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The Decline of the Ilkhanate and the Mamluk Sultanate's Eastern Frontier

In the period following the death of the last Mongol Ilkhan ruler Abū Saʿīd in 736/1335, the region east of the Mamluk Sultanate, from the Euphrates to the Oxus, was thrown into political upheaval. The Ilkhanate had been ruled by a dynastic line descended from Hülegü Khan, which, although witness to occasional succession disputes, had continued to provide undisputed leadership in the region since 656/1258. By the fourteenth century, dynastic succession had been settled in one branch of the Hülegüid family, through Hülegü's son Abaqa, and Abaqa's son Arghun. While this pattern helped to prevent the kind of succession crises that had occurred in the thirteenth century, it created a new problem of uncertainty when Abū Saʿīd Bahādur Khan died without an heir in 736/1335. The uncertainty of legitimate succession left several factions from among the state's military elite scrambling to maintain their privileged positions. Various families of amirs and local notables entered into alliances with each other as well as with members of peripheral lines of the Ilkhanid royal family in an attempt to enhance their prestige and legitimize their claims to authority. In particular, the military governors in the western Ilkhanid provinces, in roughly the area from Baghdad north to Mosul, Diyarbakr, and Erzurum, which formed the traditional border zone with the Mamluk state, sought aid and recognition from the sultan in Cairo. Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad welcomed such overtures as an opportunity to both secure the Mamluk northeast frontier, as well as extend the authority of the state beyond the Euphrates. For a brief period, it seemed as if this had been achieved, and the name of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was read in the *khuṭbah* in the mosques of Baghdad, Mosul, and Diyarbakr. This article is an attempt to untangle the often confusing web of political networks and allegiances in this frontier zone and to analyze the factors that led to the recognition of Mamluk authority east of the Euphrates River, as well as the breakdown in relations and the eventual reversion to the *status quo ante*, with the Euphrates dividing the Mamluk domains and the lands which would continue to look to the legacy of the Ilkhanate as a model for its geographical and political orientation.

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THE ILKHANID WESTERN PROVINCES

Following the second wave of Mongol migration to Iran as part of Hülegü's campaign against the Nizārī Ismā'īlīs and the Abbasid caliph in the 650s/1250s, the territory of Arab Iraq, Diyarbakr, and the Lake Van region came to form the western frontier of the newly founded Mongol state. This state, known as the Ilkhanate, extended from the Oxus to Euphrates, with its center in the province of Azarbayjan and the urban center of Tabriz. Hülegü's army of conquest, which formed the basis of this migration, included several different tribal contingents, some of which represented older groups that had lived in Mongolia in the time of Chinggis Khan, as well as some newer, non-tribal military units. From among the older tribal groups, the Oyrat came to occupy the territory on the western edge of the Ilkhanate, adopting seasonal migration routes between summer pastures in eastern Anatolia and winter pastures in the area around Mosul.¹ These migration routes corresponded territorially with the Ilkhanid military governorship of Diyarbakr, centered in Mosul.

These provinces were overseen by amirs appointed by the Ilkhanid central authority. They were charged with maintaining security on the frontier, and keeping order among the Oyrats. However, due to the Oyrats' own internal leadership, this was not always possible. In 695/1296, the Tatar Ilkhanid governor of Diyarbakr, Mūlāy Noyan, was faced with a migration of several Oyrat military units and their households under the leadership of their chief, Ṭarqāy Gūrgān. Mūlāy confronted the Oyrats, but was defeated and could not prevent them from resettling in Mamluk Syria.² The frontier with the Mamluks was quite fluid, and such examples of Mongol *wāfidīyah* to Syria and Egypt were not uncommon.³ For the purposes of this article, it is important to recognize a fundamental tension in the Diyarbakr province, which was home to large numbers of a single tribal group, the Oyrats, under the nominal authority of a non-Oyrat imperial appointee. The breakdown in central authority in the Ilkhanate after 736/1335 would lead to a parallel breakdown of this pattern of frontier administration, leading to instability and the opportunity for the Mamluk Sultanate to extend its influence in the region.

