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# Intra-Mongol Diplomacy and Witch-Hunt during the Dissolution of the Empire: the Witchcraft Trial at the Court of Hülegü

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## Abstract

The present paper examines the events that led to the establishment of the Ilkhanate under Hülegü as well as the beginning of the war between the Hülegüids and the Jöchids of the Golden Horde. The article discusses the struggle between the two branches of Chinggis Khan's *Golden Lineage* during the march of Hülegü through South West Asia. This process reached its apex when Hülegü decided to get rid of the Jöchid contingents in his army together with the princes that headed them. This happened because they were a serious obstacle on the way towards establishing his empire in Iran and the adjacent areas. Hülegü used an accusation in witchcraft as an official pretext to remove fellow Chinggisid prince (or princes).

## Keywords

witch-hunt – Mongol Empire – Ilkhanate – Golden Horde – Hülegü – Jöchids

## 1 Introduction

The conflict that sprang up in the region of Caucasia between the Hülegüids of Iran and the Jöchids of the so-called Golden Horde played a key role in the protracted dissolution of the Mongol Empire that started in the second half of the 13th century. Along with the internecine war between Ariq Böke (1260-64) and Qubilai (1260-94), this clash marked the beginning of the end of the

united Chinggisid state.<sup>1</sup> Despite the immense importance of the confrontation between the Ilkhans and the rulers of the Qipchaq Khanate, which lasted nearly a century, a relatively small number of researchers have focused on the origins of this conflict.<sup>2</sup> A closer look at the dramatic events at the turn of the sixth decade of the 13th century reveals that the path towards the ultimate rift between the two branches of the imperial family lies entirely in the context of the specific political culture dominant among the members of the Golden Lineage (*Altan Uruq*) back in the years of imperial unity. In this culture the political ruthlessness which was customary of the imperial house members (especially as regards the removal of their political opponents) is portrayed in forms natural to the 13th century Mongols. Thus, the abrupt political maneuvers of the imperial elite acquired the necessary legitimacy. The present paper focuses precisely upon the implementation of these “forms” – which had already been applied in the core of the united Empire – during the emancipation of the Ilkhanate in its periphery. Special emphasis will be placed on the witchcraft trial and the “intra-mongol diplomacy” exchange which, according to the court historians of the Hülegüids and other sources, preceded the eruption of the conflict between the two khanates. The reconstruction of these events is the key to the vital question of the legitimacy of the newly established Mongol kingdom in Southwest Asia and will greatly facilitate our understanding of the reasons that stood behind the prolonged fraternal strife between the Hülegüids and the Jöchids.

## 2 Relations between the Two Dynastic Branches on the Eve of the Conflict

It is well known that Hülegü (c. 1259-65) entered Iran at the head of a large army, composed of members of the different imperial *uluses*, as well as by

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- 1 Jackson, Peter, “The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire”, *CAJ*, XXII (1978): pp. 186-244; reprinted in: Jackson, Peter, *Studies on the Mongol Empire and Early Muslim India* (Farnham: Ashgate, Variorum, 2009): article 1.
  - 2 See for example: Jackson, Peter, “The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire”: pp. 186-244; Kostjukov, V.P., “Iranskiij pohod Hulagu: predystorstorija”, *Problemy istorii, filologii, kul'tury* (2009): 1, c. 210-40; published also in Kostjukov, V.P., “Iranskiij pohod Hulagu: predystorstorija” in Mirgaleev, I.M. (ed.), *Zolotoordynskaja tsivilizatsija*, Vypusk 2. (Kazan': Fen, 2009): pp. 69-89 (the references here will follow the first publication); Lane, George, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran. A Persian renaissance* (London – New York: Routledge, Curzon, 2003): pp. 58-78; and also the shorter examination of the events in: Boyle, John Andrew, “Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-khāns” in Boyle, John Andrew (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, v, *The Saljuq and Mongol Periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968): pp. 352-4.

auxiliary troops under the leadership of a number of local vassal rulers. Numerous Jöchid contingents stood out among his troops. The Golden Horde fielded three *tümens*, each led by a prince from this royal branch – Balagha, Tutar and Quli.<sup>3</sup> After the destruction of the Assassins in 1256, Hülegü's army undertook an assault on the 'Abbāsid Caliphate, and in the beginning of 1258 captured its capital, Baghdad. After the conquest of Iraq, the Toluid prince launched a new campaign, this time against Syria. It was there that Hülegü learned about the death of his brother, the Great Khan Möngke (1251-9), which had occurred during a siege operation in China in the late summer of the previous year. The Mongol leader withdrew his forces northeast towards Azerbaijan, leaving behind a contingent under the command of Ket Buqa, who became notorious for his later defeat at the hands of the Mamlūks. Among the factors that influenced this decision, besides the conflict over the succession to the throne which arose in the political center of the Empire, one should perhaps point out the existence of overlapping spheres of influence between Hülegü and the Jöchids.<sup>4</sup> In China, Qubilai found himself in a similar situation – at the head of a formidable military force, and on the eve of a dynastic crisis, which was about to mark the beginning of the dissolution of the Mongol Empire.

In the last years of the 1250s, Hülegü, being at the head of the imperial forces in Southwest Asia, took the path towards the creation of his own empire with rising confidence. No matter whether the appearance of the Ilkhanate was a consequence of Möngke's design or not, this process obviously represented a threat for the interests of his mighty cousins from the House of Jochi, who ruled the Golden Horde and had supported with formidable contingents the campaign in Southwest Asia. For example, V. Kostjukov, referring to the account of al-'Umarī, assumes that Batu (1227-55/6) might have intentionally

3 Balagha was son of Shiban, Tutar was the grandson of Jochi's seventh son Buval, and Quli was son of Orda (the orthography of their names often varies in the different manuscripts as well as in different passages of the same manuscripts), Rašid al-Dīn, Fażlallāh Abū al-Ḥayr, *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*, edited by M. Rawšan and M. Mūsavī, 4 vols. (Tehran: Našr-i Alburz, 1373/1994): I, pp. 716, 724-5, 726-7; Rašid al-Dīn, Fażlallāh Abū al-Ḥayr, *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*, edited by B. Karīmī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Intiṣārāt-i Iqbāl, 1338/1959, I, pp. 510, 515-6, 518; Rašid al-Dīn, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. by Boyle, John Andrew (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1971): pp. 104, 111, 113; *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols*, transl. by Wheeler Thackston, Part I-III, *Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures*, XLV (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University, 1998-9): Part II, pp. 350, 353, 354; Rašid-ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisej*, II, transl. by Ju.P. Verhovski (Moskva – Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1960): pp. 69, 74, 75-6, note 61.

4 For these events see: Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-khāns": pp. 340-51 and the detailed analysis of Reuven Amitai upon the sources for the Syrian campaign of Hülegü and the battle of 'Ayn Jālūt that took place after his retreat in: Amitai-Preiss, Reuven, *Mongols and Mamluks* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1995): pp. 26-48.

blocked Hülegü's march when the latter appeared in Transoxiana. According to him, this is the explanation for the Toluid prince's long stay in Central Asia and his crossing of the Amu Darya only after the demise of the Golden Horde's founder.<sup>5</sup> No matter whether al-'Umarī's account is accurate or not, causes for concern on behalf of the Jöchids were undoubtedly present. The bone of contention was the separation between the spheres of influence of the Jöchids and of the advancing Hülegü. While Chinggis Khan was still alive, Jochi and his descendants received the territories as far west as "the hoof of the Tātār horse had reached".<sup>6</sup> The question is whether this formula indicated

- 5 Kostjukov, "Iranskiij pohod Hulagu: predyistorstoriija": p. 213. Indeed, according to al-'Umarī's account Hülegü was forced to spend two years beyond the Amu Darya, due to Batu's prohibition of crossing the river (initiated by Berke because of his amity with the Caliph), Tizengauzen, V., *Sbornik' materialov' odnosjaščikhsja k' istorii Zolotoj ordy* (henceforth: *SMIZO*), 1, *Arab Sources* (Sankt Peterburg: Tipografija Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk, 1884): Russian translation: p. 246, Arabic text: p. 224; Jackson also commented on this evidence: Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire": pp. 224-5, note 164. It should be noted that in this passage the Arab author overemphasized Berke's role and his relationships with the Caliph, while some key events such as the capture of Baghdad and the beginning of the conflict between Hülegü and the Jöchids are omitted. This is why the entire episode with Batu's prohibition can hardly be accepted as fully reliable. This does not mean, however, that the account does not contain some true elements, such as the fact that the movement of the imperial armies under Hülegü indeed might have caused tension with the cousins from the north. It should be taken into consideration that there are also other explanations for the extended schedule of the march. Reuven Amitai, for example, ascribes it to the large number of troops who needed to move together with their families and their flocks. See: Amitai, Reuven, s.v. "Hulāgu Khan" in: *EIR*, online edition, 2004/2012, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hulagu-khan> (accessed on 24 March 2017); before Amitai, Boyle had formulated a similar assumption: Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-khāns": p. 341; but cf. Kostjukov's objections: Kostjukov, "Iranskiij pohod Hulagu: predyistorstoriija": p. 213. John Masson Smith affirms that the numbers in the army rose *en route* due to recruits from the regions that it traversed, whereas the families of the warriors who started from Mongolia initially remained there: Masson Smith, John, "Hülegü Moves West: High Living and Heartbreak on the Road to Baghdad" in: Komaroff, Linda (ed.), *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2006): pp. 111-34. But this interpretation can hardly be accepted with the same assertiveness with which the author defends it.
- 6 As it is evident in the following quotation from Juvaynī, quite often discussed in the scholarly literature: *va pisar-i buzurgtar Tūšī-rā az hudūd-i Qayālīg va Ĥwārazm tā aqšā-yi Saqsin va Bulğār va az ān jānib tā ānjā ki sum-i asb-i Tātār rasīda-ast bad-ū dād*, "And he gave to his oldest son Tūšī [lands] from the boundaries of Qayālīg and Ĥwārazm to the remotest [parts] of Saqsin and Bulğār and from that side to that place where the hoof of the Tātār horse had reached", Juvaynī, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā'-Malik, *Tārīḥ-i Jahāngūšāy*, edited by M.M. Qazvīnī, 3 vols. (Leyden – London: E.J. Brill/Luzac & Co, 1329, 1334, 1355/1912, 1916, 1937): 1, p. 31; see also: Juvaynī, 'Ala-ad-Din 'Ata-Malik, *The History of the World-Conqueror*, transl. by John Andrew Boyle, 2 vols. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958): p. 42. Isenbike Togan maintains that "Jochi, the eldest son, who had problems with legitimacy and could not inherit

also lands in Transcaucasia and Iran or with the appearance of Hülegü these territories were transferred under his jurisdiction. The Jöchids definitely had claims towards the lands south of the Caucasus and in Khorasan, which – as it seems – were not entirely groundless, since their agents were present at the highest level of the military and administrative government in a number of Transcaucasian and Iranian provinces.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, serious tension between Balagha and Tutar (two of the princes that commanded the Golden Horde contingent)<sup>8</sup> and Hülegü appeared as early as

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the rule in his own right, was given the liberty to conquer as far as the hooves of Mongolian horses would reach in the west”, Togan, Isenbike, *Flexibility & Limitation in Steppe Formations. The Kerait Khanate & Chinggis Khan* (Leiden – New York – Köln: Brill, 1998): p. 145. This interpretation is only a conjecture, especially if we have in mind that the order of birth was hardly a decisive argument for succession in the Empire. Consequently, the firstborn did not possess exclusive rights to the throne, for which he should be “compensated” in case some of the other sons were preferred.

- 7 Jackson, “The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire”: pp. 212-20. See also his comment at the end of the 2009 reprint, p. 244. See also: Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran*: pp. 58-78.
- 8 There is some disagreement in the sources regarding the appearance of these princes in Iran. According to Rašid al-Dīn they came via Derbend, while the third Jöchid – Quli, who led the troops of Orda’s *ulus* – came through Central Asia, via Khwarazm, Dihistan and Mazanderan, Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: I, pp. 510, 525; Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavi: I, pp. 716, 736; Rašid al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: pp. 104, 122; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II, pp. 350, 361; Rašid-ad-Din/trans. Verkhovski: pp. 69, 81. According to Juvaynī, Balagha and Tutar acted as vanguards of Hülegü’s forces during their march in Central Asia, Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī, III: p. 97; Juvaynī/trans. Boyle: II, p. 612. The Armenian chronicler Kirakos of Ganja adds to the confusion, pointing with regards to the Jöchid troops: “and passing through the Derbend Gates they came here [i. e. Transcaucasia]” under the command of the three princes – “Balahai, Tuthar, Guli, whom we saw by ourselves; these were grandsons of Chingis-Khan”. The quotation follows the Russian translation and transcription of the names in: Kirakos Gandzakeci, *Istorija Armenii*, transl. by L.A. Khanlarjan (Moskva: Nauka, 1976): pp. 226-7. It is possible, however, that Kirakos personally saw the Jöchids not during their arrival, but at a later stage of their campaign in Southwest Asia, which explains the appearance of Quli in his account. Grigor of Akner, whose information is not always reliable, lists the three Jöchids among the “seven sons of the khan’s”, who had “arrived from the east, where the great Khan was”, Blake, Robert. P., Frye, Richard. N. “History of the Nation of the Archers (The Mongols) by Grigor of Akanc’: Hitherto Ascribed to Marak’ia The Monk: The Armenian Text Edited With an English Translation and Notes”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, XI/3-4 (1949), English translation: p. 327, Armenian text: p. 326. Be that as it may, the interpretation of Masson Smith (Masson Smith, “Hülegü Moves West”: pp. 116-7, note 30), who tries to reconcile the accounts of the Persian chronicles, assuming that initially Balagha and Tutar had been in Mongolia with Hülegü, whence they “had set out, presumably for home” and subsequently “through the Caucasus” joined the main army in the environs of Maymūn Diz (in the late 1256), cannot be accepted. The *Tārīḫnama-yi Harāt* marked the presence of the two princes in Bādġīz, in 1255 (for this evidence and its dating see further in the text and note 14). Kostjukov, on the

