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NUR AL-DIN MAHMUD B. ZANGI (1146-1174): ONE OF THE PROMINENT LEADERS OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE CRUSADERS*

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Abstract

Nur al-Din Mahmud, the son of Imad al-Din Zangi, Atabeg of Mawsil and Aleppo, upon his father's death in 1146, having taken his father's land in Syria under his control, became the most dangerous Muslim enemy of the Crusaders thereabouts. Nur al-Din Mahmud extending his dominance up to Egypt ensnared the Crusaders from both East and West. He paved the way for the conquest of Jerusalem. Nur al-Din was a great ruler who was also known for his sense of justice and humbleness, and considered culture and arts gravely important. This paper discusses Nur al-Din Mahmud's struggle against the Crusaders and his personality as well as various qualifications and features of him.

Keywords: Nur ad-Din Mahmud, Crusaders, Egypt, Syria, Saladin.

Öz

HAÇLILARA KARŞI MÜCADELENİN ÖNDE GELEN LİDERLERİNDEN NÜREDDİN MAHMUD B. ZENGİ (1146-1174)

Musul-Haleb Atabeyi İmadeddin Zengi'nin oğlu olan Nüreddin Mahmud, Babasının 1146 yılında ölümü üzerine Haleb'e hâkim olduktan sonra bölgedeki Haçlıların en tehlikeli Müslüman rakibi oldu. Onun gayretleri sayesinde Haçlı Seferleri döneminde ilk kez, Halep ve Dımaşk tek bir hâkimiyet altında birleşti. Nüreddin Mahmud, bundan sonra hâkimiyetini Mısır'a kadar genişleterek Haçlıları doğudan ve batıdan kısıkaç içine aldı. Yürüttüğü amansız mücadele ile Kudüs'ün fethi için gerekli şartları hazırladı. Nüreddin, aynı zamanda adaleti ve mütevazılığı ile tanınan, kültüre ve sanata büyük önem veren mükemmel bir hükümdar oldu. Burada XII. yüzyılda Türk-İslâm dünyasının en önemli liderlerinden Nüreddin Mahmud'un, Haçlılara karşı mücadelesi, şahsiyeti ve çeşitli vasıfları üzerinde durulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nüreddin Mahmud, Haçlılar, Mısır, Suriye, Selahaddin.

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Introduction

The great Turkish ruler Nur al-Din Mahmud was one of the most prominent leaders of Turkish-Islamic world in the struggle between the Crescent and Cross in the 12th century. This paper deals with the leadership role of Nur al-Din Mahmud in the war against the Crusaders, his successes and personality as well as various qualifications and skills of him. Nur al-Din Mahmud, son of Imad al-Din Zangi (1127-1146) who was Atabeg of Aleppo and Mawsil, was born in Aleppo on 11th February 1118 (17th Shawwal 511). Having received a good education under his father's control, Nur al-Din was raised as a scholar and mujahid. He both studied Quran, tafsir, hadith, law, history, Persian and Romaic, and was raised as a good soldier. He was taught the war tactics by the distinguished amîrs of the era such as Asad al-Din Shirkuh and Ibn al-Daye, as well as riding, archery and chawgan (çevgan or çöğen – a mounted game very much alike polo originating from Central Asian Turkic tribes). Having improved his commanding skills by embarking on the expeditions launched by his father since his youth, Nur al-Din soon came to the fore with his military skills. He was also in the army that reclaimed the city of Edessa from the Crusaders in 1144 under the command of Zangi. Thus, Nur al-Din developed himself as a person who is a professional warrior, very brave, far-sighted and cautious against the enemies, as well as being quite benevolent, well-meaning, respectful and religious¹.

Following Zangi's death on 14th September 1146, his lands were shared by his two sons. Nur al-Din Mahmud ruled over Aleppo while his older brother, Sayf al-Din Ghazi I (1146-1149) reigned in Mawsil. Having taken his father's lands in Syria under his own rule, Nur al-Din focused on the affairs in Near East and maintained the struggle against the Crusaders, thus becoming their most dangerous and, at the same time, most respected enemy in the region. As soon as he took power in Aleppo, Nur al-Din put his heart and soul into work from the beginning and showed that he was going to be a leader as good as his father. That is because when Joscelin II, the former Count of Edessa who tried to take advantage of Zangi's death, negotiated and made agreements with the Armenians living in the city and attempted to regain power in Edessa (October 1146), Nur al-Din Mahmud immediately arrived at the city gates and interfered in this attempt (3rd November

¹ Ibn Kathir, translated by M. Keskin, *el-Bidâye ve'n-Nihâye. Büyük İslâm Tarihi*, XII, İstanbul 2000, p. 493. Cf. B. Kök, *Nureddin Mahmûd b. Zengî ve İslâm Kurumları Tarihindeki Yeri*, İstanbul 1992, p. 25 ff.

1146)², and thus defeat of the Crusaders trying to regain power in Edessa by him in the very first days of his reign thanks to his quick and determined interference added to his prestige even more³.

Nur al-Din Mahmud's biggest dream was to cease the Crusader hegemony in Jerusalem. However, he had realized, thanks to his father, that Muslim union was the indispensable prerequisite for the ultimate success of this struggle; therefore, he followed and adopted a deliberate policy and first made his efforts for the Syrian union. The biggest obstacle for this union was the Burid dynasty in Damascus which had preferred to collaborate with the Crusaders in order to defend and sustain its independence against the Zangids and been an ally of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem since 1140. Although Damascus was the indispensable target of Nur al-Din, he did not have the chance to realise his dream in the short run. As luck would have it, Nur al-Din took the advantage of the conflict between Unur, the Governor of Damascus, and his allies, the Franks, in 1147. That is because Unur, who had to seek help from Nur al-Din against the Franks when the Kingdom of Jerusalem attacked Hauran region within the borders of Damascus offered to give the reign of the city of Hama to Nur al-Din by wedding his daughter to him and sustain his independence in Damascus in return. Therefore, a treaty of alliance was made between the parties in March 1147 and army of the kingdom was destroyed with the help of Nur al-Din. Nevertheless, governor of Damascus tried to re-improve his relations with Franks against Nur al-Din for his own interest. Even though he could not have Damascus for now, who was the ruler of the lands lying between Edessa and Hama seized the fortresses on the eastern side of Orontes River one by one in the autumn of 1147 which were all the Franks had in that region, and by the end of the year, Artah, Kafar Lata, Basarfut, Balat and Hab were under the rule of Nur al-Din⁴. From then on, the gravest threat for the

² I. Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi (1118-1146)*, Ankara 1987, p. 153 f.

³ Ibn al-Athir (translated by A. Özaydın, *İslâm Tarihi, İbn'ül Esir el Kâmil Fi't-Tarih Tercümesi*, XI, İstanbul 1987, p. 113) quotes this as "The Crusaders coveted Nur al-Din's lands after his father; Zangi, was killed, and thought that they could reclaim the lands captured by him after his father's death. However, they realized that their dreams were too far to come true when they saw that Nur al-Din put his heart and soul into work from the very beginning."