In addition to the Ilkhanid governor at Mosul, there were two other important political and military posts on the western frontier. To the northeast of Diyarbakr was the governorate of Ahlat, in the region around Lake Van.⁴ In addition, the amir of the "right hand" of the Ilkhanid army, also known as the commander of

¹Faruk Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular (Başlangıçtan Cihanşah'a kadar)* (Ankara, 1962), 1:33.

²Rashid al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Hamadānī, *Jāmi' al-Tavārikh*, ed. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran, 1994), 1262.

³See David Ayalon, "The Wafidiya in the Mamluk Kingdom," *Islamic Culture* 25 (1951): 89–104.

⁴Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 33.

Anatolia (*amīr-i rūm*) resided in this region, west of Tabriz. It is at the intersection of these three Ilkhanid posts (Diyarbakr, Ahlat, Rūm) and three prominent political families that we will examine the role of the Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the events on the Ilkhan frontier after 736/1335.

THE FAMILY OF AMIR SŪTĀY AND THE OYRATS

Mūlāy Noyan died in 712/1312, and his position was given to a certain Amīr Sūtāy.⁵ Although Sūtāy's background is not certain, it is clear that he was not a member of the Oyrat tribe.⁶ He was a stable master (*aqtajī* [= *akhtājī*]⁷), and claimed to have been present at the conquest of Baghdad in 656/1258. Al-Ṣafadī writes that he was over one hundred years old when he died in 732/1331–32.⁸ During the reign of Abū Sa'īd (717–36/1317–35) he governed Diyarbakr while his three sons governed Ahlat.⁹ However, when Sūtāy died, his position in Diyarbakr passed to the Oyrat amir 'Alī Pādshāh.¹⁰ His promotion to this post was likely related to the fact that he was Abū Sa'īd's uncle, the brother of his mother Ḥājī Khātūn.¹¹ 'Alī Pādshāh came into control of the entire upper Tigris region, from Baghdad to Diyarbakr, including its large population of his fellow Oyrat tribesmen. The three sons of Sūtāy, who had served in Ahlat, opposed 'Alī Pādshāh's authority, no doubt stung that their father's assignment had not gone to a member of the family. In particular, Sūtāy's son Ḥājī Ṭaghāy clashed with the Oyrat chief, but was initially defeated. He would have to wait three more years for the breakup of the Ilkhanate to provide him an opportunity to reclaim Diyarbakr for the descendants of Sūtāy.

⁵Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārikh*, ed. Khānbābā Bayānī (Tehran, 1317 [1939]), 54; Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 33.

⁶Claude Cahen has characterized Sūtāy's son, Ḥājī Ṭaghāy, as the chief Oyrat who represented the principal surviving military force of the Mongol regime in upper Mesopotamia in the 730s/1330s. See Claude Cahen, "Contribution à l'histoire du Diyār Bakr au quatorzième siècle," *Journal Asiatique* 243 (1955): 76. However, his conflict with 'Alī Pādshāh and the Oyrats, according to Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, was based on the "ancient hatred (*kīnah*) which he held in his heart for Amīr 'Alī Pādshāh and the Oyrat tribe." Because of this, he "raised his head in opposition to them. He committed all of his efforts to eradicating that tribe." See Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl*, 152. Due to this conflict of Ḥājī Ṭaghāy with the Oyrat tribe, and based on this reason given by Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, it seems safe to say that Ḥājī Ṭaghāy, and hence his father Sūtāy, were not of the Oyrat tribe.

⁷Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* (Wiesbaden, 1963), 1:117–18.

⁸Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān al-ʿAṣr wa-A'wān al-Naṣr* (Beirut and Damascus, 1998), 2:486.

⁹Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 33–34.

¹⁰Al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān al-ʿAṣr*, 2:486.

¹¹Dāvūd ibn Muḥammad Banākātī, *Tārīkh-i Banākātī: Rawḍat Ūlā al-Albāb fī Ma'rīfat al-Tavārikh va-al-Ansāb*, ed. Ja'far Shi'ār (Tehran, 1348 [1969]), 473.