1255, even before the latter's crossing of the Amu Darya. In the course of the imperial expansion the members of the Golden Lineage received the rights to collect the incomes of numerous dominions that were not always situated in the territory of the dynastic branch to which they belonged, and sometimes were dispersed throughout the provinces of the entire Empire.<sup>9</sup> The conflict flared up precisely because of such incomes of the Jöchids in Herat, which Hülegü refused to recognize. In his *Tārīḫnāma-yi Harāt*, Sayfī narrates that the *malik* of the city, Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad Kart (1245-78), visited the princes Balagha and Tutar in their camp in Bādġīz and, after honorable welcome, came back to Herat. After his return, the *malik* was visited by Batu's agents, who demanded the traditional requisitions of donkeys, tents and money, which the Jöchids received from the city. But this time Šams al-Dīn angrily rejected. Batu, who was in the Ponto-Caspian Steppes, was informed and he sent a messenger to Balagha (who by that time was already in Māzandarān) with instructions to arrest the *malik* and to send him to the Golden Horde for investigation. In turn, Balagha transferred the orders to Ket Buqa. In the meantime, Šams al-Dīn left for Sistān. That is why Ket Buqa decided to take advantage of the services of the *Malik* of Sistān 'Alī b. Mas'ūd, who was in his camp when Batu's orders were received. The Mongol commander sent him, together with Balagha's servants and his own representative, to arrest the ruler of Herat.<sup>10</sup> Šams al-Dīn, who was informed of the developments by one of his officials, was found by their detachment in 'Alī b. Mas'ūd's palace and flatly refused to come out despite the invitation to receive Batu's *yarligh* and honorable robe. In response to the requests to submit, the *malik* of Herat emphasized that he himself was in possession of *yarlij* by "pādišāh Mangū Ḥān and Hülāgū Ḥān".<sup>11</sup> In the course of the negotiations, the people of Šams al-Dīn killed 'Alī b. Mas'ūd and the

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other hand, thinks that, passing through Derbend, the Jöchid *tümens* came to Iran before Hülegü, but does not comment on the contradiction between the accounts of Rašīd al-Dīn and Kirakos (both quoted by him), regarding Quli's route: Kostjukov, "Iranskij pohod Hulagu: predistorija": pp. 214-5.

- 9 Jackson, Peter, "From Ulus to Khanate: the Making of the Mongol States, c. 1220-1290" in Amitai-Preiss, Reuven, Morgan, David, (eds.), *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); reprinted with different pagination in: Jackson, *Studies on the Mongol Empire and Early Muslim India*: pp. 6-15, cited according to the pagination of the reprint.
- 10 al-Harawī, Sayf ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb, *The Ta'riḫ-nāma-i-Harāt (The History of Herat)*, edited by M.Z. al-Šiddiqī (Calcutta: The Baptist Mission Press, 1944): pp. 228-32.
- 11 In all likelihood it was this *yarligh* and the Toluid's policies in Ḥorāsān in general that stood behind Šams al-Dīn's decision to confront the Jöchids. Unfortunately, Sayfī, who is our only source for this conflict, does not give more information on the matter.

Mongol envoys were forced to withdraw, while the *malik* of Herat took the power in Sīstān in the name of Möngke Khan.<sup>12</sup>

This, however, was not the end of his ventures. Šams al-Dīn headed towards Hülegü's camp, but around Ṭāliqān he was met again by envoys of Balagha and Tutar. The latter gripped the bridles of his horse and declared that whether by good will or by force they would bring him to their masters. In the midst of this confrontation, envoys of Hülegü appeared and in the end everybody went to his camp. What is important for the topic of the present study is that Hülegü fully backed Šams al-Dīn. By his order the officials of Balagha and Tutar received 37 strokes<sup>13</sup> and were kept hungry and naked under the sun for two days, because they had hindered the *malik* to present himself in front of the prince. The *malik*, on the contrary, received a golden *paiza* and a *yarliġ*, and was rewarded with honors.<sup>14</sup>

As pointed out by Jackson,<sup>15</sup> the death of 'Alī b. Mas'ūd is also recorded in *Tārīḫ-i Sīstān*. Although the account in this source is much shorter and not quite clear, it contains details that are not found in Sayfi, thus throwing additional light on the events. According to this local history, Šams al-Dīn came to

12 Sayfi/ed. al-Šiddiqī: pp. 231-42.

13 This penalty seems to be extremely harsh. According to the *Secret History of the Mongols* the same number of strokes (37) and exile was the punishment for a member of the Khan's Guard, who failed to take his turn for a third time. In comparison, for his first and second violation, the guardsman was to receive three and seven strokes respectively, de Rachewiltz, Igor (trans.), *The Secret History of the Mongols. A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, 3 vols. (Leiden – Boston, 2006, 2013): I, § 227, p. 156. The correspondence between the number of strokes in *Tārīḫ-nāma-yi Harāt* and *The Secret History of the Mongols* gives additional credibility to this passage in the Persian source.

14 *ba'd az ān bifarmūd tā har tan-rā az ān il'ciyān sī-ū-haft ċub bizadand va do rüz gurusna va barahna dar āftāb bāz dāšt*, the whole episode is described in: Sayfi/ed. al-Šiddiqī: pp. 246-247. Sayfi dates these events, including the visit to Hülegü's court, in 656 AH (1258 AD), but this cannot be true. Based on the account of *Tārīḫ-i Sīstān* stating that the death of the *malik* of this province occurred in šafar 653 AH (April 1255 AD) and on Rašid al-Dīn's evidence that Šams al-Dīn Kart visited Hülegü in the same year, Jackson dates the entire episode in 1255: Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire": pp. 222-3, note 157, for the accounts cited by him see notes 16 and 17 below. Without precise argumentation Allsen points out that the conflict took place "around 1255", Allsen, Thomas, *Mongol Imperialism. The Policies of the Grand Qan Möngke on China, Russia and the Islamic Lands, 1251-1259* (Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press): pp. 87-8. The dating, defended by Jackson, is further supported by the fact that, according to the *Tārīḫ-nāma-yi Harāt*, it was Batu that ordered Šams al-Dīn Kart to be present in his camp for investigation of the case. The founder of the Golden Horde died sometime in the second half of 1255 or in the beginning of 1256 at the latest. For his death see: Kostjukov, "Iranskiġ pohod Hulagu: predistorija": p. 223; Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism*: p. 61.

15 See the previous note.

Sīstān by virtue of Möngke Khan's *farmān* and in the murder of 'Alī b. Mas'ūd, he was aided by local Sīstāni notables. The nephew of the murdered *malik* – Naṣīr al-Dīn – presented himself in front of “the Mongol emirs” (most probably the representatives of the Jöchids in the region) and acquired from them *farmān* for the rule of Sīstān. Naṣīr al-Dīn sent a deputy in Sīstān, while he himself headed for the camp of “*pādišāhzāda*” Hülegü in order “to seek his uncle's blood”, and came back from there, again with a *farmān*.<sup>16</sup> Afterwards the chronicle reports another appearance of Šams al-Dīn Kart in Sīstān, and the appearance of Naṣīr al-Dīn at Hülegü's court, where he “spent some time in service” (*va muddat-i būdan dar ḥidmat*). There follows the return of Naṣīr al-Dīn with *farmān* for governorship in Sīstān, the expulsion of *malik* Šams al-Dīn Kart's representatives and finally the execution of the Sīstāni dignitaries, who “were associates in the murder of his uncle” 'Alī b. Mas'ūd – nearly a decade after the latter's death.<sup>17</sup>

The fact that Šams al-Dīn Kart's initial appearance in Sīstān was legitimated by the *farmān* of the Great Khan Möngke, the duration of the conflict with the local *maliks*, as well as the frequent change of rulers in the province, are all pieces of evidence demonstrating that these events should be interpreted entirely in the context of the shifting spheres of influence in Khorasan between the Jöchids and the Toluids.<sup>18</sup> In the course of this confrontation, the members of the opposing branches of the imperial clan tried to secure the support of local elites in order to strengthen their positions in the region. It is precisely the backing of the Toluids, if not their own initiative, that explains the auda-

16 It is noteworthy that the court chroniclers of the Hülegüids report Šams al-Dīn Kart's visit in the camp of Hülegü beyond the Amu Darya (where the *malik* arrived “before the other *maliks* of Iran” and was showered with honors), but they do not mention anything regarding the appearance of Naṣīr al-Dīn in front of the Toluid prince, Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavi: II, pp. 978-979; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, II, p. 688; Rashiduddin/Trans. Thackston: Part II, pp. 480; Rašīd-ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisej*: III; transl. by A.K. Arends (Moskva – Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1946): p. 25; it seems that the visit of the *malik* of Herat is noted also by Juvaynī: Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī: III, pp. 98-9; Juvaini/trans. Boyle: II, pp. 612-3.

17 *Tārīḫ-i Sīstān: tālīf dar ḥudūd-i 445-725*, edited by M. al-Š. Bahār (Tehran: Čāpḥāna-yi Fardīn va barādar, 1314/1935): pp. 398-400; see also the English and the Russian translations of the referred passage: *The Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, transl. by M. Gold (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1976): pp. 324-5; *Tārīḫ-i Sīstān. Istorija Sīstāna*, transl. by L.P. Smirnova, *Pamjatniki pis'mennosti vostoka*, XLII (Moskva: Nauka, 1974): pp. 370-1. The Russian translation seems to render the Persian text more accurately, but it should be taken into consideration that at certain points both translations could be misleading.

18 If al-'Umārī is to be believed, a conflict between Batu and the Great Khan over the appanages in South West Asia arose as early as Güyük's reign (1246-8): Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, I, Russian translation: pp. 244-5, Arabic text: p. 223.

cious behavior of the *malik* of Herat, Šams al-Dīn Kart, who found protection in Hülegü's camp. It should be pointed out that the conflict between this *malik* and the Jöchid envoys reveals that attempts at redistributing the shares in Ḥorāsān started even before Hülegü crossed the Amu Darya. In this regard, the twists in Našīr al-Dīn's career suggest that the relationships of the local rulers with the different branches of the Golden Lineage were not static, and that the Toluids were willing to extend their support to various representatives of the local elites, according to the circumstances. Yet, it is indicative that when the Jöchid troops appeared in the region after the outbreak of the conflict between the Golden Horde and Hülegü, Našīr al-Dīn took their side. The *malik* of Sīstān, in fact, provided them with asylum in his capital after they were defeated by the forces loyal to Hülegü. And it is no coincidence that among the latter we find the ruler of Herat, Šams al-Dīn Kart.<sup>19</sup>

As Jackson underlined, the whole episode with Šams al-Dīn's rejection to deliver the contributions must have brought serious tensions between the members of the two dynastic branches already during the march through Iran,<sup>20</sup> especially if we keep in mind how Hülegü treated the envoys of the Jöchids.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the three Jöchid princes carried on their duty on the battlefield in a proper manner, participating actively in the operations against the Assassins' strongholds and in the assault against Baghdad.<sup>22</sup> Without a

19 *Tārīḥ-i Sīstān*/ed. Bahār: pp. 400-1; *The Tārīkh-e Sīstān*/trans. Gold: p. 326; *Istoriya Sīstana*/trans. Smirnova: pp. 371-2; for more details see: Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire": p. 242, note 259; as well as: Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran*: p. 77. As pointed out by Jackson, Sīstān proved to be a hard nut and the Ilkhans were not able to impose their authority upon the local dynasty for a long time in the decades that followed. The strife between the rulers of Sīstān and Herat continued almost until the end of the 13th century. There is no doubt that the local conflict between the two dynasties was interrelated with their choice of opposing sides after the war between the Hülegüids and the Jöchids broke out.

20 Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire": pp. 222-3.

21 The treatment of the Jöchid envoys was in sharp contrast with the mutual respect, which according to Rubruck, was demonstrated by the people of Möngke and Batu. The Minorite even adds that Batu's people were haughty and did not demonstrate so carefully their respect towards Möngke's servants: de Rubruc, Guillelmus, *Itinerarium*, in van den Wyngaert, P. Anastasius (ed.), *Sinica Franciscana*, 1, *Itinera et Relationes Fratrum Minorum saeculi XIII et XIV* (Firenze: Quaracchi 1929): p. 225; see also: *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck. His journey to the court of the Great Khan Mongke 1253-1255*, trans. by Peter Jackson (London: The Hakluyt Society 1990): p. 146.

22 Juvayni/ed. Qazvīnī, II: pp. 107, 121, 136, 269; Joveynī/trans. Boyle, II: pp. 618, 627, 636, 718; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: I, p. 525, II, pp. 696, 707, 710; Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, I: p. 736; II: pp. 990, 1008, 1012-1013; Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: pp. 122; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II: pp. 361, 485, 493, 496; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Verkhovski: 8; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Arends: pp. 31, 40, 42. In the last of the instances quoted here, Hülegü criticized

doubt, the cousins from the north and the head of their *ulus*, Berke (who in the meantime had ascended to the throne of the Golden Horde), expected appropriate compensation for their military service in terms of territory and booty – as dictated by Mongol tradition. Any perspective for arbitration from the political center of the Empire disappeared in 1260 with the outbreak of the internal war between Qubilai and Ariq Böke for the throne of the Great Khan. Despite ending with Qubilai's victory and his nominal ascension to the imperial throne, the war sanctioned an irreversible rupture: the Empire itself lost its political cohesion and the other Khanates started to follow their own politics with rising confidence. It is not by chance that at that time the bitter rivals of the Toluids from the Ögedeid and Chaghataid branches raised their heads.<sup>23</sup>

### 3 Witchcraft Trial and Intra-Mongol Diplomacy: Critical Survey of the Sources

With these events as a background, Rašid al-Dīn reports in his section about the rule of Berke that after his enthronement this Khan continued to follow “the path of sincerity, obedience, friendship, and unity” and goes on narrating the following quite curious story:

In the year 654 [30 January 1256-18 January 1257 AD], Bālāqān, who was in this land, planned treachery and deception against Hülāgū Ḥān and practiced witchcraft (*sihr kard*). An *ayjāq* [“informer”] came forward. These words [of the informer] were investigated. He [Bālāqān] also confessed. In order not to cause offence, Hülāgū Ḥān sent him to Berkāy,

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Balagha and Tutar for their lack of initiative during the assault on the Abbāsīd capital, but this episode can hardly be interpreted as a sign for the Jöchids' unwillingness to take part in the siege operation. Rather, this seems to have been a critical moment in the attack, when Hülegü tried to mobilize the available forces to a maximal extent. This conclusion is supported by the fact that after the reproach, the *nökärs* of the two princes headed the assault, which led to gaining control over the key eastern sector of the city walls. The participation of the Jöchids in the campaign against Baghdad is also referred to by Kirakos of Ganja, Kirakos Gandzakeci/trans. Hanlarjan: p. 228. Našir al-Dīn Ṭūsī also mentions Balagha (in the form Balagāy) among the commanders, who led the assault on Baghdad, Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī, III: pp. 287-8; Boyle, John Andrew, “The Death of the Last ‘Abbāsīd Caliph: a Contemporary Muslim Account”, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, VI (1961): pp. 145-61; reprinted in: Boyle, John Andrew, *The Mongol World Empire, 1206-1370*, (London: Variorum Reprints, 1977): article XI: pp. 157-8.

