



## MUSĀ YABĠU

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**MUSĀ YABĠU** (Bayġu in some sources), the son of Saljuq Sü-baši [Sobāši], the eponymous strongman of a **Ġozz** clan, whose nephew Toġrel founded the Saljuq dynasty. It is debated whether his second name is pronounced “*yabġu*” (an old Turk. title) or “*payġu*” (*bġgu*, *baygu*, *paygu*: a bird of prey). There is no information in the sources regarding initial periods of his life. He succeeded to the leadership of the Saljuqs in Transoxania as the most senior member of the family following the capture of his elder brother Arslan Esrā’il Yabġu (1025), by Sultan Maḥmud of Ghazna (r. 998-1030; Ebn al-Aṭir, IX, pp. 475-76; Rāvandi, pp. 87-92).

After the immigration of the Saljuqs to Khorasan in 1035, the battles with the **Ghaznavids** caused the brothers Toġrel and Čaġri, who were the most active members of the clan, to strengthen their position and become as powerful as their uncle Musā Yabġu. According to **Abu’l-Faẓl Bayhaqi** (d. 1077; ed. Fayyāz, p. 641), one of the envoys sent to Sultan Mas’ud I (r. 1031–41) after the first victory of the Saljuqs against the Ghaznavids on 29 June 1035, was representing Musā Yabġu. The second Saljuq victory against the Ghaznavids on 1 June 1038 caused the rapid advance of Toġrel Beg within the clan. In the sharing of the spoils after the victory, Toġrel Beg took Nišāpur, his brother Čaġri Beg took Marv, and Musā Yabġu the town of Saraqs. After the victory of Dandānaqān (q.v.) in 1040, Musā Yabġu received Herat, Esfezār, Bušanj, **Sistān**, and **Bost**. Shortly afterwards, Musā Yabġu seized Herat with about 5,000 cavalry and then ruled the region of Sistān with the aid of his nephew Ertāš (Ertāš; *Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, pp. 365-66). Abu’l-Faẓl, the regional ruler, offered his



allegiance to the Saljuqs. Musā Yabġu, who established a semi-independent government in South Khorasan and Sistān, made the town of Herat the center of his administration. Although Sistān was seized by the Ghaznavid *hājeb*, Toġrel, in 1051, it was taken back by Musā Yabġu after Toġrel's return to Ghazna (see *ĠAZNI*; *Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, pp. 371-72)

The real threat to the sovereignty of Musā Yabġu was not, however, from the Ghaznavids, but from within the dynasty itself. He encountered interference in Sistān first from Ertaš, the brother of Ebrāhim Yenāl, in 1041 and then from Yāquti, the son of Čaġri Beg in 1054-55. The most dangerous threat, however, was posed by Čaġri Beg himself, who entered the city in 1056 and had the Friday prayer sermon (*koṭba*) delivered in his name. Musā Yabġu appealed to Toġrel Beg, who reproached Čaġri Beg severely and sent the letter of appointment confirming Yabġu as governor of Sistān and, besides, authorizing him to mint coins and have Friday prayer sermons delivered in his own name (*Tāriḳ-e Sistān*, pp. 374-81). Coins minted in the name of Musā Yabġu in Herat in the years 435/1043-44, 439/1047-48, 443/1051-52, 446/1054-55 and in Sistān in 443/1052-53 have survived to the present day (see Album, bibliography).

The struggle between the line of Musā Yabġu and Čaġri Beg of the Saljuq dynasty was continuing at that time. A coin minted in the name of Čaġri Beg and his son *Alp Arslan* (r. 1063-72) in the year 450/1058-59 in Herat shows that the area ruled by Musā Yabġu was reduced at that time (Sourdel, p. 214). It seems that the political rule of the line of Musā Yabġu came to an end in 1064 at the beginning of Alp Arslan's bid for sovereignty. There is no information available about the last years of Musā Yabġu or his death.

Musā Yabġu, referred to as Yabġu-ye Kalān and Inanč/Inānč Beg, used the titles and sobriquets Faḳr-al-Molk, Mo'ezz-al-Dawla, Faḳr-al-Mella, al-Malek al-'Ādel, and Nā ṣer-al-Din. The names of his sons Yusof, Abu 'Ali Ḥasan and Qara Arslan Böri/Buri were also mentioned in the literature of the period. Abu'l-Ḥasan Bayhaqi (p. 71), however, refers to 'Omar, Abu Bakr, Böri, and Dawlatšāh as the sons of Musā Yabġu. The Dawlatšāh mentioned by Bayhaqi must be the same Dawlatšāh who rebelled in Toḳārestān in 1098 during the reign of *Sultan Barkiāroq* (r. 1092-1105) and was captured and imprisoned by Sanjar, the ruler of the eastern Saljuq Empire, who eventually blinded him (Ebn-al-Atir, X, p. 279). Dawlatšāh is the last known member of the Musā Yabġu line.



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