THE CHUBANIDS

The Chubanids' eponym, Amīr Chūpān, was a member of the Suldus tribe. He ruled the Ilkhanate virtually independently after the death of Öljeytü Khan in 716/1316, and was grooming his son, Dimashq Khvājah, to follow in his place.¹² Reaction from the other amirs and from a maturing Abū Saʿīd came in the form of a purge of Amīr Chūpān and his children in 727/1327. Dimashq Khvājah was executed after being accused of having an affair with Ṭughā Khātūn, the former wife of Öljeytü¹³ while Amīr Chūpān was on campaign in the east. Upon receiving word of his son's death, Amīr Chūpān took refuge with Malik Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kart in Herat. Amīr Chūpān's other son, Tīmūr Tāsh, was the Ilkhanid military governor in Anatolia, where he had claimed to be the *mahdī*.¹⁴ After his brother was killed in 727/1327, he fled to the south and entered Mamluk territory under the protection of the amir Sayf al-Dīn Aytmiş.¹⁵ His arrogant posturing, as well as his ostentatious dispersal of riches to the other Mamluk amirs, drew the ire of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.¹⁶ When Amīr Chūpān was executed in Herat, Abū Saʿīd demanded that the Mamluk sultan send Tīmūr Tāsh back to the Ilkhanid court. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad thus had his chance to be rid of Tīmūr Tāsh, and in the summer of 728/1328, Tīmūr Tāsh was strangled in Cairo.¹⁷

Abū Saʿīd was thus able to take greater personal control over the affairs of the Ilkhanate. Although the Chubanids were temporarily neutralized, Tīmūr Tāsh's son Shaykh Ḥasan (known as *kūchak*, "the small," or "the younger") would renew the fortunes of his family by claiming that his father was still alive and had come back after a long pilgrimage journey.¹⁸ Shaykh Ḥasan and his brother Malik Ashraf

¹²An illustration of Dimashq Khvājah's position in the state is provided by Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, who arrived in Baghdad in 727/1327, coinciding with a visit by Abū Saʿīd to the city. He saw the khan and his vizier, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad, on a boat on the Tigris. In front of them was Dimashq Khvājah who, Ibn Baṭṭūṭah wrote, held mastery over Abū Saʿīd. See Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, A.D. 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (Cambridge, 1971), 336–37. For the details of Amīr Chūpān's role in the Ilkhanate, see Charles Melville, *The Fall of Amir Chupan and the Decline of the Ilkhanate, 1327–1337: A Decade of Discord in Iran* (Bloomington, 1999); idem, "Abū Saʿīd and the Revolt of the Amirs in 1319," in *L'Iran Face à la Domination Mongole: Études reunites et présentées par Denise Aigle* (Tehran, 1997), 89–120; idem, "Wolf or Shepherd? Amir Chupan's Attitude to Government," in *The Court of the Ilkhans, 1290–1340*, ed. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert (Oxford, 1996), 79–93.

¹³Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Travels*, 337.

¹⁴Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr*, 2:111; Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fi Aʿyān al-Miʿah al-Thāminah*, ed. ʿAbd al-Wārith Muḥammad ʿAlī (Beirut, 1977), 1:307.

¹⁵Al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿAṣr*, 2:113.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., 115.

¹⁸Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl*, 156.

would establish Chubanid authority in the former Ilkhanid center of Azarbayjan in the 740s/1340s and 750s/1350s. However, in the immediate aftermath of Abū Saʿīd's purge of the Chubanids, the fortunes of a different Shaykh Ḥasan began to rise.

