

## **Arrowheads of Hülegü Khan - Envoys and Diplomacy in his Invasion of the Middle East, 1255-1258**

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Dust was rising from the mountains; in 1256, the army of Hülegü Khan reduced to submission the main strongholds of the Niẓāri Ismā'īlīs in the mountains of northeastern Iran. Two years later, the same army conquered the Baghdad and brought a violent end to the 'Abassid Caliphate, sending a shudder through the world of Islam. According to certain sources, the war against the radical and feared Niẓāri sect was the main target of Hülegü's invasion; while his move against Baghdad was a sad development of the events, one that was not supposed to happen.

Was that so? Trailing the envoys galloping to and fro between the different forces, and following the line of the diplomatic contacts before and during the different battles, this paper attempts to find out who was the target of the sword, and of the word.