23 Biran, Michal, “The Mongols in Central Asia from Chinggis Khan's invasion to the rise of Temür: the Ögödeid and Chaghataid realms”, in Di Cosmo, Nicola, Frank, Allen, Golden, Peter (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia. The Chinggisid age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): pp. 49-50.

accompanied by the *amir* Sūnjāq. When they arrived there and his crime was established and confirmed, Berkāy sent him to Hūlāgū Ḥān [with the words]: “He is a criminal, you know [what to do with] him.” (*Mujrim ast, ū-rā tū dānī.*) Hūlāgū Ḥān executed him. Shortly afterward, Tutar and Qūlī also died. It was alleged that they were given poison on purpose. Because of this reason, an estrangement arose between [them], and Berkāi rebelled (*yāǰī šud*) against Hūlāgū Ḥān. And as it is going to be related in the history of Hūlāgū Ḥān, they did battle in Shawwāl 660 [August-September 1262 AD]. Most of the troops, which had come into this land with Qūlī and Tutar, took flight. Some of them left through the way of Ḥorāsān and seized the mountains of Ghazna and Bīnī-yi Gāv as far as Mūltān and Lahor, which is the frontier of India. Senior of the amirs at their command was Negūdar.<sup>24</sup> Otegū Čina<sup>25</sup> and [...] <sup>26</sup> from the *amirs* of Hūlāgū Ḥān went on their heels. Some others [of the Jöchid troops] rejoined their homes through the way of Derbend.<sup>27</sup>

Rašīd al-Dīn continues his narrative by telling that the enmity between Berke and Hülegü lasted until the end of their lives, and that the commander of Berke’s army was the extremely valiant “Nūqāy, the son of Tātār and grandson of prince Būqāl.”<sup>28</sup> The war continued after the death of Hülegü in 663 AH (1264-5 AD), during the reign of his successor Abaqa (1265-82). Berke died while returning from a campaign against the new Ilkhan in 664 AH (1265-6 AD). With this evidence, the section about the rule of Berke comes to an end.<sup>29</sup>

24 See Boyle’s comments on this commander in: Boyle, John Andrew, “The Mongol Commanders in Afghanistan and India According to the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāširi* of Jūzjānī”, *Islamic Studies*, 11 (1963): pp. 242-3; reprinted in: Boyle, *The Mongol World Empire*, 1206-1370: article XI.

25 See Boyle’s comments on this commander in: Boyle, “The Mongol Commanders in Afghanistan and India”: p. 239.

26 Lacuna in the text.

27 Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, 1: pp. 738-9; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, 1: pp. 525-6; my translation slightly differs from Boyle’s and Thackston: Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: pp. 122-3; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston, Part 11, pp. 361-2; see also: Rašīd-ad-Din/trans. Verkhovski: pp. 81-2.

28 Some manuscripts of the *Jāmi’ al-tawārīḫ* contain other versions of Nogai’s genealogy, but a comparison with the chapter about Jochi’s offspring reveals that this is the correct variant, Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, 1: p. 726; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, 1: p. 517; Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: p. 113; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston, Part 11: pp. 353-4; Rašīd-ad-Din/trans. Verkhovski: p. 75.

29 Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, 1: p. 739; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, 1: pp. 526; Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: p. 123; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston, Part 11, pp. 362; Rašīd-ad-Din/trans. Verkhovski: p. 82.

However, in another section of his *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*, Rašīd al-Dīn comes back to this episode, this time reporting another version, which substantially differs from the one above. Describing the events that immediately followed the battle of 'Ayn Jālūt, the Persian chronicler reports:

Also at the same time prince Balaḡā, the son of Šībān and grandson of Jūčī, suddenly died during a banquet (*dar tūy ba fajā namānad*), and after that Tutar Oḡūl was accused of witchcraft and treason. After the crime was proven, Hūlāgū Ḥān sent him, accompanied by the *amir* Sūnjāq, to Berkāy, and his crime [was] reported. Berkāy, in accordance with the *Yasa* of Čīnggīs Ḥān, sent him to Hūlāgū Ḥān and on the 17th of Šafar [6]58 (2 February 1260 AD) they executed him.<sup>30</sup> They also martyred Šadr al-Dīn Sāvjī, with the pretext that he had written a charm for him. After that Qūlī also died. And after the said princes died, their followers took flight, and through the way of Derbend and the way of the Sea of Gilān [the Caspian Sea], went to the region of the Qipčāq.<sup>31</sup>

The chapter, and the description of the episode, end with this account. Both versions obviously contradict each other as to the name of the prince accused of witchcraft, the year of the event and the fate of the remaining princes. In the first version Balagha is accused of practicing witchcraft, and for the death of Tutar and Quli there are no details at all, apart from the suspicion that they were poisoned. In the second version Balagha dies during a banquet, Tutar is accused of witchcraft and executed, while Quli's death is reported without any further explanation. Such discrepancies in the voluminous *Compendium* of Rašīd al-Dīn are not rare, but in this case there seems to be something more

30 If the later Tīmūrid historian Mīrḥwānd is to be believed, Berke brought Tūtār (mistakenly spelled as Tūmār in the text) back to the hands of Hülegü, because he was convinced that the latter would pardon him, Mīrḥwānd, Muḥammad, *Tārīḥ-i rawzat al-Šafā*, v (Tehran: Ḥayyām-Pirūz, 1339/1960): pp. 267-8. The credibility of Mīrḥwānd's statement, however, cannot be established, and it is entirely possible that it is a mere assumption of the Tīmūrid historian, rather than a product of additional source information. But in any event this element, as well as the entire mission to the court of Berke, is absent in the somewhat abridged account for the events by Mīrḥwānd's grandson Ḥwāndamīr, Ḥwāndamīr, Ġiās al-Dīn, *Tārīḥ-i ḥabīb al-sīyar fi aḥbār-i afrād-i bašar*, edited by J. Humāy, 4 vols. (Tehran: Kitābhāna-yi Ḥayyām, 1333/1954): p. 101; see also: *Classical Writings of the Medieval Islamic world. Persian Histories of the Mongol dynasties*, 11. Khwandamir, *Habibu's-siyar: The history of the Mongols and Genghis Khan by Khwandamir (Tome 3)*, trans. by Wheeler Thackston (London – New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012): p. 57.

31 Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, 11: p. 1034; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, 11: p. 725; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 11, pp. 506; Rašīd-ad-Din/trans. Arends: p. 54.

than just an accidental mistake during the compilation of the chronicle. Yet, an important element, present in both versions, is the “Intra-Mongol diplomacy exchange” – i.e. the return of the accused Chinggisid in the Golden Horde and the subsequent decision of Berke on the culprit’s fate, since this part of the story fits entirely in the principles that were dominant among the imperial elite. According to the *Secret History of the Mongols*, Ögedei gave a similar order regarding his own son, the future Great Khan Güyük, who in the course of the Western campaign had insulted his cousin Batu, the commander of the united Mongol troops in Europe. Ögedei ordered Güyük’s return to Batu, who was to define his punishment, with the words: “*This is a battlefield matter.*” Furthermore, the text emphasizes that Ögedei took that decision upon the advice of the future Great Khan Möngke together with a number of retainers, in accordance with a decree of Chinggis Khan: “A decree (*yarliq*) of your father Činggis Qa’an *stated that* field matters should be decided in the field, just as domestic matters should be decided in the tent. *Now*, the Qa’an is angry with Güyük. *This is a field matter: will the Qa’an not show favour and send Güyük to Batu, entrusting him with the decision?*”<sup>32</sup> The parallel with the decision of Berke, especially in the way it is portrayed in Rašid al-Dīn’s second version, is clear.

A third description of the demise of the Jöchid princes in the pages of Persian historiography can be found in *Aḥbār-i Muǰūlān dar anbāna-yi Mullā Quṭb* – “chronological notes” for the early history of the Ilkhanate, which have been edited relatively recently.<sup>33</sup> The version of this chronicle is the shortest one, but at the same time the oldest one preserved so far, as the work was composed about two decades before *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīḥ*,<sup>34</sup> and runs as follows:

In that time Bālāqāi died during a banquet (*dar ṭūy namānad*) in the year 656 (1258 AD). And after some time they also accused (*ǰamz kardand*) Tutar of witchcraft and sent him to Berke [with the accusation] that he did such a deed. Berke ordered: “Because he is a criminal, Hülākū knows [what to do with] him!” (*Čūn gunāh kardā-ast, ān-rā Hülākū dānad!*) They

32 *The Secret History of the Mongols*/trans. de Rachewiltz: I, § 275-7, pp. 206-9, see also the comments to this episode: II, pp. 1011-9.

33 I am indebted to my colleague Dr. Qiu Yihao for bringing this source to my attention.

34 Between 1281 and 1285 AD: Lane, George, “Mongol News: The Akhbār-i Moghulān dar Anbāneh Quṭb by *Quṭb al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Mas‘ūd Shīrāzī*”, *JRAS*, Series 3, XXII/3-4 (2012): p. 543.

brought back Tutar and Hülākū ordered his execution. And this enmity fermented [i.e. continued to increase ...]<sup>35</sup>

If we summarize the facts described in the three versions in a table, the following picture appears:

Rašid al-Dīn's first version	Rašid al-Dīn's second version	Aḥbār-i Moğulān
Bālāqān plotted treason and practiced witchcraft (654); <i>Ayghāq</i> and confession; Sūnjāq's mission to Berke; Berke returns the accused to Hülegü: "you know [what to do with] him"; Execution;	Sudden death of Balağā during a banquet; Tutar Oğül is accused of witchcraft and treason; His guilt is proven; Sūnjāq's mission to Berke; Berke returns the accused to Hülegü in accordance with the <i>Yasa</i> ; Execution (17th of Şafar 658); Execution of Şadr al-Dīn Sāvji;	Bālāqāi dies during a banquet (656); Tutar is accused of witchcraft; The accused is sent to Berke; Berke finds the accused guilty and returns him to Hülegü: "Hülākū knows [what to do with] him!"; Execution;
The death of Tutar and Qūli; Suspicions that they were poisoned;	The death of Qūli;	

35 Šīrāzī, Quṭb al-Dīn, *Aḥbār-i Muğulān dar anbāna-yi Mullā Quṭb*, edited by Ī. Afšār (Qum: Kitābḥāna-i Buzurg-i Ḥadrat-i Āyatallah al-'Uzmā Mar'ašī Najafī, 2010): p. 41. The much later anonymous genealogical compendium *Mu'izz al-ansāb fi šajarat-i salāṭin-i muğul* (15th century) also preserved an account of these events. There, instead of Tutar, his uncle Tatar-Nogai's father, is mistakenly reported as the culprit. What is more important, however, is that this version seems to be close to the excerpt in *Aḥbār-i Moğulān* and in all likelihood neither of Rašid al-Dīn's versions was directly used during its compilation. The passage of *Mu'izz al-ansāb* runs as follows: "This Tātār, they say, was sent with the troops, which were designated for Hülākū Ḥān in Irān, and he was in this land until they accused (*gamz kardand*) him in front of Hülākū Ḥān: "He has bewitched you!" Seizing him, Hülākū Ḥān sent him to Berke Ḥān, who was his uncle, at the time when Berke was king (*pādīšāh*) of that *ulus*. Berke sent him back to Hülākū Ḥān and said: "He is a criminal (*gunāhkār*

The correspondence between the version of *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* and Rašīd al-Dīn's second version is obvious, and leads to the assumption that the Ilkhanid vizier used the chronicle while compiling this part of his own *Compendium*, further elaborating on it and adding facts from other sources.<sup>36</sup> Some stylistic similarities of the passage in *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* with Rašīd al-Dīn's first version<sup>37</sup> do not preclude the possibility that the author of the anonymous work and the vizier used a common direct or indirect source.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the hypothesis that the passage in *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* represents a third distinct version of the events, parallel to the two descriptions in *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*, cannot be ruled out. Such an interpretation is supported by the existence of three completely different dates in the three excerpts, as well as the fact that in other places in his text the author of *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* transcribes Balagha's name in a quite different form.<sup>39</sup> It is also noteworthy that on the pages of this chronicle there

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- ast), do with him whatever you want!" Hülākū Ḥān put him to death and this was the first cause for contention and enmity between Hülākū Ḥān and Berke". For the Persian text and the Russian translation of this excerpt see: Tizengauzen, V., *Sbornik materialov otnošjaščikhsja k istorii Zolotoj ordy*, 11 (Persian sources) (Moskva – Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1941): p. 57, note 2. A recent Russian translation, which however does not correctly render the accusation of witchcraft, is found in: *Istorija Kazachstana v persidskikh istočnikakh*, 111. *Mu'izz al-ansāb. Proslavljajušče genealogii*, edited and trans. by Š.Kh. Vokhidov (Almaty: Dajk-Press, 2006): p. 43, facsimile of the excerpt on p. 25a.
- 36 For example, the participation of Su'unchaq in the mission to Berke and the execution of Šadr al-Dīn Sāvji.
- 37 For example, the almost identical phrase with which Berke returns the culprit to Hülegü: "ū-ra tū dānī" (Rašīd al-Dīn) and "ān-ra Hülakū dānad" (*Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*), and maybe the resemblance of the orthography of the name of the accused of witchcraft in the first version of the vizier, Bālāqān (Rašīd al-Dīn), with that of Bālāqāy, who died during a banquet (*Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*). The handwritten forms of the graphemes *nūn* and *ye* in word-final position can be very close to each other in medieval Persian manuscripts.
- 38 In his analysis of *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*, George Lane points out the possibility that this text served as a source for Rašīd al-Dīn, or that its author used the same source as the vizier. In this regard, it should be pointed out that the only manuscript which has survived to the present was in fact a possession of Rašīd al-Dīn's library, as indicated by stamps on some of its pages: "waaqf-e-Ketābkhāna Rašīdī" (according to Lane's transcription), Lane, "Mongol News: The Akhbār-i Moghulān": pp. 54f-59.
- 39 Bālāqāy in the passage, quoted above, and Balaḡāy in another place in the text: *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*/ed. Afšār: p. 39. This fact could be also interpreted as evidence for the compilation of the different passages in *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* from different sources. But it should be taken into consideration that the inconsistency in the writing of certain names and terms, marked by the editor of the text Ī. Afšār, does not lead automatically to the conclusion that the chronicle is a compilation, since such variations on the pages of the same source are typical for the period, *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*/ed. Afšār: p. 9; Lane, "Mongol News: The Akhbār-i Moghulān": p. 544. Such variation in the orthography of names can be witnessed in the vast chronicle of Rašīd al-Dīn, too, as attested for example in the

is no information about the fate of Quli, whose death is mentioned in Rašid al-Dīn's second version. The absence of such information is even more puzzling if we consider the fact that in another passage of *Aḥbār-i Muǧūlān* Quli is mentioned (in the form Tūli) along with Balagha and Tutar.<sup>40</sup> Be that as it may, the problem for the interdependence of the three versions for the death of the Jöchids can hardly be settled and goes beyond the aim of the present study. The differences in the pointed passages indicate that versions for the demise of the Jöchids were circulating in the Ilkhanid court decades after the events.