SHAYKH ḤASAN JALAYIR

Timūr Tāsh's position in Anatolia passed to Shaykh Ḥasan (known as *buzurg*, "the large," or "the elder"), a descendant of one of Hülegü's high-ranking Jalayir amirs. His mother was Öljetey Sultān, the sister of the Ilkhanid rulers Ghazan and Öljeitü.¹⁹ Shaykh Ḥasan was married to Amīr Chūpān's daughter Baghdād Khātūn, although Abū Saʿīd forced Shaykh Ḥasan to divorce her and then married her himself after Amīr Chūpān's execution. Shaykh Ḥasan thus had close family ties with the Chubanids and the Ilkhanid royal house, which had ensured him of a high status in the state. With the fall of the Chubanids, he became the commander-in-chief (*amīr-i ulūs*) of the Ilkhanid forces, with his base of operations in eastern Anatolia. In these last years of the Ilkhanate, Shaykh Ḥasan was in close contact with the Mamluk state. As early as 729/1328–29, after taking over Timūr Tāsh's position in Anatolia, his own envoys started to arrive at the court of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.²⁰ Al-Maqrīzī describes Shaykh Ḥasan as the deputy (*nāʾib*²¹) of Abū Saʿīd, although they each sent separate diplomatic dispatches to Cairo. Until Abū Saʿīd's death, both sides were eager to maintain the friendly relations that had been established since the end of Mongol-Mamluk hostilities in 723/1323.²²

THE END OF THE ILKHANATE AND UNCERTAINTY ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER

When Abū Saʿīd Bahādūr Khan died on 13 Rabīʿ II 736/30 November 1335, in the words of Ḥāfīz Abrū, "the kingdom without a sultan became like a body without a soul and a flock without a shepherd."²³ Abū Saʿīd had no living male children. The only hope for the uncontested continuation of the dynasty was the unborn child of his wife Dilshād Khātūn. She was the daughter of Dimashq Khvājah ibn Amīr Chūpān, and had become the favorite of Abū Saʿīd in the later years of his reign. Her child would not be born until the following May, and in the intervening

¹⁹Abū Bakr al-Qutbī al-Ahrī, *Taʾrīkh-i Shaikh Uwais (A History of Shaikh Uwais): An Important Source for the History of Ādharbaijān in the Fourteenth Century*, trans. J. B. Van Loon ('s-Gravenhage, 1954), 83.

²⁰Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyādah (Cairo, 1934), 1:310.

²¹Ibid., 320.

²²Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamlūk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995).

²³Ḥāfīz Abrū, *Dhayl*, 143.

months various factions maneuvered for position in the political vacuum. One of these factions was led by Abū Saʿīd's vizier, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad, who enthroned Arpā, a descendant of Hülegü's brother, Ariq Böke.²⁴ Opposition to Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad and Arpā Khan came from the Oyrat amirs, led by ʿAlī Pādshāh. Not only did ʿAlī Pādshāh have the military advantage of his tribal following, but he also had a symbolic advantage as the guardian of Abū Saʿīd's unborn child, after Dilshād Khātūn had sought his protection in Baghdad.²⁵ It seems likely that ʿAlī Pādshāh assumed that if she gave birth to a son, he would have an undisputed claim to the Ilkhanid throne. However, before the birth, ʿAlī Pādshāh and the Oyrats raised their own Chinggisid protégé as their symbolic leader, a descendant of Baydu Khan named Mūsá.

On 27 Ramaḍān 736/9 May 1336, the two sides joined in battle at the Jaghatu River. Although the forces of Arpā and Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad greatly outnumbered the Oyrats, ʿAlī Pādshāh emerged victorious after two of Arpā's amirs defected, and after concocting a ruse which convinced both Arpā and Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad that the other had been defeated.²⁶ They were both eventually executed, and ʿAlī Pādshāh emerged as the apparent heir to Ilkhanid power in Tabriz. Nine days after the battle, Dilshād Khātūn gave birth to a girl, and ended the hope that a succession crisis could be forestalled by the birth of a commonly recognized male heir. ʿAlī Pādshāh attempted to rule through his Chinggisid protégé Mūsá Khan and his vizier, Jamāl Ḥājī ibn Tāj al-Dīn ʿAlī Shīrvānī, but opposition to his regime soon emerged, finding a focus in Anatolia with Shaykh Ḥasan Jalayir and the sons of Amīr Sūtāy. The end of the Ilkhanid dynasty gave rise to conflict among these representatives of the military elite who could no longer rely on a strong authority at the center to maintain the balance among their various interests, which included the Sutayid claims to Diyarbakr. It was in these subsequent conflicts that these Ilkhanid military elites looked to the Mamluks as a source of political and symbolic support, in a period when a commonly recognized ruler no longer existed to provide the political and symbolic basis for the Ilkhanid state.