⁴ William of Tyre, translated by E.A. Babcock - A.C. Krey, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea. By William Archbishop of Tyre*, II, New York 1943, p. 146-156; Ibn al-Qalanisi, translated by (partially) H.A.R. Gibb, *The Damascus Chronicle of The Crusades*, London 1932, p. 275-279; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 113; Ibn al-Adim, *Zubdat al-Halab min Tarih Halab*, published by Sâmî al-Dahhân, II, Damascus 1954, p. 291; for further information about the attack by Kingdom of Jerusalem on lands of Damascus in 1147 see St. Runciman, translated by F. Işıltan, *Haçlı Seferleri*

Crusaders in the East was Nur al-Din Mahmud. Count Joscelin of Courtenay II who was trying to take root in Tell- Bashir after the fall of Edessa and Raymond of Potiers, the Prince of Antioch, were looking forward to the Crusaders from West against Mahmud.

The armies joining the Second Crusade launched in 1144 upon fall of Edessa finally reached, at a low ebb, Syria in the spring of 1148 after the consecutive defeats they suffered in Anatolia. Yet they decided that rather than launching an expedition on Nur al-Din in Aleppo, it would be better if they targeted Damascus due to its strategic location and richness. Upon this decision, however, Unur who was trying to maintain his friendship and alliance with Franks against the increasing power of Nur al-Din had to collaborate with Nur al-Din. Upon Unur's call for help, Nur al-Din immediately set off to aid Damascus. This expedition which resulted in a complete failure in front of the gates of Damascus after a 4-day siege (24th – 28th July 1148) was a milestone marking the beginning of the end for the Crusaders in East, as well as being of no use for them, either⁵.

Therefore, following the failure of the Second Crusade, Nur al-Din Mahmud's power over the region increased even more. Once the Crusade had been over, Nur al-Din carried on his struggle against the Principality of Antioch. In the war on 29th June 1149 near Inab (İnnib), both armies of Antioch were destroyed and Prince Raymond was killed, along with Reynald, the Senior of Marash, and Ali Ibn-Wafa, the leader of the Assassins. The head of the prince was sent to Baghdad in a silver case⁶. This victory increased Nur al-Din's prestige enormously across the whole Muslim world⁷. Having eliminated one of his powerful enemies

Tarihi, II, Ankara 1992, p. 198 ff.; N. Elisséeff, *Nûr ad-Dîn Un Grand Prince Mosulman de Syrie au Temps des Croisades*, II, Damas 1967, p. 403 ff.; C. Alptekin, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, İstanbul 1985, p. 134 f.

⁵ For further information see E. Altan, *İkinci Haçlı Seferi (1147-1148)*, TTK, Ankara 2003.

⁶ For the Battle of Inab see William of Tyre, II, 196 ff.; Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 291 f.; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 130; Abu Shama, *Kitâb al-Ravzatayn fî Ahbâr al-Davlatayn al-Nûriya va'l-Salâhiya*, RHC or., IV, p. 61-64; Kinnamos, translated by I. Demirkent, *Ioannes Kinnamos'un Historia'sı (1118-1176)*, Ankara 2001, p. 94. Cf. Elisséeff, II, p. 430 ff.; J. Richard, *The Crusades c. 1071-c.1291*, translated by J. Birrell, Cambridge 1999, p. 171; Runciman, II, p. 273; Demirkent, *Haçlı Seferleri*, İstanbul 1997, p. 117 f.

⁷ H. Gibb ("The Career of Nur ad Din", *A History of the Crusades*, ed. K.M. Setton, London 1969, p. 515) suggests that the year 1149 was a turning point in Nur al-Din's life as from which he had been considered the protector of Islam, and he devoted himself to this mission. N. Elisséeff (II, p. 426), however, claims that Nur al-Din devoted himself to uniting Syria in the early years of his reign, and that it was not until the capture of Damascus in 1154 that he focused on Franks and considered jihad his mission. On the other hand, M. A. Köhler (*Allianzen und Vertzüge Zwischen*

only 3 years after he came into power, Nur al-Din soon had the chance to seize two critical fortresses, Harim and Afamiya, which served as outposts for the Latin. He also plundered the lands as far as St. Symeon but could not besiege Antioch due to insufficient number of soldiers upon which he made a short-term cease fire agreement with Patriarch Aimery and marched toward Afamiya. As a result, the last fortress of Principality of Antioch in the Valley of Orontes River was seized on 26th July 1149. Now, the lands of the Principality were restricted to the coastal area lying between the Plain of Antioch and Alexandretta-Latakia (İskenderun-Lazikiye). Actually, Nur al-Din's strategic target was Damascus at the time. It was in Nur al-Din's favour that the Crusader State in Antioch which could barely stand acted as a buffer state between Aleppo and Byzantine Empire for now⁸.

Count Joscelin II, however, was taken prisoner by Nur al-Din in 1150 and died in the dungeon of Aleppo after nine years of captivity (1159). Countess Beatrice had to sell the lands left from the county to Byzantine Empire since she could by no means defend these lands against Nur al-Din Mahmud and Sultan Masud. Nevertheless, Turks soon reclaimed these lands. In 1151, Nur al-Din seized Rawendan and Tell-Bashir, and Sultan Masud captured Aintab and Doli-che while Timurtash, the Bey of Artuqids, seized Samosata (Samsat) and Birejik (Birecik), and thus the Crusader County of Edessa was completely dissolved⁹.

One of the most significant deeds of Nur al-Din Mahmud was to reclaim Damascus without bloodshed. The city had also been besieged many a time, yet could not be taken, by Imad al-Din Zangi who tried to unite Muslims against the Crusaders. However, it seemed that Damascus had to be captured first in order to set strong fronts before and have an edge over the Crusaders, thus paving way to Egypt.

Frankischen und Islamischen Herrschern im Vorderen Orient, Berlin 1991, p. 239, 277) who thinks that Nur al-Din's primary goal was not jihad against the Crusaders, but founding a Zangid empire suggests that Nur al-Din preferred to secure his presence in and dominance over Syria after the capture of Damascus. According to Köhler, the turning point in Nur al-Din's life was the year 1157; however, Nur al-Din used the mission of jihad as a tool for his own political goals and never devoted himself to the struggle to reclaim Jerusalem. For further information see C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, Edinburgh 1999, p. 132-141.

⁸ William of Tyre, II, p. 199 f.; Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 293 f.; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 134. Cf. Gibb, 515 f.; Altan, p. 120.

⁹ Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 300 f.; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 137 f.; William of Tyre, II, p. 201. Cf. Runciman, II, p. 274; R.L. Nicholson, *Joscelyn III and the Fall of the Crusader States, 1134-1199*, Leiden 1973, p. 21 ff.

