buyids, the Kakuyids, and the Bavandids of Tabarestan and Gilān, ruled most of Iran. By all accounts, weary of the miseries and devastations of never-ending conflicts and wars, Persians seemed to have sighed with relief and to have welcomed the stability of the Saljuqid rule, all the more so since the Saljuqids mitigated theeffect of their foreignness, quickly adopting the Persian culture and court customs and procedures and leaving the civil administration in the hand of Persian personnel, headed by such capable and learned viziers as ʿAmid-al-Molk Kondori and Neẓām-al-Molk.

After Malekšāh’s death, however, internal strife began to set in, and the Turkish tribal chiefs’ tendencies to claim a share of the power, and the practice of the Saljuqid sultans to appoint the tutors (*atābak*s) of their children as provincial governors, who often became enamored of their power and independence, tended to create multiple power centers. Several Saljuqid lines gradually developed, including the Saljuqids of Kermān (1048-1188) and the Saljuqids of Rum in Anatolia (1081-1307); the latter survived the great Saljuqs by more than a century and were instrumental in spreading the Persian culture and language in Anatolia prior to the Ottoman conquest of the region.

Ḵʷārazmšāhs (1097-1231). Malekšāh’s son Sanjar lost Khorasan in his turn to a fresh wave of the Ḡozz tribes, who overwhelmed the province from the north, limiting the Saljuqid domain to western Persia and Iraq. The governors of Chorasmia, who were traditionally called Ḵʷārazmšāh, took advantage of the situation to exercise independent rule, and soon, following higher ambitions, they advanced towards central Persia, defeating their opponents and doing away with the Saljuqid power in Iran. Under ʿAlāʾ-al-Din Moḥammad b. Takeš (q.v.; 1200-1220), the most powerful of the Turkish Ḵʷārazm-šāhs, they were able to defeat the Ghurids (early 11th cent. to 1215), their chief opponents in the east, and even threatened to bring Baghdad under their control. A ruthless tyrant, ʿAlāʾ-al-Din had, however, the misfortune of being confronted by the

Mongol invasion. He had foolishly invited the disaster upon himself and his domain by refusing to surrender or chastise the governor of a border city, Otrār, who had killed a Mongol envoy together with a large number of accompanying Muslim merchants and had confiscated their valuable merchandise. Realizing the strength of the Mongol army, he regularly refused to put up an effective resistance against them and gradually withdrew to western Persia, leaving Transoxiana, Khorasan, and most Persian cities to their fate. The personal bravura and the daring battles of his son, Jalāl-al-Din Mingirini (various spellings), against the avalanche of the Mongol onslaught could not stem the tide of the oncoming Mongols. By 1230 all resistance to the Mongols was broken.

THE MONGOL INVASION

The Mongol invasion of Persia and the occupation of the Middle East are regarded as the greatest calamity that befell the region in the Islamic period. The Mongols originally inhabited the area between Manchuria, Siberia, and present-day Mongolia. They enter the annals of history only towards the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th, when they were united under the able leadership of Chengiz Khan (see ČENGIZ KHAN), who was elected in 1206 by the assembly of the Mongol chiefs (the *quriltay*) the supreme Khan of the Mongolian tribes. Chengiz immediately began to expand his power and extend the Mongolian domain by subduing various Uralo-Altaic and Turkic tribes and making them his *il* or subordinate. Through the military leadership of four of his sons, Joči, Čaghatay, Ögedey, and Toluy, and other Mongol generals, Chengiz was able to form, within a short span of time, a vast empire which stretched from northern China through Siberia and Central Asia to the Middle East, Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe, an empire which has never been exceeded in extent.

The Mongol nomadic tribes originally followed an animistic and shamanistic religion and were subject to an unwritten code of law or *Yāsā*, which regulated among other matters the conduct of war, the treatment of the prisoners, the distribution of booty, and the hunt. Their rise coincided with a period of decline of both the Abbasid caliphate and that of local states in the Middle East, mostly swept away by the Ḵʷārazmšāhs. He also ended the rule of the Qaraḵanids in western Central Asia.