Of particular importance for the present study is the mission which brought the accused in front of Berke. It is mentioned in all three variants, though in *Aḥbār-i Muǧūlān* there is no reference to the participation of Su'unchaq in it.<sup>41</sup> Other noteworthy features of the three versions under discussion are that they contain serious chronological discrepancies as well as contradiction regarding the name of the executed prince, which cannot be settled only within Persian medieval historiography.

Luckily, other sources shed additional light upon the events. For instance, the chronicle of the Mamluk historian al-Mufaḍḍal includes an account of the beginning of the conflict between the Jöchids and the Ilkhans of Iran, which was of great importance for the Mamluk state. The chronicler reports the story of 'Alā al-Dīn b. 'Abd Allāh al-Baǧdādī, which was preserved in other sources.<sup>42</sup> The latter was captured by the Mongols during their conquest of Baghdad and

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orthography of the name of the same personality in the passages of *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*, quoted above, as well as in those discussed in note 23. In this regard, Balagha's name stands out with a particular variety of forms; see Qazvīnī's comment: Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī, III: p. 91, note 2. Thus, depending on the context, the variations in the writing of one and the same person's name on the pages of a single source could be interpreted both as an indication for compilation from different sources, or as a simple consequence of the peculiarities of the Perso-Arabic alphabet, in which the Turkic-Mongol names could be spelled in various ways.

40 *Aḥbār-i Muǧūlān*, ed. Afšār: p. 39. Here it should be taken into account once again that the writing of *te* and *qāf* at the beginning of the word is very similar and the two forms would look, respectively, as follows: **تولی** and **قولى**. That is why this prince was called Tūli not only in *Aḥbār-i Muǧūlān*, but also in some manuscripts of the *Tārīḥ-i Jahāngušāy*, Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī: III, p. 91, note 5.

41 The mission to Berke is also mentioned in the later version of *Mu'izz al-ansāb* where, similarly to the passage of *Aḥbār-i Muǧūlān*, there is no reference to the participation of Su'unchaq.

42 The original account containing the story of al-Baǧdādī, belongs to Ibn Šaddād, but this part of his work has not survived. Luckily this passage is quoted by several later Arab authors. For this tradition see: Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire": pp. 226-7, note 174.

apparently was closely acquainted with the dramatic events surrounding the death of the Jöchid princes:

The Tatars (al-Tatār) took me as captive from Baghdad, when the Tatars conquered it. I remained in their company and became acquainted with their affairs. When it was the year 660, two envoys came from Berke, one of them was called Balāgiyā,<sup>43</sup> the other Ṭaṭaršā,<sup>44</sup> with a request that, among other things, what was gathered from the conquest of lands should be dispatched to the House of Bātūwa [the Jöchids], according to the custom. The custom was that everything extracted from the lands, conquered and possessed by them, from the river Jeyhūn [Amu Darya] westward,<sup>45</sup> was collected and divided in five shares. Two shares [were given] to the Great Qaan (*al-Qān al-Kabīr*), two shares to the army, and one share to the House of Bātūwā. When Bātūwā died and Berke sat on the throne, Hūlāwūn [Hülegü] held back his share.<sup>46</sup> Then Berke dispatched his envoys to Hūlāwūn, and among them he dispatched sorcerers (*saḥara*), [who had to] corrupt the sorcerers of Hūlāwūn. Hūlāwūn had a sorcerer named Yakšā.<sup>47</sup> They [the envoys] handed to him a gift, sent to him by Berke, and asked him to concur with them in the pursuit of their goals. He agreed with them. Hūlāwūn had attached to these envoys servants, among whose numbers was a sorceress from Khatay (al-Ḥaṭā),<sup>48</sup> named Kamšā,<sup>49</sup> who had to inform him about their [the envoys'] news.

43 al-Yūnīnī and al-Dawādārī give the name as Balāgā, al-Yūnīnī, Quṭb al-Dīn, *Dail mir'āt al-zamān*, 2 vols. (Hyderabad, Deccan: Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau, 1374-5/1954-5): I, p. 497; II, p. 161; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Abū Bakr, *Kanz al-durar*, edited by Ulrich Haarmann, (*Die Chronik des Ibn ad-Dawādārī*) (Cairo, 1391/1971): VIII, p. 92.

44 al-Yūnīnī gives the name as Ṭaṭar, al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 497; II: p. 161; al-Dawādārī gives it as Ṭaṭaršāh, al-Dawādārī/ed. Haarmann: VIII, p. 92.

45 al-Dawādārī adds: "from the fringes of the river Jeyhūn westward, whither the conquests lead them", al-Dawādārī/ed. Haarmann: VIII, p. 92.

46 According to al-Yūnīnī: "When Bātūwā died and Berke sat on the throne instead of him, Hūlāwūn did not send him anything of what he had taken in Iraq and Syria, and what he used to send to Bātūwā", al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 498; II, pp. 161-2.

47 Al-Yūnīnī gives the name as Taktā, al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 498; II, p. 162; al-Dawādārī has Yakšā, al-Dawādārī/ed. Haarmann: VIII, p. 92.

48 Both Al-Yūnīnī and al-Dawādārī give the toponym as al-Ḥaṭā, i.e. Khatay, Northern China, al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 498; II, p. 162; al-Dawādārī/ed. Haarmann: VIII, p. 92.

49 Al-Yūnīnī has Kamsā (al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 498) and Kamštā (al-Yūnīnī II, p. 162), al-Dawādārī has Kamšī (al-Dawādārī/ed. Haarmann: VIII, p. 92). In this case the Arab informer, perhaps by mistake, considered as a personal name or added to the personal name of the sorceress under question the Turkic word *qam*, used by the Mongols for designation of their shamans. In this regard see the evidence in Juvaynī and Rubruk: Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī: I,

When she learned about their affairs, she informed him [Hülāwūn] about this. He ordered that they should be arrested and detained them in the fortress Telu (Telā).<sup>50</sup> Then, fifteen days after their arrest, he put them to death, killing also his sorcerer, who was called Yakšā.<sup>51</sup> When the news about the murder of his envoys and his sorcerers reached Berke, it arose his enmity towards Hülāwūn so that he dispatched his envoys to al-Malik al-Zāhir<sup>52</sup> in order to incite him to joint actions against the House of Hülāwūn.<sup>53</sup>

The Arab authors preserved the report of a person closely acquainted with the events. This report, though somewhat distorted, provides valuable additional information supporting Rašid al-Dīn statement that, indeed, a person from

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p. 43; Juvaini/trans. Boyle: I, p. 59; Rubruc, *Itinerarium*: pp. 205, 305; *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*/trans. Jackson: p. 121, note 3, p. 245. Such mistakes are not rare. Rubruk erroneously thought that the title Khan and the designation of the shamans were one and the same word (Rubruc, *Itinerarium*: p. 305; *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*/trans. Jackson: p. 245.), while Carpini considered that “Kam” was the Cuman name of the Mongol god, Pian Di Carpine, Giovanni di, *Storia dei Mongoli*, edited by P. Daffinà, C., Leonardi, M.C., Lungarotti, E. Menestò, L., Petech (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di studi Sull’alto Medioevo, 1989): p. 240; *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, translated by a nun of Stanbrook Abbey, edited with an introduction by Christopher Dawson (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955): p. 12.

50 For this castle see below note 58.

51 In both of Al-Yūnīnī’s versions the name is given as Taktā (al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 498; II, p. 162). al-Dawādārī has Yakšā, al-Dawādārī/ed. Haarmann, VIII: p. 92. In al-Yūnīnī’s first version the following additional information could be found: “Afterwards he took counsel with his amirs about their matter and they advised him to kill them after fifteen days. Together with them, he killed his sorcerer Taktā, etc.” (al-Yūnīnī: I, p. 498).

52 The Mamlūk Sultan Baybars (1260-77).

53 Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, I, Russian translation: pp. 188-9. For the original Arabic text see pp. 177-8. I am indebted to Professor Pavel Pavlovich, who compared my translation of Tisenhauzen’s Russian translation with the original Arabic text and checked Al-Yūnīnī’s and al-Dawādārī’s versions for me. It should be noted that according to Jūzjānī part of the booty from Baghdad was sent to Berke, but the latter, being Muslim, not only refused it, but also massacred Hülegü’s envoys, Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāširī*, edited by ‘A. Habibi, II (Kābul: Anjuman-i Tārīḥ-i Afġānistān, 1343/1964): p. 198; al-Jūzjānī, Minhāj al-Dīn, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāširī: A General History of the Muhammadan Dynasties of Asia, including Hindustan; from A.H. 194 (800 A.D.) to A.H. 658 (A.D. 1260) and the Irruption of the Infidel Mughals into Islam*, trans. by Henry. G. Raverty, II (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1970 [First published in 1881, in the Bibliotheca Indica Series by Asiatic Society of Bengal]): p. 1257. Naturally, this account cannot be taken at face value and should undoubtedly be considered as evidence for the chronicler’s own religious zeal. But Jackson might be right to see in it an indication that as early as 1260 (the year in which Jūzjānī accomplished his work) there was already tension between Berke and Hülegü, Jackson, “The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire”: pp. 224-5.

Hülegü's court was involved in the witchcraft episode. Another important detail, provided by the Arab captive, is that the informer mentioned by Rašid al-Dīn was deliberately instilled in the Jöchids' entourage. Apropos, it is quite possible that the *ayjāq* mentioned in the *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ* was the very same Kamšā,<sup>54</sup> given that both in Persian and in Turkic gender markers are absent. It is also noteworthy that, according to al-Bağdādī, there were two accused Jöchids. The versions of the Persian historians, however, always mention one culprit, despite referring to him with both names. Last but not least, the Arab text dates the episode in a completely different year, which is later than the ones given in the *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ* and in the *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*.

In his *History of the Nation of Archers*, Grigor of Akner also describes the death of the Jöchids. The Armenian author does not refer to the involvement of sorcerers, but offers other important details. Thus, according to the chronicler, Möngke's envoys convened a *qurultai*, during which they were to declare – in front of the high commanders of Hülegü's army – the orders of the Great Khan that his brother should become Khan of the newly conquered lands. The account continues as follows:

When, however, the khans' sons heard that it was his [i.e. Möngke's] will that Hulawu become Khan, four became angry and refused to submit to Hulawu. T'agudar and Bawraγan submitted to Hulawu. Balaxay, Tut'ar, Ƣatayan, and Miγan did not submit. When the messengers of Manku Ƣan learned that these four would not submit, but even wanted to fight Hulawu, then they ordered the yasax imposed upon Balaxē, Tut'ar and Ƣatayan,<sup>55</sup> to be strangled by a bowstring, for it was their custom to kill khans in such a manner.<sup>56</sup> But Miγan, who was the son of

54 The circulation of specialists in magic arts is also noteworthy – Kamšā is explicitly designated as a sorceress from China.

55 A certain Gatahan is mentioned also by Kirakos (see further in the text). L. Hanlaryan hypothesized that this was the name of one of Quli's wives: Kirakos Gandzakeci/trans. Hanlarjan: p. 312, n. 4. Indeed, Rašid al-Dīn mentions a woman named Qadaqan (Qadaqān) among Quli's chief wives, but the vizier explicitly reports only about one of his other wives that she accompanied the prince in Iran and died there. See the passages from *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*, cited in note 60.

56 The shedding of royal blood was sacrilege according to the perceptions of the Mediaeval Turks and Mongols. That is why one of the preferred methods for execution of the members of the Golden Lineage was strangling and the Dominican Ricoldo of Monte Croce left perhaps one of the best descriptions of the motives behind this choice: "One Chan kills another, in order to rule, yet he is very careful not to shed his blood. They say, in fact, that it is in no way appropriate for the blood of a great Chan to be shed on the earth, but he takes care in every possible way to strangle him.", "Vnus Chan occidit alterum, vt ipse dominetur, tamen valde obseruat, ne effundat eius sanguinem. Dicunt enim, quod nullo modo est conueniens, quod sanguis Magni Chan fundatur in terra, sed quocumque modo

Xul,<sup>57</sup> and young in years, they seized and put him *in prison* in the middle of the salt lake<sup>58</sup> which lies between the districts of Her and Zarawand.<sup>59</sup>

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potest eum suffocare procurat”, *Peregrinatores medii aevi quattuor: Burchardus de Monte Sion, Ricoldus de Monte Crucis, Odoricus de Foro Julii, Wilbrandus de Oldenburg*, edited by J.C.M. Laurent (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1864): pp. 115-6.