As mentioned above, Nur al-Din Mahmud had been striving for the Syrian union since he acceded to the throne. Nur al-Din avoided a direct attack to the city, instead he applied diplomatic and military pressure on Burids. Mujir al-Din Abaq (1140-1154), ruler of Damascus arrived at Aleppo in November of 1151 and pledged allegiance to Nur al-Din. Nur al-Din, having realized that he would not be able to take control of the city by force, made Abaq suspect most of his commanders after winning his trust first; from time to time, he sent messages to Abaq suggesting that some of his amîrs were intriguing with each other to relinquish Damascus and caused Abaq to send them away. Once there was no one in Damascus to defend the city against him, he notably increased the pressure thereon. Having captured Ascalon in 1153, the Crusaders now coveted Damascus. Abaq agreed to pay annual tribute to King Baldwin III of Jerusalem which allowed Franks to freely move around the lands of Damascus. Thereupon, Nur al-Din prevented the delivery of wheat to Damascus from north and soon there was a food shortage in the city. Meanwhile, since he believed that they were plotting an assassination for him, Abaq acted against the gentry as well. Thus, discontent with Abaq increased day by day in the city. First, Nur al-Din's commander Shirkuh came forward at Damascus's gates in Nur al-Din's capacity as Proxy, but he was not allowed in the city. Therewith, Nur al-Din advanced on Damascus and was seen in front of the city on 18th April 1154 before the Frank forces Abaq had called to get help; he was welcomed with huge demonstrations of joy and happiness by the people when he entered the city one week later. At first, Abaq was appointed as the amîr of Hims; however, having been impeached for plotting an assassination for Nur al-Din, he was soon expelled from the city and went to Baghdad. Therefore, thanks to Nur al-Din's determination and efforts, Aleppo and Damascus were taken under control of a single man in 1154 for the first time in the Crusade period. Now, eastern borders of all Crusader states were ruled over by a single Muslim force: Nur al-Din Mahmud, defender of Islam and leader of jihad, became the only leader of Syria¹⁰.

Following this, Nur al-Din approved the previously made ceasefire agreement between Damascus and Jerusalem and agreed upon extending the validity thereof one year more as he wished to take care of the affairs in the North and sustain his safety in the region (28th May 1155). A few days later, Nur al-Din's forces

¹⁰ Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 318-21; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p.169 f.; Abu Shama, p. 69 ff.; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 393. For detailed information about the capture of Damascus see Runciman, II, p. 285 f.; Elisséeff, II, p. 474-488; Alptekin, p. 158 ff.

took the Muslim city of Baalbek over¹¹. Having been in a competition with Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate as well at the time, Nur al-Din Mahmud worriedly watched the legacy disputes in Anatolia upon the death of Sultan Masud in 1155. Danishmendids were involved in the struggle as well between the sons of Sultan Mesud, i.e. Kilij Arslan II who succeeded to the throne and his brothers. Nur al-Din, being the protector of Danishmendids, tried to reconcile the parties by warning them against the possibility that this conflict could be taken advantage of by the Byzantine Empire and Franks, and encourage them to attack Muslim lands¹². Afterwards, Nur al-Din captured some lands, Aintab and Raban, descended from County of Edessa to the Seljuks (November 1155, and consolidated his status quo in the North. Thereupon, Kilij Arslan II allied himself with Thoros, Lord of Armenians, and Crusader rulers against his sister's husband Nur al-Din. Nur al-Din indicted Kilij Arslan II for allying himself with Christians, and refused to return the lands he captured. Meanwhile, Crusader rulers of Jerusalem and Antioch breached the ceasefire agreement and attempted plunder and damage around Aleppo, yet they were defeated by Nur al-Din's forces in Aleppo. Ceasefire agreement between the Crusaders and Nur al-Din was renewed in November 1156 and extended for one year¹³.

In February 1157, King Baldwin of Jerusalem, who gravitated to the enormous pillage he might get, terminated the treaty with Nur al-Din by sending his troops to raid on a large group of Turkmens who were putting their herds to graze near Banyas. Thereupon, Nur al-Din's commanders made several retaliatory attacks, and Nur al-Din himself arrived at Banyas with his army and besieged the city; however, when he was informed that the King of Jerusalem had set off for Banyas to aid his forces, he torched the lower neighbourhoods of the city and retreated. Afterwards, he had a great victory by raiding on the King of Jerusalem in the north of Lake Tiberias who was heading for the South after having the city walls repaired in June. Nur al-Din then besieged Banyas again, but he rushed back to Aleppo upon hearing the news that Sultan Kilij Arslan II was approaching to the region with a big army to besiege Antioch¹⁴.

¹¹ Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 322.

¹² Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 324.

¹³ Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 324 f., 327; *Matthew of Edessa, Urfalı Mateos Vekayi-nâmesi (952-1136) ve Papaz Grigor'un Zeyli (1136-1162)*, translated by H.D. Andreasyan, Ankara 1987, p. 318 f., 321 f. Cf. Runciman, II, p. 286; O. Turan, *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye*, İstanbul 1999⁷, p. 199 f.; A. Çay, *II. Kılıç Arslan*, Ankara 1987, 27 f.; S. Koca, *Türkiye Selçukluları Tarihi*, II, Çorum 2003, p. 156-160.

¹⁴ William of Tyre, II, p. 255-264; Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 330-339.

Another thing that prevented Nur al-Din from seriously taking the offensive against the Crusaders was the massive earthquakes in Syria in 1156/57 since the aftershocks lasted for months after the great earthquake striking Syria in the spring of 1156. There was no damage in Damascus; however, many places in Aleppo and Hama were destroyed, and the earthquake destructed one of the towers of Afamiya castle. Lots of houses were demolished and many people were killed by the earthquake in Shaizar. In Kafartab, people fled the city to save their lives¹⁵. In the summer of 1157, Syria was still being struck by earthquakes. The earthquake in August 1157 caused a great loss of lives and property in Hims, Aleppo and Afamiya. Yet, it was a total disaster particularly for Hama. Nur al-Din Mahmud took necessary precautions against potential attacks by Franks to the now-defenceless castles. He tried to have the damaged castles and fortresses repaired quickly and, at the same time, gathered a big army, camped near Antioch and prevented any Crusader attack from taking place¹⁶.