In their westward movement the Mongols came into contact with Manichean Uighurs, whom they subdued and absorbed. As the Mongols did not have a

script, they adopted for their language the Uighur script, itself derived from the Manichean script (q.v. at *iranica.com*). In the East, the Mongols defeated the northern Chin dynasty and later in 1279 cleared all of China by bringing to an end the rule of the Sung dynasty in southern China. They became the founder the new Yüan dynasty, which adopted the Chinese way of life and culture and continued ruling China until 1370, when it was replaced by the Ming dynasty. In China they adopted the Buddhist religion of the Tibetan type. In Central Asia they came also into contact with Christianity and Islam and became acquainted with their teachings.

When intending to conquer a city or fortress, the Mongols would, as a rule, propose submission. If this was not accepted, they would attack their target or set siege to it, and, when they succeeded, they would normally drive all the inhabitants out of the city or fortress into the open; then they would take all the artisans and craftsmen and would send them to their capital and massacre the rest, sometimes taking the young men among them into their army. The great majority of the cities in Transoxiana and Persia that refused to submit were destroyed, with their populations put to the sword. Thus Bukhara, Samarqand, Otrār, Ḵojand, Termeḏ, Marv, Balḵ, Ṭāleqān, Nišābur, Ṭus, Herāt, Juzjānān, Bāmiān, Ray, and the cities of Ṭabarestān suffered large-scale destruction, and their populations were massacred. In some of the cities, according to the descriptions of the historians, the Mongol hordes did not leave even the animals alive, and in some, like Marv and Herat, they also resorted to torture and mayhem before embarking on a general massacre. The number of the people killed in the course of Mongol assaults that are mentioned in the histories far exceeds the possible number of the inhabitants, but it testifies to the unprecedented number of people who perished in each instance. Persian cities had not suffered, prior to the Mongol raids, such thorough pillaging or such a widespread loss of human life. The nominal resistance of Moḥammad Ḵʷārazmšāh ended on the island of Ābeskun at the southeastern corner of Caspian Sea, where he died from sickness in dire conditions. The several engagements of the courageous Jalāl-al-Din Mingirini only occasioned more bloodshed to no useful purpose. His military adventures ended in 1231 around Mayyāfāreqin in western Iran, when some Kurds murdered him as he was fleeing before the Mongol pursuers.

When Qubilay, son of Ögeday, became the Great Khan, he sent his brother Hülegü (see HOLĀGU) to consolidate and expand the Mongol conquest of Persia and the Middle East. Hülegü defeated the Ismāʿilis in 1256, destroyed

their fortress, and added to his entourage thefamous scientist and philosopher Naṣir-al-Din of Ṭus, who was attached to the Ismāʿili court. He proceeded westward, entered Baghdad, and put the last Abbasid caliph MostaʿsÂem to death (1258), ending the long-lasting Abbasid caliphate and thus bringing to a close an era of Islamic history, as the Muslim community no longer possessed a head, even if nominal (and in spite of the Ottoman sultans' claim), to give it a measure of religious and political unity.

After advancing into Syria, Hülegü was checked in Palestine by the Mamluks of Egypt, who defeated the Mongol army, destroying the prevailing myth of their invincibility. Hülegü became the ruler, on behalf of his brother, the Great Khan, of a vast civilized region that included Persia, Iraq, Anatolia, and the Caucasus. He was named Ilḵān, that is, the vassal of the Great Khan, a title by which the dynasty founded by him became known (see IL-KHANIDS).

