

IFI Guest Lecture

Divine Wrath?

Irinjin (d. 1319), a Pro-Christian Mongol,
amid Climate Instability in Anatolia

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Slavic-Eurasian Research Center, Hokkaido University

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This talk examines the relationship between climatic instability and political legitimacy in early fourteenth-century Anatolia under the Ilkhanate (1256–1357). Soon after his accession, the eighth Ilkhan, Öljeitü (r. 1304–16), appointed his pro-Christian father-in-law, Irinjin (d. 1319), as governor of Anatolia. Irinjin's fraught relationship with the local Muslim administration undermined provincial stability, prompting the intervention of the grand amir Choban (d. 1327) in 1314. Arabic chronicles from the neighboring Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517) record a severe famine affecting eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq between 1316 and 1318, while paleoclimate data independently confirm significant climatic anomalies during the same period. This talk argues that the famine emerged as a polycrisis resulting from the convergence of environmental stress, administrative dysfunction, and political instability following Öljeitü's death. It further analyzes how a contemporary Persian local chronicle condemned Irinjin's rule as tyrannical for its failure to uphold the Islamic order while praising the subsequent Muslim governorship of Choban's son, Timurtash (d. 1327). Although Timurtash later proclaimed himself the Mahdī and rebelled against the Ilkhanate with support from segments of the local Muslim elite, these narratives suggest that climatic disaster was interpreted as divine wrath against non-Muslim rule. Climatic anomalies thus became central to competing claims of political legitimacy in Mongol Anatolia.

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ORGANIZER

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REGISTRATION

Registration for online participation:
https://oeaw-ac-at.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_P4QtR91cRCKr1A7B-6DjKA



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WED
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Seminar room 6, 4th floor
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