In the following days, the Crusaders allied themselves with Byzantine Empire against Nur al-Din Mahmud. King Baldwin III sent envoys to Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143 – 1180), who was the only force that could help them, to inform him of his intention to marry a lady from the imperial family, and asked for the Emperor's support and help against Nur al-Din. The Emperor decided to wed his niece Theodora to Baldwin, and promised to help the Crusaders personally with his own army. Thereupon, they got married in September 1158 while the Emperor headed for the South with a big army in autumn. Manuel first targeted Armenian lands and captured the Cilician cities, then punished Reynald of Châtillon, Prince of Antioch, who followed an impulsively offensive policy after having come into power in Antioch through his marriage with Constance in 1153. Reynald, together with Armenians, launched a piratical attack to the Island of Cyprus which belonged to Byzantine Empire and terrorised the island. However, he now had to go, in fear, to the Emperor's encampment in Misis, and after being humiliated, he asked for forgiveness and recognized the sovereignty of Byzantine Emperor. King Baldwin III went to Emperor's post as well. At the end of the meeting therein, it was concluded that Christian forces were to collectively launch an expedition on Nur al-Din Mahmud in order to save the thousands of Christian

¹⁵ Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 326, Matthew of Edessa (*Gregory the Priest, Continuation*), p. 316.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Qalanisi, p. 338-41; Ibn al-Athir, XII, p. 185. 1156-57. Cf. E. Altan, "1150-1250 Yılları Arasında Anadolu'da Doğal Âfetler", *Tarih Boyunca Anadolu'da Doğal Âfetler ve Deprem Semineri*, 22nd-23rd May 2000, *Bildiriler*, İstanbul 2001, p. 41-43.

prisoners in Aleppo and Damascus¹⁷.

The Emperor who entered Antioch on 12th April 1159 with a ceremony as the high ruler of Latin East from then on became the sole protector of the Crusaders suppressed by Nur al-Din Mahmud, and he set off for Aleppo with his army after staying in Antioch for a while. After a day's march, they stopped in a place called Balane near Aleppo. Therewith, Nur al-Din sent him legates offering setting thousands of Christian prisoners free, and help against the Seljuks having heard that there was a plot against him in İstanbul at the time, the Emperor agreed to make a treaty with Nur al-Din. Upon demand of the Emperor, Nur al-Din liberated Bertrand of Toulouse taken prisoner in 1149, Bertrand of Blancford who was the Master of the Templars taken prisoner in 1157 during siege of Banyas, as well as more than six thousand people taken prisoner during the Second Crusade who was of no noble descent. As soon as he made agreement with Nur al-Din, Manuel rushed back to İstanbul. Crusaders, however, were disappointed and indicted the Byzantine Empire for treachery again. On the other hand, the aforementioned agreement was in Byzantine Empire's favour. Indeed, the Emperor did not want to damage the balance in the region as well. That is because the Crusaders would be dependent on the Byzantine Empire as long as Nur al-Din's power carried on. Furthermore, Seljuks of Anatolia were a greater threat to Byzantine Empire at the time¹⁸.

Franks worried about the possibility that having captured Damascus Nur al-Din Mahmud was to conquer Egypt next, thus posing a vital threat to the kingdom. Therefore, in a period during which the unrelenting struggle between the viziers weakened the state thoroughly and the Fatimid Caliphate was heading for a rapid resolution, they wanted to forestall Nur al-Din. The way to Egypt was cleared for the Crusaders with the conquest of Ascalon in 1153. As soon as acceding to the throne, King Amalric I of Jerusalem (1162 – 1174) targeted Egypt. Thereupon, Nur al-Din Mahmud focused on Egypt and a struggle started between these two parties to capture Egypt. First, King Amalric attacked Egypt in September 1163 and besieged the city of Pelusium. However, the Crusaders had to retreat when Vizier Dirgham, taking advantage of the time which was the flooding time of the Nile

¹⁷ Kinnamos, p. 132-137; Matthew of Edessa, p. 322 ff.; William of Tyre, II, p. 277 ff. For detailed information about Reynald of Châtillon see E. Altan, "Renaud de Châtillon: Antakya Prinkepsi (1153-1160), Mâverâyi Ürdün Senyörü (1117-1187)", *İst. Üniv. Edeb. Fk. Tarih Dergisi*, Vol. 55 (2012/1), İstanbul 2013, p. 1-28.

¹⁸ Kinnamos, p. 138 f.; Matthew of Edessa, p. 325 ff.; William of Tyre, II, p. 280. Cf. R. J. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States 1096-1204*, translated by J. C. Morris - J. E. Ridings, Oxford 1993, p. 182 f.

River, opened several levees. Meanwhile, Shawar, the former vizier who lost his position after his struggle with Dirgham, came to Nur al-Din Mahmud to ask for his help to reclaim his position, and in return, he offered to recognize Nur al-Din's high ruling, pay for all costs and expenditures of the soldiers who were to come to help him, and give two third of Egypt's income to Nur al-Din as tax. Therewith, Nur al-Din sent an army commanded by Shirkuh, his most valuable commander, to Egypt (April 1164). Shirkuh's 27-year-old nephew, Saladin, joined the army as well. Nur al-Din Mahmud took all the necessary actions for Shirkuh to quickly pass through the desert and reach Egypt without being hampered by the Crusaders. He raided on Frank lands (Banyas) with another army to keep them busy and put them off. Vizier Dirgham asked for King of Jerusalem's urgent help; however, having quickly entered Egypt before Amalric could respond or interfere, Shirkuh defeated the forces commanded by Dirgham's brother near Pelusium. Eventually, Shawar regained his position in May 1164 while the former vizier was killed. Following this, however, Shawar violated the agreement and told Shirkuh to leave Egypt. When Shirkuh captured Bilbais (Bilbays) as a response, Dirgham asked for King of Jerusalem's help this time. He offered to pay 1000 dinars for each marhala of the expedition which would take 27 marhalas (about 216 parasangs/leagues) from Jerusalem to Nil, pay the feeding costs of the Knights' Hospitaller horses, and give various presents as well. Thereupon, Shirkuh was besieged in Bilbais by allied forces of Crusader-Fatimid¹⁹.

Nur al-Din Mahmud, however, raided on Frank lands to make Amalric leave Egypt, and eventually, his younger brother Qutb al-Din Mawdud, Amîr of Mawsil, besieged Harim castle near Antioch with around 70,000 cavalry and 40,000 infantrymen under his command gathered with help of Artuqid rulers, namely Fakhr al-Din Qara Arslan, Amîr of Hisn Kayfa (Hasankeyf), and Najm al-Din Alpi, Amîr of Mardin. Being the ruler of this castle which is of critical importance for the defense of Antioch, Reynald of St. Valery asked for urgent help of the Franks left within the Kingdom's borders. Prince Bohemond III of Antioch, Count Raymond III of Tripoli, Byzantine Governor Constantine Kalamanos (Coloman) of Cilicia, Lord Thoros of Armenians, and Joscelin III of Courtenay, son of Count Joscelin II of Edessa, gathered an army of around 13,000 soldiers

¹⁹ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 242-245; Ibn Shaddad, translated by C. R. Conder, *The Life of Saladin 1137-1193, by Beha ad-din Compared with the Original Arabic and Annotated*, PPTS, XIII, London 1897, p. 46-48; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 448 f.; Abu Shama, p. 106-108; William of Tyre, II, p. 302-305. Cf. St. Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, London 1898, p. 77-83; Runciman, II, 307 f.

and rushed to help the forces in Harim castle. Thereupon, Nur al-Din, intending to draw them into a suitable place, retreated from the gates of the castle towards Artah. The Crusaders ignored the advice of Armenian Lord Thoros and chased Nur al-Din upon which two armies came across near Artah on 10th August 1164. Having taken the offensive immediately and chased the Muslim army which pretended to be defeated and began retreating, Bohemond was trapped and heavily defeated. Frank forces which were surrounded by Nur al-Din's army were destroyed while all the leaders in the army were taken prisoners, except for Thoros who was the only one managing to escape. Prince Bohemond III of Antioch, Count Raymond III of Tripoli, Byzantine Governor Constantine Kalamanos, and Hugh of Lusignan were chained and sent to Aleppo²⁰.