THE MAMLUK CONNECTION

The Mamluk view of the events in the years following Abū Saʿīd's death can be traced through the diplomatic missions and reports that reached Cairo from the east which were recorded by al-Maqrīzī in his *Kitāb al-Sulūk*. Just a week after the Oyrats' victory at the Jaghatu River, envoys representing ʿAlī Pādshāh and Mūsá

²⁴Ibid., 145.

²⁵Ibid., 148.

²⁶Ibid., 149.

Khan arrived in the Mamluk capital. They were well received, and presented with great wealth. Two days later, the day that Dilshād Khātūn's daughter was born, the envoys rode out from the Citadel and visited the tombs of al-Shāfi'ī, Sayyidah Nafisah, and Sultan Qalāwūn.²⁷ After describing the envoys' visit, al-Maqrīzī digresses to provide the background to their arrival. He explains that 'Alī Pādshāh had persuaded the sons of Sūtāy (Sūntāy) to join with him, while at the same time promising to turn Baghdad over to Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, in return for the sultan's help against the sons of Sūtāy. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was delighted at this, and raised several military units to aid 'Alī Pādshāh.²⁸ Meanwhile, the sons of Sūtāy had joined with Shaykh Ḥasan Jalayir in Anatolia.²⁹ After the battle, al-Maqrīzī writes, 'Alī Pādshāh stood alone in charge of the *urdū*, and raised Mūsá to the royal throne.³⁰

Thus, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad had entered into an alliance with 'Alī Pādshāh, who had agreed to govern Baghdad in the name of the Mamluks in exchange for support against his rivals, the sons of Sūtāy. Following the battle at the Jaghatu River, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's Oyrat ally 'Alī Pādshāh enthroned a new Ilkhan, who was essentially his puppet. The Sutayids had been neutralized, and it seemed as if Mesopotamia had become, if not a province of the Mamluk Sultanate, at least a friendly vassal.

'Alī Pādshāh's success was short lived, however. Sūtāy's son Ḥājī Ṭaghāy turned to Shaykh Ḥasan Jalayir for help in driving 'Alī Pādshāh out of Diyarbakr. Shaykh Ḥasan agreed, summoning a Hülegüid prince named Muḥammad from Tabriz, whom he crowned as khan, in opposition to Mūsá Khan. After entrusting Anatolia to his deputy Eretna,³¹ Shaykh Ḥasan set out for Tabriz with his following of amirs and the army of Rum to confront 'Alī Pādshāh.³² For Shaykh Ḥasan, however, the main issue may not have been a matter of seizing power for himself, but rather a desire to limit the personal power of 'Alī Pādshāh and ensure consensus among the amirs. Before confronting 'Alī Pādshāh in battle, Shaykh Ḥasan called on 'Alī Pādshāh to give up his power and allow a sultan to be named by all the amirs. He appealed to the custom of their ancestors, and their background in a common (Ilkhanid) *ulūs*. Ḥāfiẓ Abrū relates Shaykh Ḥasan's message to 'Alī Pādshāh:

We have all been in one *ulūs* and we know one another. The

²⁷ Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:397.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 398; Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl*, 152.

³⁰ Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:398.

³¹ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri* (Ankara, 1988), 156.

³² Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl*, 152.

custom of the fathers and ancestors is clear. It is better that we all agree and seat a padishah on the throne who is deserving of the sultanate, and everyone stays on his own path and custom. Since that which you seek is that which brings discord throughout the land, in order that unlawful (*nā-ḥaqq*) blood does not flow and the country remains flourishing and inhabited, the condition we give you is to either heed my words or suffer.³³

‘Alī Pādshāh did not receive this ultimatum. Instead, the other Oyrat amirs replied that, “we have taken the kingdom by the power of our own hands. . . . [Shaykh Ḥasan] cannot deceive us with these fables (*afsānhā*).”³⁴ The Oyrat position was that their rule was justified merely by the military force they were able to command. Contrary to this was Shaykh Ḥasan’s appeal to the tradition of consensus and election of the ruler by all members of the military elite. The convention of political acclamation (*quriltay*) was a tradition of nomadic steppe politics, and had precedent in the Mongol empire going back to the *quriltay* which named Chinggis Khan the ruler of all Mongols in 602/1206. Although more often than not, a *quriltay* was a symbolic confirmation of a single dominant contender for the throne, rather than an election among several candidates, it was an occasion for members of the royal family and the amirs to gather and assert their voice in the collective political enterprise. The fact that a major *quriltay* had not been held for either Arpā or Mūsā Khan meant that Shaykh Ḥasan, the *amīr-i ulūs*, had not consented to these choices for political leadership, and was asserting what he assumed to be his traditional right to take part in the process of enthroning the new khan.

With the Oyrats’ refusal to compromise, both sides prepared for military conflict. In the ensuing battle at Qarā Durrah, near Ālādāgh, on 14 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 736/24 July 1336, Shaykh Ḥasan’s forces, referred to by Ḥāfiẓ Abrū as the Anatolians (*rūmī*), and the supporters of Muḥammad Khan (*muḥammadīyān*), defeated ‘Alī Pādshāh and the Oyrat army.³⁵ Shaykh Ḥasan and Muḥammad Khan occupied Tabriz, the Ilkhanate’s urban capital. Now in control of eastern Anatolia and Azarbayjan, Shaykh Ḥasan had assumed the paramount position in the Ilkhanid domains.

The defeat of ‘Alī Pādshāh meant that Ḥājī Ṭaghāy ibn Sūtāy had regained control of his father’s province of Diyarbakr. Once again, his family governed both Mosul and Ahlat, while the remaining Oyrat troops came under the leadership of Shaykh Ḥasan, who established his authority in Baghdad. For the moment, it

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., 152–53.

³⁵Ibid., 153.

seemed as if the Mamluks had lost their influence east of the Euphrates. Initially, neither Shaykh Ḥasan nor the Sutayids made promises to govern in the name of the Mamluk sultan. Shaykh Ḥasan's nominal allegiance was to the newly enthroned Muḥammad Khan, although, in reality, Shaykh Ḥasan himself represented the real authority in the region from Baghdad to Tabriz. However, the Jalayirid amir did maintain friendly relations with al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, sending an envoy and a gift to the sultan after his victory at Ālādāgh.³⁶

Shaykh Ḥasan's campaign against 'Alī Pādshāh, and his subsequent occupation in Azarbayjan and Iraq, meant that his former post in eastern Anatolia was vacant. Shaykh Ḥasan had left his deputy Eretna in charge there before heading east, and Eretna was eager to assert his own authority. He did this in part by seeking official recognition as the *nā'ib* of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in Anatolia in return for including the sultan's name on his coins and in the Friday prayer.³⁷ Al-Maqrizī writes that this support from the Mamluks frightened Shaykh Ḥasan, who, later in the same year (738/1337–38), sent a messenger to the sultan requesting peace.³⁸ Soon after, in 740/1339–40, Shaykh Ḥasan again appealed to al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, this time asking him to send the Mamluk army to take over Baghdad, Mosul, and Persian Iraq.