- 57 According to Grigor, Xul – who is undoubtedly identical with Quli from the Persian sources – died of gout: Blake, Frye, “History of the Nation of the Archers”, English translation: pp. 329, 331, Armenian text: pp. 328, 330. The fact that the Armenian historian places his death before the Baghdad campaign (contrary to the other sources), as well as the quite unrealistic context of his report (including the story of an evil Jewish doctor, who cruelly killed over thirty children in an unsuccessful attempt to heal the prince), indicates that his account can hardly be regarded as trustworthy. It is possible, however, that Grigor’s words might be partially true, since gout was indeed widespread among the members of the Mongol elite. Thus, it would not be surprising if Quli suffered from it. As for Miyan, who – according to the Armenian chronicler – succeeded his father, it is noteworthy that Rašid al-Dīn claims that the third son of Quli was indeed named Mingqan (Mīngkān) and went with him to Iran. However, the vizier states that Mingqan was accompanied by his own three sons, a fact suggesting that he was not that “young in years” and that would explain why, after Quli’s death, he could have “ascended his throne in his place”. Grigor apparently merges into one person Mingqan and one of his brothers Ayachi (Āyāčī), who according to Rašid al-Dīn came to Iran as a child. The vizier continues his account with the extremely interesting evidence that in the time of Abaqa Khan this Ayachi, who already had a son, was in Ḥorāsān with Arghun. After being educated and honored, he was sent back to his own *ulus* “out of friendship and good intentions”: Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, 1: pp. 716-8; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, 1: pp. 510-1; Rašid al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: pp. 104-5; Rashiduddin/Trans. Thackston: Part 11: pp. 350-1; Rašid-ad-Din/trans. Arends: pp. 69-70.
- 58 This is Lake Urmia in modern northwestern Iran. It is interesting that, according to al-Mufaḍḍal, the fortress of Telu, in which the Jöchid princes were kept before their execution, was situated in the “lake of Aḍerbaijān”, and Hülegü himself found shelter in it after he was defeated by Berke’s troops: Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, 1, Russian translation: p. 188, Arabic text: p. 177. Grigor states that as a result of the events that took place after Hülegü’s demise, Abaqa banned Tegüder in “the midst of the salt sea which lies in the districts of Her and Zarawand”, Blake, Frye, “History of the Nation of the Archers”, English translation: p. 377, Armenian text: p. 376. According to al-Nasawī (mid. 13th c.) who knew the region well, the fortress Ṭelā was actually on the shore of Lake Urmia, and was surrounded by water on three sides, whereas another fortress named Šāhi was placed on an island in the lake, Šihab ad-Din Muhammad, *Sirat as-Sultan Dzhalal ad-Din Mankburny (Zhizeopisanie sultana Dzhalal ad-Dina Mankburny)*, edited and trans. by Z.M. Bunjatov (Moskva: Vostočnaja Literatura RAN, 1996): pp. 194, 198; 348, note 2; p. 349, note 5. Interestingly enough, Rašid al-Dīn combines the two names into one toponym, Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 11, pp. 1051, 1118, 1349; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, p. 736, 779, 978; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 11, p. 514; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 111, pp. 545, 672; Rašid-ad-Din/trans. Arends: pp. 63, 97, 214.
- 59 The quotation follows the English translation of Blake and Frye: Blake, Frye, “History of the Nation of the Archers”: pp. 339, 341, for the original Armenian text see pp. 338, 340; see also the recent translation, based on the classical Armenian text, published by Blake

The Armenian author continues with an account of the assault against the troops of the executed Jöchids, which according to him was ordered also by Möngke's envoys, and was conducted by the forces of Hülegü and the Georgian and Armenian detachments loyal to him. Many "Tat'ars" were slain, but two chieftains, Nuxak'awun and Aradamur, were warned. With "twelve thousand horsemen and much treasure and gold and fine horses", they managed to cross the river Kura, whence they headed for "their own country" – i.e. the Golden Horde. Once they reached it, they secured Berke's help and "wreaked much evil for ten years".<sup>60</sup>

Another medieval Armenian chronicler – Kirakos of Ganja, left slightly different, but no less interesting description of the death of the Jöchids in Hülegü's army. After giving a short account of the internal war between Qubilai and Ariq Böke, Kirakos continues:

Hulagu was their brother and of Mangu-khan. He supported Gopilay. Berkay, ruling the northern regions, supported Arik-Buge; another relative of theirs, named Algu, also a warlord, son of Khan Chagatay, the oldest son of Chinggis Khan<sup>61</sup> – this also made war on Berkay, because, as they say, Mangu-Khan, instigated by him (Berkay), exterminated his entire family. And he sent to Hulagu [an army], to support him from this side, through the Derbend Gate. And the great Hulagu mercilessly and ruthlessly exterminated all of those, who were with him, being equal to him by lineage, noble and glorious rulers from the family of Baty and Berkay: Gul, Balaha, Tuthar, Megan, the son of Gul, Gatahan, and many others together with their troops – old and young were destroyed by the sword, since they were with him and interfered in the affairs of the state. And only some of them, and with many efforts, managed to save

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and Frye in: *Grigor Aknerts'i's History of the Nation of Archers*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian (Long Branch, New Jersey: n.p., 2003 [*Sources of the Armenian Tradition*]). Further in his work Grigor again mentions the execution of the Chinggisids and the banishment of the surviving prince "in the middle of the salt sea": Blake, Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers", English translation: p. 375, Armenian text: p. 374.

60 Blake, Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers", English translation: p. 341, Armenian text: p. 340.

61 Of course, Chaghatai was not the oldest son of Chinggis Khan, but the second one, born after Jochi. As for Alghu, he was not a son of Chaghatai but his grandson through the latter's sixth son Baydar, Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 1, p. 761; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, p. 530; Rašid al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: pp. 143-4; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 11, p. 372; see also Hanlaryan's comment to this part of Kirakos's text: Kirakos Gandzakeci/trans. Hanlarjan: p. 312, endnote. 3.

themselves – alone, without women, children and property, they fled to Berkey and their other relatives.<sup>62</sup>

Thus, Grigor of Akner ascribes the massacre of the Jöchids to the sanction of Möngke's envoys – a very doubtful element of his narrative, which obviously aims at legitimizing Hülegü's enthronement. Kirakos on the other hand, is perhaps closer to the real course of events, when he puts the bloody massacre of the cousins from the north in the context of the rising geopolitical clash between the different branches of the Golden Lineage, which marked the dissolution of the United Mongol Empire. Some other Armenian sources also describe these events, unfortunately quite laconically. The *Chronicle of Bishop Stephanos* reports that "In the year 711 (1262 AD) Huli ad Balahain fled."<sup>63</sup> Another anonymous Armenian chronicle dated the flight of "Palah and Guli" to 1261 AD, but it seems that this source is a later compilation, in which the entries about the Mongols are characterized by clear chronological inaccuracies.<sup>64</sup> Be that as it may, the years pointed out in the two short accounts of the Armenian chroniclers roughly correspond with the report of al-Bağdādī, who dates the events in 660 AH (26 November 1261-14 November 1262). The *Chronicle of Mkhitar of Airavan* reports, immediately after the description of the Mongol defeat at 'Ayn Jālūt, but without indicating a specific year: "Hulagu Khan exterminated all the Jagatays, children of the khan".<sup>65</sup>

Along with the Armenian sources, the Georgian compendium *Kartlis Tskhovreba* also preserves information about the death of the Jöchids in

62 The quotation follows the Russian translation and transcription of the names in: Kirakos Gandzakeci/trans. Hanlarjan: p. 236.

63 The quotation follows the Russian translation and transcription of the names in: *Armjanskije istočniki o mongolakh, XIII-XIV vv.*, trans. by A.G. Galstyan (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Vostočnoj Literatry, 1962): p. 36. The flight of "Huli and Balahain" (and accordingly that of "Palah and Guli" in the following account) should apparently be interpreted as the flight of their troops, not of the commanders themselves.

64 The quotation follows the Russian translation and transcription of the names in: *Armjanskije istočniki o mongolakh, XIII-XIV vv.*/trans. Galstyan: p. 82. For example, the capture of Mosul by Hülegü is dated in 1257, Berke's campaign (apparently against the Ilkhanate) and his death are dated in 1258, and 1275(!) is pointed out as the year in which Hülegü took Baghdad: *ibid.*: pp. 82-3, see also note 210 on p. 129.

65 The quotation follows the Russian translation and transcription of the names in: *Armjanskije istočniki o mongolakh, XIII-XIV vv.*/trans. Galstyan: p. 91. It should be pointed out that some evidences in this source are not given in the right chronological sequence too, since the death of Batu is reported immediately after the entrance for the capture of Baghdad by Hülegü: *ibid.*: p. 90. The short accounts of the events of interest for the present paper, however, are given in the right order, since the strike against the Jöchids was delivered after the defeat of Ket Buqa's corps.

Hülegü's army. Describing the conflict between Berke and Hülegü the Georgian chronicler somehow retrospectively reports the following:

But then something happened: the children of the Khan – T'utar, Q'uli and Balagh<sup>66</sup> – who were sent to Ulo [i.e. Hülegü], were seized and put to death by him. He seized their country and all their treasures. Learning of the murder of their master, the members of his family, who stayed in Greece,<sup>67</sup> led by their chief – one by the name of Ala-Temur – took off at once and fled to Samtskhe with all his goods and his household.<sup>68</sup>

The Georgian chronicler proceeds further, similarly to Grigor of Akner but with more details, with an account of the hardships which the refugees headed by Ala-Temur had to endure, before they managed to reach the dominions of Berke through the Caucasus.<sup>69</sup>

#### 4 Witchcraft Trial and Intra-Mongol Diplomacy: a Tentative Reconstruction

The numerous contradictions in the sources do not permit the reconstruction of the precise developments that led to the death of the Jöchid princes in the camp of Hülegü. It is evident, however, that the Persian chroniclers do not reveal the whole truth and in one way or another the cousins from the north fell victim to the rising conflict between the founders of the Ilkhanate and the Golden Horde. This is quite apparent from the account of the pro-Hülegüid Grigor of Akner; from the report of his counterpart Kirakos of Ganjak, who seemingly did not take a side in the dynastic conflict; as well as from the story of al-Bağdādī, preserved in Mamlūk historiography, which was generally hostile

66 This is the name according to the English translation. The older Russian translation gives the form "Abaqa", which seems to be a corruption of the name of the same prince, since further in the same source the three Jöchids are mentioned again, and this time both translations give the name Balagh. See below in the text and note 79.

67 Perhaps this is a reference to some part of the territories under the control of the Empire of Trebizond.

68 *Kartlis tskhovreba*, eds. Met'reveli, Jones: p. 359; see also: *Kartlis tskhovreba*/eds. Met'reveli et al.: p. 372.

69 *Kartlis tskhovreba*, eds. Met'reveli, Jones: pp. 359-60; see also: *Kartlis tskhovreba*/eds. Met'reveli et al.: pp. 372-3. The description of the events connected with the flight of the Jöchid troops in *Kartlis Tskhovreba* corresponds to that of the *History of the Nation of Archers*, since Aradamur of the Armenian text is to be identified with Ala-Temur, mentioned in the passage quoted here.

towards Hülegü and his dynasty. Grigor of Akner ascribes the execution (and the very enthronement of Hülegü, as already mentioned) to Möngke's sanction. This statement, of course, cannot be taken at face value since the Persian historians (and Rašid al-Dīn in particular) could not omit such a significant fact, as it would present the conflict between Hülegü and Berke in a completely different light.<sup>70</sup> Kirakos undoubtedly left the most plausible answer to the question of what were the reasons behind Hülegü's decision to eliminate the Jöchids: "since they were with him and interfered in the affairs of the state".<sup>71</sup>

The question arises, however, whether the Chinggisid who was accused of witchcraft (Balagha or Tutar according to the different versions), was ever sent to Berke in order the rift to be avoided – i.e. was there any "intra-Mongol diplomacy" episode at all? Apart from the Persian chronicles no other source mentions such a visit to the court of the Golden Horde. Naturally, the omission could be due to a number of reasons: ignorance, omission throughout the number of paraphrases of the story, etc. Yet it seems that Rašid al-Dīn himself hints to the fact that the entire episode related to the visit to Berke was an interpolation, perhaps stemming from the official interpretation of the events at the court of the Hülegüids. Narrating about the war between Hülegü and Berke, the vizier points out that the latter "sent in the vanguard Nūkāy, who was his commander and a relative of Tutar's,<sup>72</sup> to avenge his blood [literary: in search of his blood] with thirty thousand horsemen".<sup>73</sup> Describing the development of the conflict, already during Abaqa's rule, Rašid al-Dīn reports once again: "and another time Nūkāy set out from the side of Derbend with an entire

70 Without going into details, Lane accepts that Grigor erroneously thought that the sanction came from Möngke (who by that time had already been dead for several years), while in reality it came from Qubilai, Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran*: p. 74. Be that as it may, the interference of the Khan's envoys in the purge of the Jöchids must be interpreted as an interpolation in the story for their demise. As already mentioned it is hard to believe that the Persian court historians would omit an event which would emphasize the fact that the execution of the princes was sanctioned by the Great Khan.

71 Kirakos Gandzakeci/trans. Hanlarjan: p. 236. The author of *Aḥbār-i Muḡūlān* also states: "Balḡāi and Tūtār and Tūli [sic] who were close relatives of Berke, and even his own nephews, were giving orders in the kingdom". *Balḡāi va Tūtār va Tūli [sic] ki ḥʷišān-i nazdik-i Berke būdand bal ḥʷud birādarzādagānaš būdand dar mulk ḥukm mikardand*, Šīrāzi/ed. Afšār: p. 39.

72 As pointed out also by Thackston, Nogai and Tutar were first cousins, Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II, pp. 511, note 1, and the passages from *Jāmī' al-tawārīḫ*, cited in note 28.