Nur al-Din used the victory he had near Artah to capture Harim (August 1164), and Banyas (October – November 1164) which had been under control of the Crusaders since 1149; however, he did not besiege Antioch despite the advice of his men to do so because he feared that even if he had captured the city, the keep which was well fortified would have stood for a long time and might have been relinquished to Byzantine Emperor who could probably reach there to aid the castle before its fall, therefore, Nur al-Din found it more favourable for himself to be the neighbour of a weakened Crusader state, i.e. Bohemond III, than being the Emperor's neighbour. All in all, upon hearing that Harim was captured and Banyas was besieged, Amalric allied himself with Shirkuh and armies of both parties left Egypt. However, King Amalric's attempt to save Banyas failed. Afterwards, Nur al-Din agreed to liberate the Prince of Antioch and Governor Constantine of Cilicia who are the vassals of the Emperor. He sent Bohemond III back to his country in return for a large amount of ransom of release and liberation of lots of Muslim prisoners, and Amalric requested Count of Tripoli and Reynald of Châtillon who was taken prisoner in 1160 to be released as well; however, Nur al-Din refused it²¹.

²⁰ For detailed information about the Battle of Artah (1164) see William of Tyre, II, p. 306-308; Kinnamos, p. 157 f.; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 246 f.; Ibn al-Adim, II, p. 319 f.; Abu Shama, p. 108 f.; Michael the Syrian, translated by H. D. Andreasyan, *Süryanî Keşiş Mihail'in Vekayinâmesi*, (Turkish Historical Association – in press), p. 196; *Anonim Süryanî Vekayinâmesi*, translated by (partially) A. S. Tritton, *The First and Second Crusades from an Anonymous Syriac Chronicle*, *JRAS*, 1933, p. 303 f. Cf. Nicholson, p. 32-36; Elisséeff, II, p. 591-595; Runciman, II, p. 308; Demirkent, p. 126; B. Küçüksipahioğlu, *Trablus Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi*, İstanbul 2007, p. 163-167; Th. Asbridge, *The Crusades*, London 2010, p. 258-260.

²¹ William of Tyre, II, p. 306-311; Ibn al-Athir, XI, 247 f.

Having realized that Egypt was now weakened, Nur al-Din Mahmud sent Shirkuh in January 1167 for the second time on an expedition on Egypt to conquer it before the Crusaders. At Nur al-Din's request, Saladin accompanied his uncle as well. Upon Shawar's call for urgent help, King Amalric sent troops to catch Shirkuh while passing through Sinai desert, but they failed. Despite a deadly sandstorm he was caught in while passing through the desert, Shirkuh managed to reach and encamp in Giza which lied in the north of and across Egypt's capital city. Shirkuh spent fifty days in Giza after which he sent messengers and offered alliance to Shawar against Franks for jihad, he sent him messages stating that it was a fairly good time to join their armies and destroy Franks. However, Shawar who valued his own interests above Amalric's refused to ally himself with King Amalric. According to this agreement which was also officially approved by Fatimid Caliph al-Adid, Amalric was to swear not to leave the region until Shirkuh is removed from Egypt, and Franks were to be paid 400,000 Byzantine gold coins in return half of which was to be paid in advance. Thereupon, Shirkuh contacted the Establishment of the city of Alexandria and took their support against Shawar²².

Eventually having decided to wage war, Shirkuh adopted the traditional Turkish military tactic and divided his forces into three parts, and since he thought that Crusaders would target the centre first, he appointed Saladin to command the central forces and concentrated the heavy part of the army there so that the central force would seem crowded. Indeed, having been attacked by Amalric in Babayn on 18th March 1167, Saladin retreated as planned after a brief clash while Amalric chased him down with his troops. Meanwhile, Shirkuh having the command of the right wing raided on the part of allied Fatimid-Crusader army left behind and ruined it. Therewith, when the link between King Amalric and the main army was broken, Saladin turned back and re-attacked the king's forces. Most of the Crusaders caught in the cross-fire were killed while some others were taken prisoners; even Amalric barely escaped. Amalric and Shawar fled to Cairo with their men who managed to survive²³.

After his victory, Shirkuh advanced upon Alexandria where he was joyfully welcomed by the Sunni public, but soon surrounded by the allied forces. Despite having been heavily defeated, army of allied forces outnumbered Shirkuh's men. After a three-month siege despite all difficulties, Shirkuh agreed to relinquish the

²² William of Tyre, II, p. 313-321; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 263; Ibn Shaddad, p. 49 f.; Abu Shama, p. 110.

²³ For the Battle of Babayn (or Ashmunayn) on 18th March 1167 see William of Tyre, II, p. 331-334; Ibn al-Athir, XI, 264 f.; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 403 vd; Michael the Syrian, p. 201 f.

city of Alexandria to Egyptians on the condition that Franks would leave Egypt as well without punishing the people. King Amalric deemed such a deal necessary as well since he had heard that Nur al-Din attacked the lands under the realm of Crusader County of Tripoli. Thereupon, having reclaimed Alexandria on 4th August 1167, Shawar agreed to pay reparations to both parties in return for which armies of both Muslims and Franks left Egypt simultaneously. Under the treaty he made with the Crusaders, Shawar agreed to pay 100,000 gold coins as tribute, as well as allowing Amalric to accommodate a garrison in Cairo under the command of Balian of Ibelin before leaving Egypt²⁴.

Garrisoning Crusader troops in Cairo and the attitude of the soldiers in these troops caused unrest among the public and everyone opposed Shawar. The vizier who adopted a rigid policy and punished many innocent people was in a situation worsening day by day, so much so that even his son, al-Kamil got in touch with Nur al-Din Mahmud. The Crusader garrison in Cairo sent messengers to King Amalric to inform him that Egypt was in a state it could easily be conquered, and advised him to capture it. Eventually, despite the treaty between him and Shawar, King Amalric re-attacked Egypt with a big army in November 1168. The Crusaders who captured Bilbais on 4th November 1168 slew all the people. A few day later, the Frank fleet entered Nile Delta and attacked the city of Tanis which saw the same savage where the people were put to the sword. Upon Shawar's call for urgent help who was terrified, Nur al-Din Mahmud sent, for the third time, an army of 7,000 to Egypt under the command of Shirkuh. Nur al-Din insisted on Saladin accompany his uncle in this expedition. Having besieged Cairo at the time, Amalric began retreating on 2nd January 1169 when he heard that Nur al-Din's army was approaching. All in all, struggle to rule over Egypt ended when Nur al-Din's commander Shirkuh entered Cairo on 8th January 1169. Shawar was killed at the behest of Fatimid Caliph (18th January) and Shirkuh was appointed as the vizier of Egypt in Nur al-Din's capacity as his regent; however, he was succeeded by his nephew Saladin upon his death 2 months later²⁵.