Hülegü remained through his life obedient to his brother the Great Khan, but his descendents gradually became practically independent, particularly after Ḡāzān (1295-1304) became converted to Islam. After Hülegü (1256-65) the following Ilḵāns ruled: Abaqa (q.v.), son of Hülegü (1265-82), who made Tabriz his capital and had to fight against Baybirs, the capable Mamluk sultan of Egypt; Tegüder (1282-84), another son of Hülegü, who became Muslim and assumed the name of Aḥmad; Arḡun (q.v.; 1284-91), son of Abaqa, who abandoned Islam; Gayḵātu (q.v.; 1291-95), a son of Abaqa who scattered and emptied the treasury by his extravagant generosity to princes and his generals, and as a result, following the advice of his vizier Ṣadr al-Din Aḥmad Zanjāni, issued paper money (*čāv*; q.v.) in imitation of the practice in China, but failed to have it accepted by the people; Baydu (q.v.), a grandson of Hülegü, who ruled less than a year (1295); Ḡāzān son of Arḡun (q.v.) who became a Muslim and assumed the name of Maḥmud just before toppling Baydu and killing him; he instituted a number of far-reaching reforms in administration and economy, trying to establish a just rule and prevent the abuses of government agents, particularly tax collectors and soldiers, even though he could be also a harsh and unforgiving despot where his own purse or pleasure was con-cerned; Moḥammad Ḵodābanda Oljeytü (1304-16) a son of Arḡun, who made Solṭāniya near Qazvin his capital; he became a Shiʿite, but towards the end of his life hereturned to Sunnism; he, too, was a good king and built cities and encouraged art and helped agriculture; Abu Saʿid Bahādor (1316-35), the son of Oljeytü, the last of the powerful Ilḵāns; he ordered the killing of the historian and scholarly vizier Rašid-al-Din Fażl-Allāh in 1318, but,

regretting his action, he appointed Rašid-al-Din's capable son, Ḡiyāṯ-al-Din Moḥammad, as his vizier. His rule was beset by many disturbances and conflicts, but he managed to keep his head above water and deal fairly efficiently with his military problems and also found time to be a supporter of art and literature.

The dynasty, which by now had aged, lost its vigor after Abu Saʿid. A succession of Il-khans followed without any of them having much control over their disputing generals. The last ones were puppets set up by Mongol generals, until finally their line came to an end in 1353, when Persia was divided among the contending claimants for power.

The Il-khanids' vast territory had to defend itself against the Golden Horde in the northwest over disputes concerning some Caucasian territories, and against the rise of the Chaghatayid dynasty (q.v.) in the northeast as well as having to struggle with the Mamluks of Egypt in the west, against whom they tried to forge an alliance with the Crusaders. On the whole they defended their territory well. They were ably helped in the administration of their lands by a number of capable Persian viziers and governors, including Šams-al-Din Moḥammad Jovayni and his son Bahā-al-Din Moḥammad, ʿAtā-Malek Jovayni, governor of Baghdad, Saʿd-al-Dawla, a Jewish physician; Saʿd-al-Din Sāvaji, and more particularly Rašid-al-Din Fażl-Allāh, also of Jewish origin but converted to Islam, and his son Ḡiyāṯ-al-Din Moḥammad.

Even though the Il-khanids were mostly Buddhists or favored Christianity before Ḡāzān Khan, they soon adopted, like the Turkic rulers of Persia before them, the Persian way of life and court etiquette. They brought Persia under a single rule and administration, and relative peace and tranquility reigned in their domain in a manner that Persia had not experienced for a long time. They attempted to repair the ravages caused by their invasion and to build public monuments. The country began to prosper under their rule. Ḡāzān distinguished himself in particular by being a just ruler and caring for the wellbeing of his subjects. His edicts known as the Yāsās of Ḡāzān are famous in Mongol history for providing detailed regulations in order to establish an equitable rule and for lightening the burden of his subjects (a summary of them can be found in ʿAbbās Eqbāl, *Tāriḵ-e mofasÂṣal-e Irān*, pp. 514-21; Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran*, pp. 373-98).

