

## STUDIES

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JEAN-JACQUÉS THIBON

## Kh'āja-yi Jahān

**Kh'āja-yi Jahān** (lord of the world) was an honorific title bestowed upon high-ranking dignitaries in various Indo-Muslim sultanates. One of its earliest uses dates to the reign of Sulṭān Mu'izz al-Dīn Kay Qubādī (r. 686–9/1287–90) of the Mu'izzī or Shamsī Slave dynasty of Delhi sultans (r. 602–89/1206–90) who, upon his accession to the throne, granted it to one of his officers. “Kh'āja-yi Jahān” was a pre-eminent title under the Tughluqs (r. 720–815/1320–1412), accorded to persons wielding considerable influence, including *wazīrs*. As frontier provinces broke away from the Delhi Sultanate towards the middle of the eighth/fourteenth century, the title was adopted by the founders of these newly emerging political dispensations, in a bid to legitimise their authority by emulating their former masters. There are several instances of its use amongst the Bahmanīs (r. 748–934/

1347–1528) of the Deccan and in the short-lived sultanate of Madurai (r. 734–79/1334–77), where, as the Moroccan traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 770 or 779/1368 or 1377) relates, a fine was prescribed for anyone who addressed the bearer of the title otherwise.

The Mughal emperors retained its use when they came to power in the tenth/sixteenth century, and the title was given to individuals enjoying the ruler's confidence. Its importance seems, however, to have diminished by this time, and its bearers held modest ranks, a notable exception being Kh'āja-yi Jahān Dūst Muḥammad (d. 1029/1620)—variously referred to as Cojah Jehaun, Choja Jehan, and Hogio Jahan in the records of the British East India Company and the accounts of European travellers—who, during the reign of the emperor Jahāngīr (r. 1014–37/1605–27), rose to a *mansab* (office, position, rank) of 5000 *dhat* (personal numerical rank on the basis of which an individual's salary was decided) and 3000 *savār* (figure indicating the number of cavalymen he was expected to maintain). Over the years, men of various ethnic and geographical origins—Central Asians, Iranians, Afghans, and Indian Muslims—bore the title, as is evident from the terms Turk, Astarābādī, Kābulī, Khwāfī, Harātī, Khurāsānī, and Dakhinī appended to it.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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