²⁴ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 265; Ibn al-Adim, II, p. 324; William of Tyre, II, p. 334-343; Abu'l-Faraj (Bar Hebraeus), *Abū'l Farac Tarihi*, translated by Ö. R. Doğrul, II, TTK-Ankara 1987, p. 404 f.; Michael the Syrian, p. 202.

²⁵ William of Tyre, II, p. 350-359; Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 272-278; Ibn Shaddad, p. 51-55; Abu Shama, p. 111 ff.; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 407 f.; Michael the Syrian, p. 207 f. For the struggle between Nur al-Din Mahmud and Amalric to rule over Egypt also cf. G. Schlumberger, *Campagnes du Roi Amaury de Jérusalem en Égypte*, Paris 1906; Lane-Poole, p. 85-91; Runciman, II, p. 311-314; H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, Oxford 1988², p. 117-122; Richard, p. 183-188; Elisséeff, p. 602-613;

Amalric who lost the struggle to rule over Egypt requested from the West to launch another Crusade, but he was disappointed. Only Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos agreed to help the Crusaders by sending a powerful navy. The expedition of Byzantine-Crusader coalition on Egypt failed after a 50-day siege of Damietta (December 1169)²⁶. Thereupon, Saladin, regent of Nur al-Din Mahmud, secured his position in Egypt even more. At the behest of Nur al-Din Mahmud, Saladin ordered that name of Fatimid Caliph be omitted from khutba and name of Abbasid Caliph be included instead as from 10th September 1171. A few days later, al-Adid, the last Fatimid Caliph, died which ended the 272-year-old Fatimid State²⁷.

Nur al-Din Mahmud, Ruler of Egypt and Syria, who united Muslims against the Crusaders died in Damascus on 15th May 1174 at the age of 56. He had great successes in his 28-year reign. Nur al-Din who was a wise, determined, planned, intellectual, brave, cautious and struggling man, and made good commander and statesman choices managed to turn his state into a great sultanate in a short time thanks to these characteristics. He was a leader who had big goals and devoted himself to realise these goals. He realised one of his three biggest dreams by ending the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt. His biggest dream, however, was to drive the Crusaders away and reclaim Jerusalem for which he strived until his death. Nur al-Din Mahmud set even conquest of İstanbul as a third long-term goal and considered this his mission²⁸.

Being a statesman who was a great mujahid and had supreme characteristics, Nur al-Din was at the same time a leader who was appreciated and praised by everyone thanks to his sincere religiousness, modesty and sense of justice. Ibn

R. Şeşen, *Salâhaddîn Devrinde Eyyûbîler Devleti*, İstanbul 1983, p. 34-38; the same auth., *Kudûs Fatihî Selâhaddîn Eyyûbî*, İstanbul 2013, p. 27-37; M. C. Lyons- D.E.P. Jackson, *Saladin. The Politics of the Holy War*, Cambridge 1997, p. 6-29; B. Kök, "Nureddin Mahmud'un Mısır'ı ele geçirmesi ve Fatimîler'in yıkılışı", *Atatürk Üniv. İlahiyat Fk. Dergisi*, Vol. 9 (1990), p. 165-187; Vol. 10 (1991), p. 130-148; A. Usta, *Çıkarların Gölgesinde Haçlı Seferleri*, İstanbul 2008, p. 173-185; C. Tomar, "Şâver b. Mücîr", *DİA*, XXXVIII, p. 382 f.; M. Kılıç, "Şîrkûh el-Mansûr", *DİA*, XXXIX, p. 203 f.

²⁶ For further information see Runciman, II, p. 321-324; Elisséeff, p. 645-650; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, p. 74 f.; Lilie, p. 198-202; Lyons-Jackson, p. 36-38.

²⁷ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 296 f.; Ibn Shaddad, p. 61 f.

²⁸ Cf. Kök, p. 30 f., 55. (In his letter he sent to the Caliph, Nur al-Din Mahmud tells him about his goal to conquer İstanbul. See Ibn al-Furat, *Tarihu İbnu'l-Furat*, neşr. K. Ruzzik, Beirut 1942, VII, 27-28.)

al-Athir quoted about him “I studied senses of ethics and lifestyles of the previous rulers as well upon which I could not come across someone else who has a better conduct or seek for and investigate for the sake of justice, except the Four Caliphs and Umar Ibn Abd al-Aziz.”²⁹ Nur al-Din Mahmud was also known as “al-Malik al-Adil” as he ruled over his country with justice, and he indeed had a supreme sense of justice. He always protected the sufferer without discriminating against the strong or the weak. He would always listen to the suffering party’s trial in person and try to enlighten the situation. He would let nobody be sentenced based upon a suspicion or assumption; a person with an established crime would be sentenced or punished sufficiently as determined by Shari law. He added a new one to the Islamic institutions by having a court of justice built to try the legal cases. Thus, Mahkamat al-Mazalim (Courts of Mazalim) had a certain and permanent place to hear the cases. Nur al-Din would gather a judicial panel twice a week in the abode of justice and hear the complaints of the public; anyone could go to him in person and tell his/her situation. Nur al-Din was an adherent of Hanafi madhhab (school); however, qadis, faqihs (canonists) and muftis of all madhhabs would appear on these judicial panels of justice³⁰.

Nur al-Din Mahmud would revere justice and value it above anything else so much so that he would not avoid standing trial himself. Once, a man who claimed that he was Nur al-Din’s creditor offered him to take the issue to the court. Therewith, Nur al-Din accompanied him on foot to the court held by Kamal al-Din Ibn al-Shahrazuri to whom he sent a message, while on his way to abode of justice, to inform him that he was about to appear on the trial as defendant and asked the qadi to treat him in the same way as he always treated each defendant. Nur al-Din stood before the qadi together with his rival until the qadi decreed. The court concluded that plaintiff’s claim was not true, and on the contrary, Nur al-Din was his creditor. Yet, Nur al-Din granted the claimed rightful properties to the man in the presence of witnesses. Actually, Nur al-Din knew that the man was not his creditor; however, he agreed to accompany him to the abode of justice so that he would not seem to avoid standing trial due to his pride and arrogance when he was clearly offered to go to the court³¹.

²⁹ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 323; the same auth., *Târih al-Bâhir fi’l-Devleti’l-Atabekiyye bi’l-Mavsıl, RHC or., II, (part II), Paris 1876, p. 297 f.*

³⁰ Ibn al-Athir, *al-Bâhir*, p. 301 ff.; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 494.

³¹ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 323; the same auth., *al-Bâhir*, p. 303; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 496. For detailed information about Nur al-Din Mahmud’s sense of justice, and Dar al-Adl see K  k, p. 96-110.