The weakening of the Mongols after Abu Saʿid produced a result only too familiar in Persian history: the rise and rebellion of contending generals who

had been in the service of a once strong dynasty and the resurgence of local potentates and belligerent warlords, until a strongman rose again. Thus the domain of the Il-khans became divided between the Karts in eastern Khorasan and northern Afghanistan (1245-1389); the Moẓaffarids in Yazd, Kermān, Fārs, and even for a while in western Persia and Azarbaijan (1314-93); the Injuyids (see INJU DYNASTY) in Fārs (1325-53); the Jalayerids in Azarbaijan, Kurdistan, and Iraq (1340-1432); and Sarbedarids in western Khorasan (1337-86), with some regions becoming a bone of contention between the contending, short-lived houses, before Timur terminated their rule.

The rise of Timur (Tamerlane, 1336-1405). Timur belonged to a clan of the Chaghatayid Mongols that had been Turkified, and, in the chaotic and war-torn situation that prevailed in Central Asia in the mid-fourteenth century as a result of the decay of the Chaghatayid power, he was able to establish a military presence there, eventually becoming the master of Transoxiana. He made Samarqand his capital, and often, when he conquered a city, he would send its craftsmen to his capital before putting the rest of the people to the sword. Thus Samarqand prospered during his reign. His ambitions and his resolve to expand his power and avail himself of the rich urban centers of Persia that had just recovered from the effects of Mongol onslaught fueled his ceaseless war efforts. After conquering Chorasmia and subduing the ruler of the Qebčaq plains, he embarked on a series of expansionist wars that included a three-year war beginning in 1386 and a five-year war beginning in 1392 and a seven-year war beginning in 1399. The outcome was that he conquered Khorasan, Māzandarān and Astarābād, Azarbaijan, Georgia, Shirvan, and Armenia. In 1398 he invaded India, sacked Delhi, and massacred some 100,000 people. In the course of his seven-year wars he also captured Aleppo and sacked Damascus. He defeated and took prisoner the Ottoman sultan Bayezit, and, campaigning in the Ottoman Anatolian provinces, he reached Izmir and the Mediterranean. He was planning the conquest of China, and to that purpose he moved with 200,000 men towards the Jaxartes (Syr Daryā), but he fell ill and died in 1405.

Timur was a ruthless and an avaricious tyrant, who, feigning Islamic piety, sometimes paid a visit to Muslim shaikhs and mystics of repute after his massacres. When he ordered the massacre of the people of Isfahan, who had rebelled against the abuses of his agents, he ordered his army to deliver to him 70,000 heads of the Isfahanis, and this they did, enabling him to have a column built with their skulls. After sacking Baghdad, he ordered each of his 20,000

men to bring him one severed head, and this order too was carried out. His wanton rapacity and cruelty led him in many cases to sack a city and massacre its people even when they had already submitted, as was the case with Damascus. He presented his invasion ofIndia and Syria and his intended attack on China as holy wars against infidels and heretics, but his conduct was that of an aggressive, bloodthirsty, and acquisitiveoppressor.

Unlike Chengiz, Timur was not a capable administrator, being interested only in conquest and collection of booty; nor did he have any viziers or counselors of note. He mostly left the conquered lands in the hand of their defeated rulers without integrating them into his own domains. Although his empire extended from Moscow and the Ukrainian plains to the borders of China and from the Mediterranean to India—a little less extensive than that of Chengiz, which included China, but not India—his empire soon became an arena for his contending descendents as well as the Turkmen dynasties of Qara Qoyunlu and Āq Qoyunlu (q.v.). However, his only surviving son Šāhroḵ (r. 1405-47), a peace-loving, capable, and generous patron of culture and art, was able to hold together a large portion of his father's empire, that is, Khorasan, Transoxiana, southern Iran, and Iraq. He appointed his son Uluḡ Beg, an astronomer and a lover and patron of sciences, as the governor of Transoxiana (1409-47). He made Samarqand his capital, and spent much of his time in an observatory he had built in that city. It was by his order that the foremost astronomers of the time organized the *zij* or astronomical tables known as Uluḡ Beg's Zij, which remained in use for many centuries.