73 *Nūkāy-rā ki laškarkaš-i ū būd va ḥʷiš-i Tūtār; ba ṭalab-i ḥūn-i ū bā sī hazār suvār dar muqaddama bifristād*, Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavi: II, p. 1044; see also: Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: II, pp. 731-2; Rašid-ad-Din/trans. Arends: p. 59; see also: Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II, p. 511.

army, intending to avenge Tutar's blood".<sup>74</sup> If the fate of this prince had been indeed left in Hülegü's hands by Berke, as stated in one of Rašīd al-Dīn's versions and in *Aḥbār-i Muǧūlān*, why then a revenge for his execution would be demanded?<sup>75</sup> At first glance the logical answer is that if the culprit was Balagha (as in Rašīd al-Dīn's first version) and not Tutar, then revenge for the latter's death would have been sought due to the suspicions that he and Quli had been poisoned. A comparison with the other sources, however, demonstrates that this interpretation is unacceptable, since the Persian chroniclers are the only ones attempting to split the death of the Jöchids into separate cases.<sup>76</sup>

According to al-Baǧdādī, Balaha and Tutar were executed together as a result of the witchcraft affair, while other sources add the names of various Jöchids who also became victims of Hülegü's unexpected strike. Curiously enough, phrases similar to the recently quoted statements of Rašīd al-Dīn can be found in the earlier work of Kirakos of Ganja, who reports: "Berke assembled a countless myriad of troops in order to come and take revenge from Hülegü for the blood of his relatives."<sup>77</sup> *Kartlis Tskhovreba* is even more specific stating who

74 *va digar bār az ʔaraf-i Darband Nūkāy ba qašd-i qašāš-i ḥūn-i Tūtār bā laškarī-yi tamām dar ḥarakat āmad*, Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rowšan, Mūsavī: 11, p. 1062; see also Karīmī's edition, where the name of Tutar is given incorrectly, Rašīd al-Dīn/Ed. Karīmī, 11: p. 744; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston, Part 11: p. 518; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Arends: p. 68.

75 It is not impossible that this paradox prompted Mīrḥ<sup>w</sup>ānd to add the information that, leaving the decision on Tutar's fate in his cousin's hands, Berke did not expect such a harsh penalty, and the culprit was supposed to be pardoned, see note 30.

76 Elsewhere in his vast chronicle the vizier mentions another close relative of one of the Jöchid princes who apparently also played an important role in the conflict with the Ilkhanate. In his chapter about the Jöchids' genealogy Rašīd al-Dīn reports that the winter pastures (*qīslāq*) of Balagha's third son, Toqdai (Toqdāy), were located close to the Terek river, "in the direction of Derbend", and that the latter headed for a long time the vanguard (*laškar-i qarāul*) of the Golden Horde's troops in this strategical frontier area. Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 1, p. 725; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 1, p. 516; Rashīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: p. 111; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston, 11: p. 353; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Verkhovski: p. 74. The long-term presence of one of Balagha's sons in the battle zone with the Hülegüids and the high military office which he occupied leaves the impression that the circumstances of this prince's death too were not accepted unquestioningly by the Jöchids. Apparently his family was engaged in the search for vengeance during the prolonged confrontation. Nearly three decades after the death of his father, Toqdai led a raid in Hülegüid-controlled Transcaucasia (1288) and soon afterwards he is mentioned among the commanders that headed a Jöchid campaign in the same region (1290), Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rowšan, Mūsavī: 11, pp. 1164, 1176-7; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, pp. 813, 821-2; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 111, pp. 567, 573; Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Arends: pp. 118, 124-5.

77 The quotation follows the Russian translation and transcription of the names in: Kirakos Gandzakeci/trans. Hanlarjan: p. 237. Apropos, according to Kirakos the war between Hülegü and Berke started in 1261.

were the relatives for which vengeance must be sought: “At this time the great Khan Berka set out with his countless army upon the Daruband road to take vengeance for all the deeds of T’utar, Balagh and Q’uli.”<sup>78</sup> In light of this additional evidence, the motive for the “vengeance of Tutar’s blood” mentioned by Rašīd al-Dīn cannot be interpreted in any other way than as a contradiction to his own statement (and that of the author of *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*), namely that the Jöchid accused of witchcraft was presented to Berke for confirmation of the verdict.

The Arab authors – the only ones providing information for the time span between the accusation and the execution – explicitly assert that it lasted only fifteen days. Of course, it was impossible to complete a round trip from Hülegü’s camp to that of Berke in such a short time. Even if we assume that al-Bağdādī’s report is unreliable (following some other discrepancies which are perhaps due to the specific circumstances in which he acquired his information, as well as the additional distortions during the transmission of his story) one undeniable clue against the versions of the Persian chroniclers still stands out. As already mentioned, all other sources represent the death of the Jöchids as a simultaneous event. Rašīd al-Dīn and the author of *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* are the only ones to depict their ends separately and under different circumstances.<sup>79</sup> Thus, in the writings of the Persian chroniclers the inconvenient for the Hülegüids elimination of their rivals is split into distinct episodes and is represented as a sequence of more or less natural events. A comparison with the remaining sources, however, leaves no doubt that there was a purge of Jöchid commanders in Hülegü’s camp, which was obscured in the pages of *Jāmi’ al-tawāriḥ*<sup>80</sup> and *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān*.

78 *Kartlis tskhovreba*, eds. Met’reveli, Jones: p. 360; see also: *Kartlis tskhovreba*, eds. Met’reveli et al.: p. 374. The sources quoted here refer to different stages of the initial period of the war between the Golden Horde and the Ilkhanate.

79 There is a dissonance regarding the number and the names of the executed Jöchids in the different accounts, but generally the sources are unanimous concerning the reasons leading to their death. Al-Bağdādī and Grigor of Akner do not mention Quli among the victims, but the Armenian author states that two other Jöchid chiefs were put to death in the course of the purge: Gatayan, and Miyan. Grigor reports that Quli died of natural causes (see above, note 57). Kirakos, who – unlike Grigor – was already mature by the time of the events, mentions among the victims “Gul, Balaha, Tuthar, Megan, the son of Gul, Gatahan, and many others.” The remaining Armenian sources either name only Quli and Balagha, or do not mention the names of the exterminated princes at all. In its turn, *Kartlis Tskhovreba* reports that Tutar, Quli and Balagha were executed.

80 This is not the only element of deliberate manipulation in the vizier’s account for the conflict between Berke and Hülegü. Such an approach was not unusual for the Persian historiography of the Ilkhanate period. For example, describing the outbreak of the war, Rašīd al-Dīn states that Berke “rebelled” (*yāğī šud*) against Hülegü (see the passage

Another important element which strengthens this conclusion and which is omitted in the *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ* is the onslaught on the Jöchid forces. Rašid al-Dīn merely notes that these troops “fled” (*bigureḥtand*) after their commanders’ death, but does not mention the reason for their sudden retreat.<sup>81</sup> The description in the *Aḥbār-i Moǧūlān* is even more vague, but on the other hand provides us with the important evidence that not everybody was so lucky to escape: “And because of this reason [the conflict with the Golden Horde broke out], that before that Hülākū had seized the army of Berke and those who belonged to that region, [and] some of them were killed, some of them were taken captives, and some had fled”.<sup>82</sup> The Armenian sources represent a picture of a sudden strike against the camps of the Jöchid units which hints that the attacks were planned in advance and coordinated with the executions in Hülegü’s court.<sup>83</sup> It is not by chance that the Jöchid troops in the Middle

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quoted above and the editions referred in note 27). The word is used tendentiously since Berke and Hülegü were not subordinate to each other, or if they were, then Hülegü was the junior member of the dynasty, as pointed out by the vizier himself, Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 11, p. 1044; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, p. 731; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 11, p. 51; Rašid-ad-Din/Trans. Arends: p. 59. In the same chapter Berke’s warriors are continuously designated as rebels (*yāǧī, yāǧīyān*), Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 11: pp. 1044-7; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī, 11: pp. 731-4. This is a clear allusion to the Mongol imperial ideology, where all the enemies of *Yeke Mongol Ulus* are considered rebels and thus are deprived of the opportunity to be equal adversaries of the Empire, Voegelin, Eric, “The Mongol Orders of Submission to European Powers, 1245-1255”, *Byzantion*, xv (1941): pp. 378-413. In this regard, if Rukn al-Dīn Beybars is to be believed, Berke also designated Hülegü as a “rebel” in his letter to the Mamlūk Sultan Beybars, and the Arab chronicler employed the very same word used by Rašid al-Dīn with regard to Berke-*yāǧī*, Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, 1, Russian translation: p. 99, Arabic text: p. 77.

81 See above and notes 27 and 31.

82 “Va ba ḥukm-i ān ki Hülākū piš az īn laškar-i Berke va kasānī[-rā] ki ta’alluq bad-ān jānib dāštand bigrifta būd, ba’zi-rā kušta, ba’zi-rā band karda va ba’zi guriḥta būdand”, *Širāzi*/ed. Afšār: p. 39.

83 Actually, Grigor of Akner reports that “all of the chieftains who were in the train of Hulawu”, the Georgian King with his horsemen and Baiju with his horsemen were called by Möngke’s envoys, who “gave them secret instruction for their *private ears*”, before the princes were summoned to the *qurultai* for the forthcoming enthronement of Hülegü. Blake, Frye, “History of the Nation of the Archers”, English translation: p. 339, Armenian text: p. 338. Having in mind that the Georgian and Armenian troops were mentioned among the forces of Hülegü, who rushed upon the Jöchid contingents (*ibid.*, English translation, p. 341, Armenian text, p. 340), it is only logical to assume that these were the instructions for the “ears” of the Georgian King and the Mongol commanders. The *Kartlis Tskhovreba* also describes intensive participation of the Georgian troops in the pursuit of the fugitives, but does not explicitly link this with orders issued by the King or by Hülegü, *Kartlis tskhovreba*, eds. Met’revelevi, Jones: pp. 359-60; *Kartlis tskhovreba*, eds. Metrevelevi, et al.: pp. 372-3. It is curious, however, that if Jackson’s assumption is correct, Baiju himself

East rushed out in panic to look for asylum in different directions: some back to Dašt-i Qipčāq, and those who did not have that chance fled all the way to the Indian border<sup>84</sup> or to the mongol enemies in Mamlūk Syria and Egypt.<sup>85</sup> This was the menace about which the chieftains Nuxak'awun and Aradamur were warned.<sup>86</sup> If al-'Umarī's claim that Hülegü massacred seven hundred "of the most noble persons of Hamadan" upon suspicion of their loyalty to Berke is to be believed,<sup>87</sup> then among the victims of the purge were not only the Jöchid princes and their troops, but also members of the local elites connected with the Jöchid influence in Iran.<sup>88</sup> Through this skillful and ruthless maneuver, Hülegü removed his Jöchid cousins and their troops – a substantial

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may have fell victim to the same purge, Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire": p. 233.

- 84 See above and footnote 28, see also: Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran*: p. 77.
- 85 The Mongol refugees arrived to the Mamlūks in several consecutive waves between the years 660 AH (1261-2 AD) and 661 AH (1262-3 AD). According to the Arab authors, the Jöchid troops were instructed by Berke himself that if they were not able to come back to him they should head towards the Mamlūk Sultan. It should be pointed out, however, that the Mamlūk authors do not directly link the appearance of the Jöchid refugees with the massacre of the princes' troops. They usually placed it within the context of the subsequent open warfare between Hülegü and Berke, Rukn al-Dīn Baybars, Šafi, al-Mufađdal, al-Maqrīzī, Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, I, Russian translation: pp. 100-1, 125-6, 187-8, 429, 432, Arabic text: pp. 78-9, 124, 176, 418, 420; Mongol refugees in Egypt are also mentioned by Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, I, Russian translation, pp. 56-8, Arabic text, pp. 47-9. The appearance of different waves in the course of 660 and 661 AH indicates that the destruction of the Jöchid troops was a prolonged process. The protraction was perhaps due to the vast size of the territories controlled by Hülegü, to the fact that Jöchid units were dispersed in various provinces and were mixed with the troops of the other Chinggisids, as well as to the fact that some local Iranian rulers apparently remained loyal to the Jöchids even after the massacre of their princes and troops. An example for the latter case is the *malik* of Sīstān Našīr al-Dīn (see note 19).
- 86 Blake, Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers", English translation: p. 341, Armenian text: p. 340.
- 87 Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, I, Russian translation, p. 246, Arabic text p. 224. al-'Umarī's evidence is unclear regarding the chronological context, since his account omits a number of facts from the chain of events leading to the rift between Hülegü and Berke. But from the text of the Arab author it can be concluded that the drama in Hamadan took place in the context of the onslaught against the Jöchid *tümens*, or at the latest, in the very beginning of the war between the founder of the Ilkhanate and the ruler of the Golden Horde. The story immediately precedes the distorted account of the first clash between the Chinggisid cousins and Hülegü's attempt to transfer the conflict north of Derbend.
- 88 Such an interpretation can also be supported by the words of Nogai, spoken according to Rašīd al-Dīn, during his conversation with a spy of Hülegü, Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, *Mūsavī*: II, p. 1047; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: II, p. 733; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II, p. 512; Rašīd-ad-Din/trans. Arends: p. 60.

obstacle against his ambitions to establish his own empire in Southwest Asia, on the territories that were conquered with the joint efforts and resources of the United Mongol Empire. Thus, the founder of the Ilkhanate proved to be a worthy counterpart to his grandfather Chinggis Khan and his brothers Möngke and Qubilai in the bloody process of “empire building”.

Of particular importance is the fact that the accusation of witchcraft lies at the base of the offensive against the Jöchids. Furthermore, al-Bağdādī’s account, which seems to represent the Hülegüid perspective of the time, refers to the participation of several different sorcerers. Apparently this was a widely disseminated version among Hülegü’s people,<sup>89</sup> but whether it was founded on real facts cannot be ascertained. What matters here is that the “informer” appeared at the most convenient moment in order to report the odious crime. The Arab sources led us to the assumption that the accusation came at a time when there was already serious tension between the two dynastic branches.