Nur al-Din's renown relating to his sense of justice was appreciated by even his Christian neighbours. A foreigner who visited Damascus in Nur al-Din's reign decided to live in Damascus as a result of the justice system he observed there. When Saladin captured Damascus upon death of Nur al-Din, one of his soldiers hurt this foreigner. Thereupon, the man came before Saladin to complain about the treatment he experienced; however, conditions did not allowed for Saladin or anyone else to take care of his complaint. Then, the man went down Damascus castle weeping, and carrying a large crowd behind, he marched, clamouring, towards Nur al-Din's mausoleum. Having heard of the news, Saladin summoned the man and propitiated him by solving his problem; however, the man began weeping even louder than ever. When Saladin asked why he was still crying, the man replied "I am weeping for the Sultan who brings justice upon us even after his death". Thereupon, Saladin showed that he protected and maintained Nur al-Din's conduct in this context as well and followed his footsteps by replying the man "Now, that is well said. We've learned everything about justice from him"³².

Nur al-Din's tax policy was based on justice as well. He abolished heavy taxes and charges over Egypt, Syria, al-Jazira and Mawsil, namely mukus and tithe (oshr) which are kinds of traditional taxes. He had a declaration written asking the public to yield the previous taxes they paid up to the State (i.e. consider those taxes as sacrifices they made for the benefit of the State) since the income obtained from those taxes was spent to make war with infidels, defend the country, and protect women and children, and he asked the merchants to yield up through his preachers³³.

Nur al-Din Mahmud would spend his own money to meet his family's needs and other costs, and he would take only his own share from the booty. He asked fatwa from faqihs about the subsistence allowance he needed and did not take more than the amount prescribed by the fatwa. Ibn al-Athir transferred that Nur al-Din's wife (Ismat al-Din Khatun) once told that she did not have enough money to satisfy her needs and bemoaned financial straits. Thereupon, Nur al-Din gave 3 stores in Hims which were owned exclusively by him and yielded only 20 dinars a year. When his wife deemed this income insufficient, he showed an exemplary behaviour by replying her "I have no more money; all the money and properties at my disposal belong to Muslim people whom I am the treasurer of and dare not betray. Nor am I willing to go to hell deliberately for you"³⁴.

³² Ibn al-Athir, *al-Bâhir*, p. 304 f.

³³ Ibn al-Athir, *al-Bâhir*, p. 301 f.; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 499 f.

³⁴ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 323; the same auth., *al-Bâhir*, p. 298; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 495.

The Sultan would give no importance to the worldly things and property, live a pure life, wear no gold and silver, or silk clothes; he was a sparing and moderate person. Even the poorest person in Nur al-Din's reign would spend more than him. He likened the livelihood he intended to obtain to a shadow following him. Once, Nur al-Din and a friend of his were riding, and the sun was behind them while their shadows were casted before them. On the way back, their shadows were chasing them this time upon which he told his friend "...I liken this to the Earth. The world flees from a person who wishes to conquer it, whereas it chases down the one who flees from it"³⁵.

Nur al-Din knew Hanafi fiqh very well but he showed no bigotry for any madhhab, and he spent most of time praying and his religious lifestyle resounded. The Crusaders in Jerusalem would say "...He prevailed over us not with the number of his soldiers, but with the quantity of his prayers he performed at night"³⁶.

The Sultan was such a quite moderate and solemn person that he used his real name, Mahmud, instead of Nur al-Din which means 'The Light of Faith'. So much so that would say before a war that "Oh dear Lord! May You predestine the victory for not Mahmud but for only Islam. All in all, who on earth is Mahmud to deserve victory?". As he wanted to be a martyr, he was also called "ash-Shaheed" (*The Martyr*). He rushed forward for many times in the wars to realise this dream of his. On day, Faqih Qutb al-Din al-Neysâbûrî told him "Oh Master, for the sake of God, do not put yourself in danger. If you get killed, all Muslims will be put to the sword!". Thereupon, the Sultan replied "Who in the name of the Lord is Nur al-Din Mahmud? Who had been protecting Islam and Muslims before I did? Of course, Allah but whom there is no god!"³⁷.

As well as being humble, Nur al-Din Mahmud was also dignified and grand. None of his amîrs, except Najm al-Din Ayyub, would dare sit down in his presence. However, Nur al-Din who revered scholars and clergymen would stand up whenever a faqih, sufi or poor man came before him and make them sit by him, and then he grant them all sorts of things generously of which reason he explained as "These are the soldiers of God. We defeat our enemies thanks to their prayers. They have an immeasurable share in Bayt al-mal (the State Treasury), and we owe them way more than we have given them"³⁸.

³⁵ Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 495.

³⁶ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 323; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 501 f.

³⁷ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 323 f.; the same auth., *al-Bâhir*, p. 307; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 497.

³⁸ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 324; the same auth., *al-Bâhir*, p. 314; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 498 f.

Nur al-Din Mahmud would give a great importance to doing each and every deed in good faith. One day, one of the prominent scholars of religion condemned him as playing chawgan too often which has no use for religion, and furthermore is nothing than a torment for the horse. Therewith, the Sultan replied “Deeds depend upon intentions. I play this game because I want my horses to get used to attacking and retreating. We never give up jihad!”. Nur al-Din considered this sports game gravely important which was played by many Turkish rulers at the time since it equipped him and his horse with warrior skills³⁹. Sultan was such a skilled master of riding that he could mount or dismount even if the horse was at a gallop. Ibn al-Athir quoted that there had been no other man to ride better than him, and that he seemed as if he was a part of the horse itself⁴⁰.

As a promoter of institutionalisation, Nur al-Din Mahmud was one of the unique leaders in the history of Islamic institutions. This institutionalistic aspect of his may be exemplified as him being the founder of Dar al-Adl and Dar al-Hadith which served as a University of Hadith. In his reign, a great activity in science and public works was observed. Big madrasas (Islamic universities), mosques, soup kitchens, caravanserais, ribats (headquarter buildings on the borders raised to protect the country from enemies, and alternatively used as a place of accommodation for the ones in need) and khanqahs (the main monasteries where a Sufi leader resides and food, a place to sleep and any other help are given to the poor and students) were built in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Hims, Baalbek, Manbij and other cities. The hospital (bimaristan) built in Damascus at the behest of the Sultan to treat especially the poor, the needy and the elderly, and financed by the charities was one of a kind across the whole country (it is used as a museum today). Besides, many institutions providing a shelter and necessary education for the children under protection of the State went into service in Nur al-Din’s reign in which widows and the needy and the elderly were also taken under protection of the State. Nur al-Din Mahmud ordered all of these institutions be financed by wealth charities. In the literature, it has been reported that total annual income obtained from the lands and stores he allocated to these charities was around 30,000 dinars, and that he distributed 20,000 dinars in total to these charities as subsidy and alms⁴¹.

³⁹ Ibn al-Athir, *al-Bâhir*, p. 299; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 495.