At first glance, such a request seems hard to believe. Why would Shaykh Ḥasan invite the intervention of a foreign army? However, when we examine the challenges and setbacks Shaykh Ḥasan had faced since Ālādāgh in 736/1336, it seems plausible that an allied Mamluk military presence would be a welcome source of support. Shaykh Ḥasan had lost a large portion of his troops to the Chubanid amir Shaykh Ḥasan-i Kūchak. As mentioned earlier, Shaykh Ḥasan-i Kūchak claimed that his father Tīmūr Tāsh was still alive, and that he had returned from Egypt and the hajj pilgrimage to claim the rights of the Chubanids in the Ilkhanate. Although "Tīmūr Tāsh" was a Turkish former deputy of the real Tīmūr Tāsh, named Qarā Jūrī, all of Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg's Chubanid and Oyrat forces left him to join Shaykh Ḥasan-i Kūchak when the false Tīmūr Tāsh appeared.³⁹ Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg was driven out of Azarbayjan, and after an unsuccessful attempt to seek support from Khurasan in 739/1339,⁴⁰ he turned to the Mamluks. He also sought to renew his alliance with Ḥājī Ṭaghāy ibn Sūtāy, and requested that the Mamluks broker a peace between them.⁴¹ Although it does

³⁶Al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:421.

³⁷Ibid., 445; Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu*, 156.

³⁸Al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:446.

³⁹Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl*, 157.

⁴⁰Ibid., 159–61.

⁴¹Al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:489.

not seem that the Mamluk army took up Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg's invitation to come to Baghdad, Mosul, and Persian Iraq, the Mamluk amir Aḥmad Sāqī did negotiate a peace agreement between the Jalayirid and Ḥājī Ṭaghāy.⁴²

It is likely that the Mamluks hoped to win over Ḥājī Ṭaghāy and Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg as their new frontier allies. With the re-emergence of the Chubanids, Timūr Tāsh's son Malik Ashraf had come to power in Anatolia. Eretna, who had governed that region in the name of the Mamluks, was marginalized, but would establish his own independent principality in Kayseri.⁴³ Having lost their vassal in Anatolia, the Mamluks looked to Diyarbakr and Iraq to secure their frontier against the Chubanids. In 741/1340–41, the Mamluk amir Aḥmad Sāqī rode to Sultaniyya on behalf of the sultan and demanded oaths of allegiance from Ḥājī Ṭaghāy and Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg. They again requested that the sultan send the army to take over the eastern lands (*bilād al-sharq*). The Mamluk amir insisted that they each send their sons as security of their pledge of allegiance to the Mamluks. Ḥājī Ṭaghāy sent his son Barhashīn, while Shaykh Ḥasan sent Ḥājī Ṭaghāy's nephew, Ibrāhīm Shāh, to Aleppo.⁴⁴ From Aleppo, these two traveled on to Egypt and arrived in Cairo on 6 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 741/23 May 1341. Two days later, they had an audience with al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Barhashīn and Ibrāhīm Shāh had brought with them the qadis of Baghdad, Mosul, and Diyarbakr, and presented the oaths of Ḥājī Ṭaghāy and Shaykh Ḥasan, as well as the amirs and soldiers, who pledged to be obedient to the Mamluk sultan. They also reported that the *khuṭbah* had been said in the sultan's name in Baghdad, Mosul, and Diyarbakr. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad then indicated that the army should be discharged to them.⁴⁵

Thus, at the end of the third and final reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 741/1341, the Mamluk Sultanate had established its authority in Arab Iraq and Diyarbakr. With the instability arising from the end of the Ilkhan dynasty, as well as the end of effective Oyrat leadership following the defeat of 'Alī Pādshāh, the Sutayids had reclaimed the territory they had governed for the Ilkhans. However, without Ilkhanid dynastic authority, they aligned themselves with Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg Jalayir and the Mamluks to ensure their position and security. The Mamluks, having first recognized 'Alī Pādshāh, and then Eretna as their vassals on the eastern frontier, had finally found what they must have hoped to be a more stable arrangement. The Mamluk army would march east, and from Iraq and Diyarbakr, extend their reach against the Chubanids in the very heartland of the Ilkhanate.

Such a campaign did not take place, however. Soon after Barhashīn and Ibrāhīm

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu*, 156.

⁴⁴Al-Maqrizī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, 1:517.

⁴⁵Ibid., 519–20.