Hülegü, who after the death of his brother (or even before that) headed towards the establishment of his own dynasty, needed a publicly acceptable argument that would enable him to free himself from the troublesome Jöchids. What better excuse than an accusation in illegal practice of witchcraft, which was considered exceptionally blameworthy by the Mongols<sup>90</sup> and, according to al-Maqrīzī, was a capital offence?<sup>91</sup> As we know from the case of the former regent of the empire, Oğul Kaimiš,<sup>92</sup> the crime was serious enough to justify

89 The events surrounding the death of the Jöchid princes apparently had wide public resonance.

90 Rašid al-Dīn explicitly mentioned that the Mongols were extremely disgusted by witchcraft: “va čün Muğül siħr-rā bigāyat munkar mībāšand”, Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavi: 11: p. 1128; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11: p. 787; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 111, p. 550; Rašid-ad-Din/trans. Arends: p. 101.

91 A number of authors have offered reconstructions of various fragments of the imperial laws, including the one for witchcraft: d’Ohsson, Constantin, *Histoire des Mongoles depuis Tchinguiz khan jusqu’a Timour bey ou Tamerlan*, 1 (Amsterdam: Frederic Muller, 1852): p. 408; Howorth, Henry, *History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th Century*, Part 1, *The Mongols proper and the Kalmuks* (London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1876): p. 111; see also Riasanovsky’s research on Mongol law: Riasanovsky, Valentin, *Fundamental principles of Mongol Law* (Bloomington – The Hague: Indiana University/Mouton & Co., 1965 [*Indiana University Publications. Uralic and Altaic Series*, 43]): pp. 36, 83. Without going into the details of the controversy regarding the real existence of the *Yasa*, described by al-Maqrīzī, it should be pointed out that his evidence for the capital offence for witchcraft can be regarded as absolutely relevant; see argumentation in: Golev, Konstantin, “Witchcraft and Politics in the Court of the Great Khan: Interregnum Crises and Inter-factional Struggles among the Mongol imperial elite. The Case of Faṭīma Khatun”, *CEU Medieval Annual*, XXIII (2017): p. 113, note 7.

92 She was executed together with the mother of another prince on the accusation of witchcraft in the course of the purges of the imperial elite directed by Möngke, *Zolotaja*

the death penalty even for a member of the Golden Lineage.<sup>93</sup> Thus, the ordinary Mongols in the camp of Hülegü could accept the elimination of the stubborn commanders as a completely natural act, since, indeed, in such occasions this was the common custom of the imperial Mongol elite.<sup>94</sup> That is why the accusation of witchcraft, thrown upon a member or members of the rival dynastic branch was the perfect solution for the Toluid prince. Of course, this does not mean that one should completely rule out the possibility that the accused prince (or princes) actually resorted to the services of wizards. It is indicative, however, that a person from Hülegü's entourage also fell victim of the witch-hunt that flared up. This fact hints to a carefully planned strike against the Jöchids, intended to be publically delivered and to mobilize the public opinion of the remaining Mongols in the Near East in favor of the Ilkhans.<sup>95</sup>

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*Orda v istočnikakh*, 111, *Kitajskie i mongol'skie istočniki*, trans. by roman Khrapachevskij, (Moskva: Nauka, 2009): p. 188. See also Rubruk's evidence, quoted in note 109, where the Minorite states that during his audience with Möngke the latter told him "with his own mouth" that Oghul Kaimish was "the worst of witches".

- 93 The members of the Golden Lineage enjoyed immunity with regard to capital offences. At least in theory they could not receive the death penalty unless it had been sanctioned by a *qurultai* at which all branches of the imperial clan were present, Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 1, p. 69; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 1, pp. 51, 439; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part I, p. 39; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II, p. 299; Rašid-ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisej*, I, Part I, trans. by L.A. Khetagurov (Moskva – Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1952): p. 95; Rašid-ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisej*, I, Part II, trans. by O.I. Smirnova (Moskva – Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1952): pp. 263-4.
- 94 One should recall the death of the anonymous chieftain in the service of Quli. According to Grigor of Akner, the commander accused the abbot of an Armenian monastery where he had feasted the previous evening for his deteriorating health, and stated that the old man had poisoned him. For this "crime" the abbot was put to an extremely cruel death, Blake, Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers", English translation: pp. 327, 329, Armenian text: pp. 326, 328. This indicates that the Mongols commanded by Hülegü were as open for such "conspiracy" explanations of sudden accidents as those in the political core of the empire. This is hardly surprising, as some of them were actually the same persons.
- 95 In this regard, the phrases used by Rašid al-Dīn when he reports, in his second version, the execution of Šadr al-Dīn Sāvji, are noteworthy. According to the chronicler, he was martyred (*šahīd kardand*) under the pretext (*ba bahāne*) that he wrote a charm for the accused Jöchid. These phrases leave the impression that Šadr al-Dīn Sāvji was rather innocent, which could be expected in the context of a witchcraft trial with pronounced political motives. On the other hand, according to al-Baġdādī Yakšā, the court sorcerer of Hülegü, was indeed guilty of cooperating with the Jöchids. It should not be neglected that the prisoner renders the story in the way it was disseminated among Hülegü's people. Be that as it may, the lack of further evidence does not permit us to ascertain whether we are dealing with the same person or different courtiers and what was their actual commitment to the crime of witchcraft. It is curious, however, that a Chinese source preserves a vague reference that Hülegü executed two soothsayers, named Ḥussām al-Dīn and Majd al-Dīn,

In fact, when the long process of increasing tension between the Golden Horde and Hülegü finally brought up an open conflict, Berke also did not hesitate to use ideological arguments in order to prove that he was on the right side. The ruler of the Golden Horde embraced Islam before he ascended the throne<sup>96</sup> and now represented himself as an avenger for the unlawful (in his view) execution of the Caliph al-Mustaʿsim, which shocked the Muslim world.<sup>97</sup> Here a favorite pose of the Mongols – presenting themselves as protectors of the oppressed religious communities – should be remembered, and it was now used in the fraternal strife between the descendants of Chinggis Khan.

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because they harbored “evil intentions”. This evidence hints that perhaps the Jöchid case was not the only “witchcraft trial” at the court of Hülegü, Endicott-West, Elizabeth, “Notes on Shamans, Fortune-tellers and *Yin-yang* Practitioners and Civil Administration in Yüan China”, in Amitai-Preiss, Rouven, Morgan, David (eds.), *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy* (Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill 2000): p. 232.

- 96 The political consequences of this act apparently concerned Batu and he deliberately moved Berke eastward, beyond the Volga. Thus, Berke was not able to be in touch with the Muslims coming “from Persia and Turkia”, in whose way his pastures in the North Caucasus lay, and his communication with the official Muslim envoys was terminated, Rubruc, *Itinerarium*: p. 209; *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*/trans. Jackson: p. 127. See also Kostjukov’s comments on this episode: Kostjukov, “Iranskij pohod Hulagu: predystorija”: pp. 218-9; as well as those of Lane: Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran*: p. 70. Regarding Berke’s adoption of Islam see: Vásáry, István, “History and legend’ in Berke Khan’s conversion to Islam”, in Sinor, Denis (ed.), *Aspects of Altaic Civilization*, 111 (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1990): pp. 230-52; reprinted in: Vásáry, István, *Turks, Tatars and Russians in the 13th-16th Centuries* (Aldershot – Burlington: Ashgate, Variorum, 2007): article xvii.
- 97 Rašid al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavi: 11, p. 1044; Rašid al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, pp. 731-2; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston, Part 11: p. 511; Rašid-ad-Din/trans. Arends: p. 59. According to Rukn al-Dīn Beybars Berke emphasized his Islamic devotion as a reason for the war with Hülegü also in his letter to the Mamlūk Sultan Beybars, Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, 1, Russian translation, p. 99, Arabic text, p. 77. It should be noted, however, that there is another paraphrase of the letter, which belongs to Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir, who, unlike Rukn al-Dīn Beybars, was a contemporary to the events and the Sultan’s secretary. This version highlights the fact that Berke waged war on Hülegü because of the latter’s infringement of Chinggis Khan’s *Yasa* and the laws of his people, while the motive of the revenge for the “imams and the people” comes only afterwards, *SMIZO*, 1, Russian translation, p. 59, Arabic text, pp. 49-50; see also the English translation of this passage by Ayalon and his correction to Tisenhauzen’s translation, where it is implied that the violator of the *Yasa* was Berke, and not Hülegü: Ayalon, David, “The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination (B)”, *StIs*, xxxiv (1971): pp. 167-72; reprinted in: Ayalon, David, *Outsiders in the Land of Islam: Mamluks, Mongols, Eunuchs* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1988): article rvb; for Berke’s ideological employment of Islam in the course of the conflict with Hülegü and the conclusion that religion was not the main cause for this confrontation see: Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran*: pp. 60, 70-2, 78; see also: Ayalon, David, “The Great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān: A Reexamination (B)”: pp. 173-7.

However, since the Islamization of Berke's subjects had hardly advanced to a considerable extent at that time,<sup>98</sup> apparently while mobilizing them, the Khan did not neglect the traditional steppe motive of the vendetta. As already pointed out, Rašīd al-Dīn reports that Nogai, who several times led incursions in Transcaucasia, was Tutar's relative. He also explicitly remarked twice that the Jöchid aggression was in retaliation for the latter's death. From what has been said so far it is clear that Hülegü's employment of the "witchcraft accusation" was only a part of the diverse ideological arsenal used by the two branches of the Golden Lineage in their fight with each other. No doubt, a hundred years' war is not waged only for a witchcraft trial and this was merely one of the causes for the eruption of the lasting conflict.

Other contradictions in the Persian versions of the death of the Jöchids in Hülegü's camp, such as the discrepancy in the assigned years, also demand further examination. Each of the three versions gives different dating for the events: Rašīd al-Dīn's first version – 654 AH (30 January 1256-18 January 1257 AD); *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* – 656 AH (1258 AD);<sup>99</sup> and Rašīd al-Dīn's second version – 17 šafar 658 AH (2 February 1260 AD). The first of the dates, 654 AH, can be discarded due to the fact that Rašīd al-Dīn himself mentioned several times the participation of the three Jöchids in the operations against Baghdad nearly two years later – in the beginning of 1258.<sup>100</sup> As for the other two years mentioned by the Persian chroniclers, they contradict al-Bağdādī's dating – 660 AH (26 November 1261-14 November 1262 AD) and those of the Armenian sources (1262 AD in *Chronicle of Bishop Stephanos* and 1261 AD in the *Anonymous Chronicle*). The comparison of these accounts and the survey of the context of the events as reported by other sources lead us to the conclusion that the records of the Arabic and Armenian chroniclers should be given preference over the Persian historiography. In addition to the evidence of al-Bağdādī, who after all was among Hülegü's people at the time of the events, it should be pointed out that the sources usually recount the death of the Jöchids after they report the Mongol defeat at 'Ayn Jālūt (3 September 1260), and Rašīd al-Dīn's second version is not an exception to this trend. Thus, the remaining two dates given by the Persian authors turn out to be unacceptable. On the other hand, the Ilkhanid vizier dated the beginning of the open conflict between the forces

98 Despite the attempts of Mamlūk authors to convince us of the opposite.

99 Beside the explicit statement of this year, elsewhere the author mentions that the basis of the conflict with the Jöchids was laid in the year in which Baghdad fell: *Aḥbār-i Moğūlān*/ed. Afšār: p. 39.

100 The participation of these princes in the campaign against Baghdad is also confirmed by other sources, see note 22.

of Hülegü and Berke to the late summer and autumn of 1262.<sup>101</sup> Surveying the data for the beginning of the conflict in the Arabic, Armenian and other sources, Jackson comes to the conclusion that the war must have flared up in the winter of 1261-1262. He points out that the strike against the Jöchids and their contingents must have been delivered immediately before the confrontation.<sup>102</sup> The mobilization of the troops in the two *uluses*, following the murder of the princes and the massacre of their troops, as well as the movement of the armies towards the zone of the conflict, undoubtedly required some time. Therefore, the *terminus post quem* for the onslaught on the Jöchids is around the last months of 1260, and the *terminus ante quem* is around the last months of 1261. This is a timeframe which roughly corresponds to the report of al-Bağdādī (as it is transmitted by al-Mufaḍḍal and the related Arab authors), and to the account of the Armenian chronicles.<sup>103</sup>

As for the puzzling appearance of three different years in the three Persian versions for the events, two of which are on the pages of the same chronicle, this fact perhaps should be interpreted as another indication of their compilative character.

## 5 Fictive “Intra-Mongol Diplomacy” and Legitimacy

The only question left is why the three versions of *Jāmi‘ al-tawāriḥ* and *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* mention the dispatch of the Jöchid, accused of witchcraft, to Berke in the Golden Horde for confirmation of his guilt. As we have seen above, the comparison with the remaining sources demonstrates that this episode is a later interpolation. Since this element is present in the *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* it is evident that it was not inserted by Rašīd al-Dīn’s hand. But why is the vizier so consistent in his description of this fictive “intra-Mongol diplomacy” – one of the few elements that remained unchanged in his contradicting versions for the death of the Jöchids?<sup>104</sup> The report in the *Aḥbār-i Muğūlān* indicates that Rašīd

101 Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: I, p. 738; II: pp. 1044-6; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: I, p. 526; II, pp. 731-3; Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: p. 123; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part II, pp. 362, 511-2; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Verkhovski: p. 82; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Arends: pp. 59-60.

102 Jackson, “The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire”: pp. 233-234.

103 In this case the exact day of the execution, mentioned only by Rašīd al-Dīn – 17 Šafar 658/2 February 1260 theoretically could be correct, but with a possible reference to the following year, 659 AH (21 January 1261 AD). Such a possibility, however, is not very likely, as it leaves too long a timespan between the massacre of the Jöchids and the outbreak of the war with the Golden Horde.

