



JABA

JABA (Jebe; Jovayni uses the Turkish form Yeme), 13th-century Mongol general of the Besüt (Bisut) tribe under Čengiz Khan (q.v.). His original name was Jirġo'adai ("sixth"; Jirqutāy), but when, having deserted the Tayiči'ut tribe, he joined Čengiz Khan, the latter renamed him Jebe, a Mongolian term meaning "weapon" (*Secret History*, I, p. 69, par. 147; Rašid-al-Din gives a different etymology: *Jāme' al-tawāriḳ* [Moscow], p. 488; ed. Rowšan and Musawi, I, p. 188). He rose from commanding a unit of ten to be commander of a *tümen* (10,000; Rašid al-Din, *Jāme' al-tawāriḳ* [Moscow], pp. 551-53; ed. Rowšan and Musawi, I, pp. 207-8), and he distinguished himself in the war against the Chin Empire in northern China, taking Tung-ching (the modern Liao-yang), its eastern capital, by a ruse that involved a false retreat (*Secret History*, I, pp. 175-76, par. 247; Rašid-al-Din, *Jāme' al-tawāriḳ* [Moscow], p. 563 ed. Rowšan and Musawi, I, pp. 210, 443). His most celebrated operations fell during the great seven-year campaign to Western Asia (1218-24), when he was first sent against Čengiz Khan's enemy, the Naiman (Nāymān) chief Kūčlüg (Kušluk), who had usurped the throne of the Qara-Khitay Empire. Jebe fomented a rising by the oppressed Muslim population with a proclamation of religious freedom (Rašid-al-Din, ed. Rowšan and Musawi, I, pp. 465-66; cf. Jovayni, ed. Qazvini, I, pp. 49-51). After Jebe's success in hunting down and killing Kūčlüg on the frontier of Badakšān, Čengiz Khan warned him against excessive self-confidence (Rašid-al-Din, *Jāme' al-tawāriḳ* [Moscow], p. 554; ed. Rowšan and Musawi, I, p. 208). From Samarkand in 1220, Čengiz Khan dispatched Jebe and another general, Sübe'etei (Subatāy), with an army of 30,000 men in pursuit of the K̄vārazmšāh Moḥammad b. Tekeš (Jovayni, ed.



Qazvini, I, pp. 92, 113-16; tr. Boyle, I, pp. 118, 143-49), who had fled to the Caspian coast; they were ordered to complete the task within three years, but did so in two-and-a-half (Rašid al-Din. *Jāme' al-tawāriq* [Moscow], p. 557, ed. Rošwan and Musawi, I, pp. 209, 505). As the two generals moved rapidly through northern Persia, Jebe received the submission of Balk, Nišāpur, Ray, and Hamadān, but sacked towns such as Zāva, Āmol, and Ardabil, which offered resistance. The Mongol army then ravaged Azarbaijan, defeated the Georgian king and the Alans, and crossed the Caucasus to crush the Qepčāq (Cumans) and their Russian allies on the Kalka River before withdrawing eastwards to rejoin Čengiz Khan on his homeward march to Mongolia (Rašid al-Din, ed. Rowšan and Musawi, I, pp. 501, 504-10, 521-25, giving slightly different details from Jovayni; Jovayni, ed. Qazvini, I, pp. 112-17). Garbled reports of these operations, reaching the Fifth Crusade in Egypt, brought the Mongols to the attention of Christian Europe for the first time. The Chinese dynastic history of the Mongol era, the *Yuan Shih* (chap. 120), suggests that Jebe died towards the close of the expedition (tr. Pelliot and Hambis, p. 270). An isolated reference in the *Secret History* (I, p. 202, par. 272) to his participation in a campaign in northern China in 1231 is therefore probably anachronistic.

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