Shāh met with the sultan, a message arrived in Cairo from the Artuqid governor of Mardin, al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ. It informed the sultan that when the Chubanids went to fight Shaykh Ḥasan and Ḥājī Ṭaghāy, they pressed for peace, and took an oath to watch over the Euphrates for them. Al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ added that there was no longer any use in sending the Mamluk army to the east.⁴⁶ Shortly thereafter, another message arrived from Aleppo, confirming that Shaykh Ḥasan and Ḥājī Ṭaghāy had made peace with the Chubanids. Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrībirdī both report that this so agitated al-Nāṣir Muḥammad that he was afflicted with bloody diarrhea.⁴⁷

Al-Maqrīzī attributes the failure of the sultan to send the army to the east in support of Shaykh Ḥasan and Ḥājī Ṭaghāy to a truce they made with the Chubanids. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's agitation came when he realized that he would have no support from these amirs in the campaign. Such a truce is not mentioned by either the Jalayirid historian Ahrī, nor by the Timurid historian Ḥāfiẓ Abrū. Ahrī writes that the Chubanids fought an inconclusive battle with Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg. The Jalayirid amir fell back to Baghdad, while the Chubanids devastated Persian Iraq.⁴⁸ According to Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, the Chubanids attacked the Sutayids in Diyarbakr, then Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg in Baghdad. He was able to repel them and hold on to Arab Iraq, while Shaykh Ḥasan-i Kūchak withdrew to Erzurum, where they destroyed a city held by the Sutayids, and even defiled the grave of Ḥājī Ṭaghāy's son.⁴⁹ Thus, it is difficult to recreate a precise picture of what actually took place among these various factions. We can conclude, however, that the contacts between the Jalayirids and Sutayids, and the Mamluks were significantly disrupted by the Chubanids. The Mamluk state faced its own internal disorder following al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's death. He was succeeded by a series of short-lived sons and grandsons, most of whom ruled only nominally, with various amiral factions competing for actual power.⁵⁰ Instability within the Mamluk state, combined with a relative stability in the former Ilkhanid territory after 741/1341 led to an end to the co-optation of frontier governors which had been attempted under al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. The Chubanids under Shaykh Ḥasan-i Kūchak, and then under his brother Malik Ashraf, were able to control the center of the Ilkhanid state in Azarbayjan, and the strategic urban centers of Tabriz and Sultaniyya.

⁴⁶Ibid., 521.

⁴⁷Ibid., 522; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1929–72), 9:162. In fact, the sultan had been ill for some time, and died a few days later, on 18 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 741/4 June 1341.

⁴⁸Ahrī, *Tārīkh-i Shaikh Uwais*, 68.

⁴⁹Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Dhayl*, 165.

⁵⁰Linda Northrup, "The Bahri Mamlūk Sultanate, 1250–1390," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1, *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517* (Cambridge, 1998), 287.

Their authority there would continue until an invasion from the Golden Horde led by Jānī Beg Khan in 758/1357. The Jalayirid amir Shaykh Ḥasan-i Buzurg maintained his authority in the traditionally Oyrat territory of Arab Iraq and Diyarbakr. His son and successor Shaykh Uvays would take advantage of the instability following the Golden Horde's invasion of Azarbayjan, and reunite Tabriz and Baghdad in 759/1358, establishing an independent Jalayirid dynasty which lasted until the fifteenth century.

Further research remains to be done in order to understand the complex political dynamics in play between the Mamluk Sultanate and the successor states to the Ilkhanate. Relations continued to be maintained across the frontier, but as the dust began to settle in the years after 736/1335, it became clear that the political center of gravity east of the Euphrates remained Azarbayjan. Especially after Shaykh Uvays' re-conquest of Tabriz in 759/1358, there was little room for maneuvering on the frontier, since the provinces of Arab Iraq and Diyarbakr were more firmly tied to the center in Tabriz under Jalayirid rule. Thus, conditions more closely resembling the period of Öljeytū and Abū Sa'īd were established, leading to a more stabilized relationship between Cairo and Tabriz. Overt claims to Mamluk sovereignty in Iraq, Diyarbakr, and eastern Anatolia were no longer possible without the kind of fluidity and uncertainty that had existed in these regions immediately after the collapse of the Ilkhan dynasty.