Another son of Šāhroḵ, Bāysonḡor (q.v.; 1397-1433) was an outstanding calligrapher, a poet, and a fun-loving prince, who preferred the company of artists and men of letters to martial or political pursuits. His court was ahaven for painters, calligraphers, architects, poets, and scholars. It was he who commissioned the famous manuscript of the *Šāh-nāma* known as the *Bāysonḡori Šāh-nāma* (q.v.) and had it illustrated with excellent miniature paintings. Many of the Timurid princes, including some of Timur's sons, were patrons and practitioners of art and letters.

After the reign of Šāhroḵ the Timurid house had yetanother shining period in Khorasan inaugurated by Ḥo-sayn b. Manṣur b. Bāyqarā (r. 1469-70, 1470-1506; see ḤOSAYN BĀYQARĀ), a great grandson of Timur. Under his reign, Herat, his capital, rose to prominence and was a center of poets, artists, and scholars, and was adorned by many buildings and monuments. It was also the site of a vast library that Sultan Ḥosayn brought together. He encouraged

the study of arts and sciences by providing stipends to a large number of students. He was aided by his vizier Mir ʿAlišir Navāʾi, a cultured man of letters and a poet in both Persian and Chaghatay (q.v.; he is called the father of Chaghatay poetry). Among the luminaries of Sultan Ḥosayn's court one could mention ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmi, the famous poet, writer, mystic, and anthologist, admired both in Persia and in the Ottoman empire. He is traditionally considered to represent the last phase and glow of classical Persian poetry. Kamāl-al-Din Beh-zād (q.v.), the most outstanding Persian painter of the Islamic times, and Mir Ḵʷānd, the historian and the author of the comprehensive history *Rawżat al-ṣafā*, were among the other luminaries of Sultan Ḥosayn's court. His encouragement of arts and letters and his patronage of learned men represented a tradition that had started with the Samanids and had been followed by nearly all the ruling houses in Persia. The Timurid rule came to an end soon after Sultan Ḥosayn as a result of repeated Uzbek incursions.

The Turkmen intermezzo. The successors of Timur had to deal with two Turkmen dynasties mentioned above. The Turkmen tribes were pushed westward by the Mongol invasion. The Qara Qoyunlu (Black Sheep) were settled originally to the north of Lake Van and northern Iraq, while the Āq Qoyunlu (White Sheep), who like the Qara Qoyunlu traced their descent to the Ḡozz tribes, were centered in eastern Anatolia. Qara Yusof (r. 1390-1400, 1406-11) and Jahānšāh (r. 1434-67), the Qara Qoyunlu leaders, were warlike commanders, who for a time managed to bring under their control the regions of western Persia, Armenia, Georgia, Arrān, and Azarbaijan. Both were defeated in the end by their powerful rival, Uzun Ḥasan (Tall Hasan, r. 1457-78), the leader of the Āq Qoyunlu. Some of the Qara Qoyunlu, like Jahānšāh, were also patrons of art. The little that remains of the excellent Blue Mosque in Tabriz is a relic of their rule.

The Āq Qoyunlu (1396-1508) were related by marriage to the Byzantine principality of Trebizond and, unlike the Qara Qoyunlu, submitted to Timur and fought with him against the Ottoman Bāyezit. The greatest ruler among them was the impressive military commander and statesman Uzun Ḥasan, who was married to a Byzantine princess, defeated Jahānšāh Qara Qoyunlu, and extended his rule to the shores of the Persian Gulf. He was on good terms with the Qaramanids of Anatolia (1256-1475) against the Ottomans and developed extensive relations with Venice and some other Western powers, but, despite his considerable military prowess, he proved no match for the

Ottoman army and was defeated in 1473. His successors continued their struggles against the Ottomans for a while, but soon had to face a mightier enemy, the Safavids. The Safavid Sufi propaganda had found staunch followers among the Turkmen tribes residing in eastern Anatolia and Azarbaijan, providing powerful support for the Safavid Shah Esmāʿil (q.v.; r. 1501-24) who put an end to the Āq Qoyunlu dynasty in 1508.

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