104 It is noteworthy that in both versions, the culprit is escorted by Su’unchaq, one of the most prominent *noyons* of Hülegü and his successors, also referred to on the pages of

al-Dīn followed the official version (or versions) of the death of the Jöchids, which circulated at the court of the Hülegüids decades before the composition of *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*. Mention of the mission to Berke proves to be a quite persistent element, as it legitimates the actions of the founder of the Ilkhanate in the course of events that lead both to the establishment of his own state as well as to a protracted conflict with another mighty branch of the Golden Lineage – the Jöchids of the Golden Horde. It is hard to answer the question of whether Rašīd al-Dīn was aware of the actual fate of the Jöchid princes, but in any case, the versions of their demise circulating at the court of the Ilkhans fit perfectly into the concept of his monumental chronicle. Furthermore, in the vizier's two passages, the guilt and the confession of the accused prince are emphasized, whereas they are not found in the earlier text of the *Aḥbār-i Muḡūlān*. One cannot be sure whether Rašīd al-Dīn was their author or he borrowed them from his sources, but there is no doubt that their insertion into the text additionally supported the concept of his work.

The account of the foundation of the Ilkhanate in the *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ* is designed to convince the reader that the enthronement of the Hülegüids was a fully legitimate and lawful process. Rašīd al-Dīn made all possible efforts to instill the idea that on the eve of the conflict with the Golden Horde Hülegü kept the Mongol ethos and displayed the necessary patience towards the constant and even intrusive instructions of Berke, to whom he owed respect as an older member of the Golden Lineage (*aqa*).<sup>105</sup> The message of the

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*Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ* with the honorific *aqa*. Abaqa entrusted him with the governance of Fārs and Baghdad (his deputy in the former 'Abbāsīd capital was the Ilkhanid chronicler Aṭā'-Malik Juvaynī), see: Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 11, p. 1061; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, p. 743; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 111, pp. 517-8; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Arends: p. 67; as well as the general information for this person in: Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī: 111, pp. 303-4; Juvaynī/trans. Boyle: 1, p. xxii; Juvaynī/trans. Boyle: 11, pp. 624-5, n. 20; Boyle, "The Death of the Last 'Abbāsīd Caliph": pp. 153-4, note 8. Rašīd al-Dīn called him commander of the guard and *yarghuchi* (investigator), which hints to the fact that, at certain stages of his career, Su'unchaq had also such authority. Perhaps due to this reason he was mentioned with regards to the Jöchid witchcraft trial in the vizier's two versions, Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 1, p. 177; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 1, pp. 135-6; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 1, p. 95; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Khetagurov: p. 175. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that about two decades after the events, in the beginning of Aḥmad Tegüder's reign (1282-4) Su'unchaq took part in the investigation against an eminent Ilkhanid courtier, Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī, 11: p. 1128; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 11, p. 787; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 111, p. 550; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Arends: p. 101. In the course of this investigation, which also had some political motives, suspicions of witchcraft also appeared, but curiously enough, this time Su'unchaq apparently remained skeptical.

105 Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavī: 11, p. 1044; Rašīd al-Dīn/Ed. Karīmī: 11, p. 731; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 11, p. 511; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Arends: pp. 58-9. It is

chronicler is that the rift with the Jöchids flared up despite Hülegü's efforts to avoid the conflict and as a result of Berke's excessive demands.<sup>106</sup> The episode with the dispatch of the Jöchid accused of witchcraft to Berke fits entirely into this storyline. Thus, the reader is informed that Hülegü kept all requirements of the imperial political culture, leaving the final decision on the fate of the culprit in the hands of his older cousin, who was also the head of the Jöchid clan. Furthermore, in one of his versions, Rašid al-Dīn explicitly emphasizes that the accused Jöchid, whose guilt was confirmed in the Golden Horde, was brought back to Hülegü "in accordance with the *Yasa* of Činggis Hān", thus reinforcing his account with a reference to the Mongol law.<sup>107</sup> In this way the responsibility for the decision is shared with Berke, the *Yasa* is taken into consideration, and the "intra-diplomatic" episode legitimates the execution on the charges of witchcraft eliminating possible suspicions in manipulation of the trial.

The account of the "mission to Berke" allows the Persian chroniclers to comply with certain "ethical norms", which were apparently characteristic of the Persian administrative stratum serving the Hülegüids. While for the Mongols the accusations of illegal practice of witchcraft were absolutely natural and had a wide social impact, it seems that the Persian historians of the Chinggisids considered them dishonorable, though they themselves were sometimes involved in such occurrences. Thus, Juvaynī, in his description of the trial against 'Alī Ḥwāja, deliberately avoids linking the accusation with the name of Möngke, despite the fact that the process obviously was part of the judicial repressions against the adversaries of the new ruler.<sup>108</sup> Rašid al-Dīn also follows this tendency. When commenting on the fate of Oghul Kaimish he, unlike Juvaynī, describes her execution: the former regent was interrogated naked, wrapped in felt and thrown into the water – the usual way by which

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indeed possible that Hülegü ostensibly tried to follow the Mongol ethos until the war broke out.

106 It is noteworthy that this element is not present in the earlier version of *Aḥbār-i Muǰūlān*, where as a reason for the rift with the Jöchids the assertive behavior of the Jöchid princes themselves is emphasized, Širāzi/ed. Afšār: pp. 39-40.

107 This element is also not present in the text of *Aḥbār-i Muǰūlān*.

108 For the nature of these repressions in general, see: Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism*: pp. 30-4. According to Juvaynī, the process against 'Alī Ḥwāja was connected with other similar trials that preceded Möngke's enthronement, and this indeed seems to have been the case. The chronicler depicts the events as an interconnected story, whose moral was that every slanderer in the end falls victim to slander, Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī, 1: pp. 200-3; Juvaynī/trans. Boyle: 1, pp. 244-7. Yet, describing the last of the three processes in this chain, the one against 'Alī Ḥwāja which seems to have been part of the crackdown against the adversaries of the recently enthroned Möngke, Juvaynī avoids naming the accuser as he does in the previous two cases. The historian merely points out that the accusation was spoken by "some other person" (*šaḥse-yi diǧar*).

the Mongols put to death practitioners of illegal magic. Yet, the vizier avoided mentioning what was the precise nature of her crime.<sup>109</sup>

## 6 Conclusion

Thus, the “intra-Mongol diplomacy” episode turns out to be a convenient means to avoid Hülegü’s central role in the execution of a Chinggisid under such a dishonorable charge. The sentence is depicted as a fair decision, confirmed by another member of the Golden Lineage, who moreover enjoyed the status of *aqā*. This skillful device, however, does not necessarily mean that the interpolation with the “mission” was invented by the Persian chroniclers of the Hülegüids. The possibility that the “intra-diplomatic” episode was disseminated by the members of the ruling dynasty in Iran as an official interpretation of the events cannot be ruled out and this would explain the circulation of the various versions. Such an interpretation is supported by the persistent statement of Rašīd al-Dīn that the accused Jöchid was escorted to Berke’s court by Su’unchaq. As already pointed out, this element, which links with the “diplomatic episode” figure of the highest echelon of the Hülegüid military and political elite, is present in Rašīd al-Dīn’s two versions, but it is not found on the pages of *Aḥbār-i Muḡūlān*. It is logical to suppose that Rašīd al-Dīn could acquire the information for Su’unchaq’s participation either through his contacts with the Mongol military nobility, or even by official documents at the court.

No matter who was the author of the “intra-Mongol diplomacy” episode, it should be noted that such manipulations of the imperial history, aimed to accustom it to the interests of the Hülegüids, were not unusual for *Jāmi’ al-tawārīḥ*, as well as for the preceding work of Juvaynī.<sup>110</sup> In fact, there is a dissonance even in the accounts of these chroniclers for Möngke’s initial plans

109 Juvaynī/ed. Qazvīnī: 111, pp. 58-9; Juvaynī/trans. Boyle: 11, pp. 588; Rašīd al-Dīn/eds. Rawšan, Mūsavi: 11, p. 839; Rašīd al-Dīn/ed. Karīmī: 1, p. 593; Rašīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: p. 215; Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part 11, p. 409; Rašīd-ad-Dīn/trans. Verkhovski: p. 138. As already mentioned, the Chinese dynastic chronicle *Yuanshi* explicitly reports that Oḡul Kaimiš, together with Qadaqač, the mother of one of the Ögedeid rivals of Möngke for the throne, were executed for witchcraft, see note 92. Möngke himself did not hesitate to state in front of Rubruc that Oḡul Kaimiš was the worst of the witches and that with her sorcery she caused the death of her entire family: “Ipse Mangu dixit michi proprio ore quod Chamus [i.e. Oḡul Kaimiš] fuit pessima sortilega, et quod per sortilegia sua destruxerat totam parentelam suam.” Rubruc, *Itinerarium*: p. 308; *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*/trans. Jackson: p. 249.

110 See the general description of these sources and the referred literature in: Golev, Konstantin, “Witch-hunt in the Mongol Empire: Prolegomena”, *CAS Working Papers*, VIII (2015-6): pp. 7-13.

regarding the campaign of Hülegü and for the following establishment of his empire in Southwest Asia. In these cases Rašid al-Dīn's eagerness to "insert" legitimacy in the narrative is clearly visible.<sup>111</sup> The establishment of the Ilkhanate is depicted as a legitimate process in favor of the Hülegüids not only on the pages of the medieval Persian historiography, but also in works that belong to completely different written traditions, such as the *History of the Nation of Archers* of the Armenian monk Grigor of Akner.<sup>112</sup>

It is hard to give a definite answer to the question why events of such importance to the legitimacy of the Ilkhanate are given in two so different versions in *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*. Undoubtedly, the immediate explanation is that the monumental chronicle never underwent final redaction, despite the fact that its manuscripts had started to multiply already in Rašid al-Dīn's lifetime. The discrepancy in the details of the two versions hints that different sources were used in their composition. Whether the omission to synchronize them is due to the fact that one of them was written by some of the vizier's assistants (or both were written by different assistants)<sup>113</sup> and why the court chronicler did not reconcile the contradictions in one of the most important parts of his narrative, are questions that remain unanswered at this stage. It should be noted, however, that such mistakes are not characteristic only of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*. In the following decades, the story of the witchcraft process in the court of Hülegü continued its metamorphoses and deviated further from the original course of events. This is illustrated by the above-mentioned account of *Mu'izz al-ānsāb*, where the culprit is mistakenly mentioned not as Tutar, but as his uncle Tatar, who did not participate in Hülegü's campaign at all.<sup>114</sup>

In conclusion, it should be said that modern scholars should not judge Rašid al-Dīn too harshly for his manipulations of the story about the establishment of the Ilkhanate and the related rift with the Jöchids. The vizier faced the thorny task of describing events that his predecessors and contemporaries avoided mentioning in their works,<sup>115</sup> and he needed a "politically correct" way

111 Shiraiwa, Kazuhiko, "Rashid al-Din's Primary Sources in compiling the *Jāmi' al-tawārīḥ*", in Akasoy, Anna, Burnett, Charles, and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (eds.), *Rashid al-Din. Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran. The Warburg Institute Colloquia*, xxiv (London: Turin, 2013): pp. 45-7.

112 Blake, Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers", English translation: pp. 337, 339, 341, Armenian text: pp. 336, 338, 340.

113 For the existence of assistants who supported Rašid al-Dīn during his work on his voluminous chronicle see the literature, cited in: Golev, "Witch-hunt in the Mongol Empire: Prolegomena": p. 9.

114 See above, note 35. Actually, some contemporary scholars make the same mistake, see for example Thackston's comment in: Khwandamir/trans. Thackston: p. 57, note 1.

115 Juvaynī stopped working on his *Tārīḥ-i Jahāngušāy* after the description of the war against the Assassins and did not give an account for the fall of Baghdad and Hülegü's

to present the rise of the dynasty, an official of which he remained for decades. A dynasty, whose monarchs ruled over a sea of Persian administrators and Mongol *noyons*, ready to use any occasion for intrigue against their adversaries in the court. And Rašid al-Dīn was quite well acquainted with the possible consequences of such plots, since he himself had used them to get rid of inconvenient rivals,<sup>116</sup> and in the end he lost his life as a result of such court intrigue.<sup>117</sup>

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enthronement. Vaṣṣāf started his *Tāriḥ-i Vaṣṣāf* as continuator of Juvaynī, but in his description of the reasons that led to the conflict between Hülegü and Berke he completely omits the incident with the death of the Jöchid princes, Vaṣṣāf, 'Abdallāh b. Faẓlallāh. *Geschichte Wassaf's*, *Geschichte Wassaf's*, I. Persian edition and German transl. by J. von J. Hammer-Purgstall [new edition by Sybille Wentker (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010)]: pp. 96-9; Vaṣṣāf, 'Abdallāh b. Faẓlallāh, *Tāriḥ-i Vaṣṣāf (Tajziyat al-amšār wa-tazjiyat al-a'sār)* (Bombay, 1269/1852-1853): pp. 49-51; Vaṣṣāf, 'Abdallāh b. Faẓlallāh, *Tahrir-i Tāriḥ-i Vaṣṣāf*, edited by 'A.M. Āyatī (Tehrān: Intišārāt-i bunyād-i farhang-i Īrān, 1346/1967) pp. 27-9; Tizengauzen, *SMIZO*, II, Russian translation, pp. 80-2.

- 116 See for example: Bartold', Vasiliij, "E. Blochet, Introduction à l'histoire des Mongols de Reschid-ed-din, Leyden – London, 1910", *Mir islama*, I (1912): pp. 56-107; reprinted with different pagination in: Bartold', Vasiliij, *Sočinenija*, VIII, *Raboty po istočnikovedeniju* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Vostočnoj Literatury 1973): pp. 292-3, 306-7; Petruševskij, Il'ja, "Rašid ad-din i ego istoričeskij trud", in: Rašid-ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisej*: I, Part 1/trans. Khetagurov: p. 22.
- 117 Bartold', "E. Blochet, Introduction": p. 308; Rashīd al-Dīn/trans. Boyle: p. 5. See also the extensive description of Rašid al-Dīn's death by the later Timūrid chronicler Ḥwāndamīr, translated by Wheeler Thackston in his introduction to the first part of *Jāmi' al-tawāriḥ*, Rashiduddin/trans. Thackston: Part I, pp. xiii-xiv; the same passage could be found in the English translation of Ḥwāndamīr by Thackston: Khwandamir/trans. Thackston: pp. 111-2; see the original account in: Ḥwāndamīr, *Tāriḥ-i ḥabīb al-siyar*: III, pp. 199-201.

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