



YĀSĀWUR

YĀSĀWUR (YASA'UR), a Mongol prince belonging to the [Chaghatayid dynasty](#). He was a grandson of Buqa Timur (Buqa Temür) (*Tāriḵ-e Waṣṣāf*, pp. 509, 613; Kāšāni, p. 36; *Mo'ezz al-ansāb*, fol. 31a), who had briefly reigned as khan of Čağatai's ulus in the 1270s. His mother was a daughter of a leading Chaghatayid amir of the same name, known as Yāsāwur-*e bozorg* (Rašid-al-Din, I, pp. 72, 606, and II, p. 1226), and the sister of Čangši (Kāšāni, p. 36), who frequently appears as his nephew's close ally. Prince Yāsāwur is first heard of during the struggle that broke out between the khan Duwa (Du'a) and Qaidu's son and successor, Čāpār (Chapar), in 705/1305, when he supported the former (*Tāriḵ-e Waṣṣāf*, pp. 515-16; Kāšāni, p. 35-7). At some point he became a Muslim at the hands of a shaykh named Badr-al-Din Mandāni (Kāšāni, p. 213), possibly in Samarqand, which was adjacent to his camping grounds (*Tāriḵ-e Waṣṣāf*, p. 519).

Following the definitive triumph of Duwa's line in 709/1309, Yāsāwur accompanied Kupāk (Köpek), a son of Duwa and brother of the new khan Isān Buqa (Esen Buqa), on an invasion of Khorasan in 713/1313-14 (Kāšāni, pp. 153, 164, 209), when his reluctance to pursue or massacre his coreligionists aroused the suspicion and hostility of Kupāk and the khan (Kāšāni, pp. 209-11; Sayfī, pp. 635, 640-41). As a result of their quarrel, Yāsāwur, who during the campaign had conceived a desire for the pasturelands of Šaburgān (Kāšāni, p. 211), decided in 714/1314-15 to abandon Chaghatayid territory and cross the [Āmu Daryā](#) to put himself and his forces at the disposal of the Il-Khan Oljāytu (Öljeitü). In response to his offer of submission, the Il-Khan granted him the



Bādġis and Šaburgān regions as his grazing lands, ordering the army commanders and local land owning magnates of Khorasan to obey him (*Tāriḳ-e Waṣṣāf*, p. 614; Kāšāni, p. 214; Sayfi, pp. 644-45). Prior to crossing the Āmu Daryā, Yāsāwur engaged in the wholesale devastation of much of Transoxiana, including not just Keš and Naḳšab, regions where Kupāk resided, but also Samarqand, which lay within his own sphere of influence. Bukhara and Ƙojand were spared only through the intercession of Badr-al-Din Mandāni (Kāšāni, p. 213). A bid by Kupāk to avenge these outrages was foiled by amirs from Khorasan, who moved to Yāsāwur's assistance. The prince had uprooted a large number of the inhabitants of Transoxiana and transported them across the river. They suffered a great deal; Kupāk's attack forced Yāsāwur to have them moved further south, towards Herat, before the end of the winter, with the result that as many as 100,000 are said to have perished from cold or from hunger (*Tāriḳ-e Waṣṣāf*, p. 613; Sayfi, pp. 643-44; Allsen, pp. 135-36).

Oljāytu took the precaution of obtaining Yāsāwur's agreement to a treaty, whereby he promised faithful service (Kāšāni, pp. 218-19). The Il-Khan's death (716/1316), however, followed by the departure from Khorasan of his young son Abu Sa'id with a view to ascending the throne, left a vacuum in the province. In addition, strife among the Il-Khanid amirs there led a number of them, notably Baktut (Bektüt), to give their allegiance to Yāsāwur (*Tāriḳ-e Waṣṣāf*, p. 621; Sayfi, pp. 651-55). Initially Yāsāwur feigned loyalty, seeking from the new Il-Khan a renewal of his agreement with Oljāytu (Sayfi, pp. 659-68), while exerting pressure on the two principal local rulers, Ġeyāt-al-Din of Herat and Našir-al-Din of Sistan, to acknowledge his authority. Only in 718/1318 did he begin to move west, defeating loyalist amirs in Khorasan and ravaging Māzandarān (Sayfi, pp. 681-9). But his failure to secure his rear against Ġeyāt-al-Din, and the news that Abu Sa'id's troops, under Amir Ḥosayn (the ancestor of the Jalayerids), were advancing from Iraq, induced him to retreat (Sayfi, pp. 689-91). When Ḥosayn paused en route, distracted by an invasion of Iran by the army of the Golden Horde and hearing inflated reports of Yāsāwur's strength, the prince took the opportunity to launch a series of attacks against Herat in the spring of 719/1319 and then personally to take command of the siege operations; but he had to withdraw in failure (Sayfi, pp. 694-717). Abu Sa'id rewarded Ġeyāt-al-Din for his unshaken loyalty by transferring to him the privileges earlier bestowed on, or usurped by, Yāsāwur (Sayfi, pp. 742-46).

Yāsāwur was defeated and killed, together with his eldest son Juki, in mid-

Jomādā I 720/at the end of June 1320 by his old enemy Kupāk, whom Ġeyāt-al-Din had repeatedly encouraged to attack him and who in response had crossed the Oxus and offered to collaborate with Amir Ḥosayn, though in the event the Il-Khanid troops learned of Yāsāwur's overthrow before they could join forces with Kupāk (Sayfi, pp. 765-69). Since Kāšāni (p. 220) gives Yāsāwur's age in 716/1316-17 as twenty-eight, he must have been about thirty-two at his death. Some of his army may have been taken back by the victors to Transoxiana, where forty years later a quasi-tribal element called 'Yāsāwuris' was to be found in the neighborhood of Samarqand; but it is possible that this group had originated, rather, in the contingent commanded by his maternal grandfather and namesake. Another of his sons, Qāzān (d. 747/ 1346-7), would rule over Čağatai's ulus and was to prove the last effective khan in Transoxiana.

At a later date, details of a completely spurious or legendary nature attached themselves to Yāsāwur's name. The early 15th-century author Mo'in-al-Din Naṭanzi depicts him as a general of the Qaghan who invaded the Chaghatayid dominions from the east, was defeated, took refuge with Abu Sa'id and was assassinated on his way to Mecca (Naṭanzi, pp. 107-10). His turbulent career is also the subject of speculation in the secondary literature. He has been portrayed by Stroieva as a champion of the anti-centralizing tendencies of the nomadic Chaghatayid aristocracy, who entertained a total disregard for the interests of urban and agrarian elements. But Kāšāni (p. 213) claims that the devastation of Transoxiana in 714/1314-15 occurred without his consent, and according to Sayfi (p. 658), Yāsāwur executed some of his officers for looting the suburbs of Herat during the investment in 717/1317 (although their offense may have been simply that they did so without his authorization). At the very least, therefore, Yāsāwur can be charged with inadequate control over his followers.

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