⁴⁰ Ibn al-Athir, *al-Bâhir*, p. 307.

⁴¹ Ibn al-Athir, XI, p. 324; the same auth. *al-Bâhir*, p. 309 ff.; Ibn Kathir, XII, p. 494. For detailed information about the institutions for public service, and public works in Nur al-Din Mahmud’s reign see Yasser al-Tabba, *The Architectural Patronage of Nur al-Din (1146-1174)*, I-II, New

Once and for all, I want to mention a perfect event that highlights the special role of Nur al-Din Mahmud in the history of Medina: Christians planned to smuggle Prophet Muhammad's dead body to Europe in order to bother the Muslims. The persons assigned to this task and sent to Medina after years of Islamic education hired a house near Masjid-i Nebawi (The Prophet's Mosque) and began digging a long tunnel leading to the tomb. Meanwhile, as rumour has it, Nur al-Din Mahmud dreamed about the Prophet Muhammad twice in the same night in 1162. Prophet Muhammad told Nur al-Din that his body was about to be stolen and pointed at those persons. Having told his teachers and mentors about this loyal dream as soon as he woke up in the morning, the sultan gathered a group of 20 to 1000 men and immediately set off for Medina where he summoned the people of the city in front of Masjid-i Nebawi in order to both inquire and bestow on them. When he learnt that only the two men from Maghreb were absent, he ordered them be brought before him. Having recognized them (the Jesuits), the Sultan personally inquired them, and the accused confessed that they were Christian and digging a tunnel from the south of the Mosque, and evacuating the soil they extracted into a well, upon which they were immediately beheaded at Nur al-Din's behest. Then, he took necessary precautions against such attempts. He ordered Prophet Muhammad's mausoleum, as well as tombs of Abu Bakr and Umar, be covered with lead, encircled by iron cages, and then surrounded by sound walls, and he also had the damaged walls of the city repaired. Therefore, Nur al-Din Mahmud went down in history as the sultan who hampered the attempt to steal Prophet Muhammad's body. Although it is claimed that the rumours relating to these deeds Nur al-Din Mahmud personally ordered to be performed in Medina are all made-up stories, it is known that he had been to Mecca and Medina to carry out his Hajj duty (Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca) where khutbahs mentioning his name were preached and he took several precautions for safety⁴².

All in all, having been a prominent ruler in the 12th century as the protector of Islam against the Crusaders, and leader of jihad, into which he put his heart and soul, Nur al-Din Mahmud left deep marks in the history of Near East. His reign spanning over 27 years was full of fights and struggles. That is because he

York University, Master Thesis, 1982; Kök, p. 163-231; the same auth. "Nureddin Zengî", *DİA*, XXXIII, p. 261 f. For detailed information about economic and social policies adopted by Nur al-Din Mahmud see Y. Lev, "The Social and Economic Policies of Nur al-Din (1146-1174): The Sultan of Syria", *Der Islam*, LXXXI/2 (2004), p. 218-242.

⁴² *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, IX, İstanbul 1935, p. 621-626. Cf. M. S. Küçükaşçı, *Abbasiler'den Osmanlılara Mekke-Medine Tarihi*, İstanbul 2007, p. 147 f.

was a leader who had big goals. His biggest dream was to unite Islamic states and reclaim Jerusalem from the Crusaders for latter of which he adopted a deliberate and far-sighted policy and continued the jihad movement he had initiated with unending effort and determination until his death. After uniting Syria exclusively under his own rule, he expanded his dominance to Egypt and ended the Shiite Fatimid State. Although he did not live long enough to conquer Jerusalem which was his biggest dream, he paved the way for it with the unrelenting struggle he carried on, and being the ruler of Egypt, he entrapped the Crusaders from both East and West. He believed that Jerusalem could be conquered so much that he had a wooden minbar (pulpit) of very high artistic value made in Aleppo which was to be placed in Masjid al-Aqsa (al-Aqsa Mosque) when the day came. This pulpit ordered by Saladin to be placed in al-Aqsa Mosque was destroyed by a fire started by a Jew in 1969⁴³. It was also Nur al-Din Mahmud who educated Saladin, the Conqueror of Jerusalem, and brought him into history of Islam.

Known also as “Malik al-Adil”, Nur al-Din was also a ruler who revered culture and arts, protected the scientists, improved the welfare of the public with his economic and social policies, and was one of the unique rulers in the history of Islamic institutions. In his reign, Damascus became a centre of science full of students from foreign countries. Having been a political and military genius, Nur al-Din Mahmud was a sincerely religious man with no bigotry for any madhhab as well as being a unique leader who did not covet nor stooped to stealing the public’s property and money even though he lived a life in financial straits, and should be looked up to for his merit, justice and humbleness.

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⁴³ Kök, “Nureddin Zengi”, p. 262.

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PETERVARADİN MUHAREBESİNDE (1716) HABSBURGLARIN OSMANLILARDAN ELE GEÇİRDİĞİ SİLAHLAR VE HARP TEÇHİZATI*

Hakan KARAGÖZ**

Öz

1715 yılında tek cephede mücadele ettiği Venedik seferindeki başarısından büyük moral bulan Osmanlılar, 1716 yılında Habsburgların kontrolündeki Petervaradin'i de almayı planlamış, ancak başarılı olamamışlardır. Habsburglar, ünlü komutanları Prens Eugen'in Petervaradin Muharebesi'nde uyguladığı harp taktiği sayesinde Osmanlı ordusuna ağır kayıplar verdirmiştir. Başta Osmanlı Sadrazamı olmak üzere, çok sayıda askerini ve karargâhını muharebede kaybeden Osmanlı ordusu, sadece büyük bir mağlubiyet yaşamamış, aynı zamanda harp sahasında bıraktığı külliyetli harp teçhizatıyla büyük sıkıntılar yaşamıştı. Burada ele alacağımız çalışmamızın amacı, daha çok Avusturya arşiv vesikalarının verdiği bilgiler çerçevesinde, Osmanlı ordusunun muharebe sahasında bıraktığı toplar ve harp teçhizatının miktarıyla bunların türleri/teknolojileri hakkında tespitlerde bulunmaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Osmanlı Devleti, Habsburg, Prens Eugen, Petervaradin, Top, Silah.

Abstract

THE WEAPONRY AND WAR EQUIPMENTS SEIZED FROM THE OTTOMANS BY THE HABSBURGS DURING THE PETERVARADIN BATTLE IN 1716

The Ottoman army had a success at the battle of Venice in 1715 as they fought at one battle field. That success encouraged them to stage an attack on Petervaradin controlled by the Habsburgs in 1716. Habsburgs war tactics, skills and techniques inflicted heavy losses on the Ottoman army by its famous Commander Prince Eugen at the Petervaradin battle. The costly war not only made the Ottomans lose its Grand Vizier, a great number of soldiers and its military base at this battle field but also the loss of huge weaponry, military equipments and most importantly its prestige among the world powers. This article deals with the number of lost Ottoman weaponry, cannons, arsenal, war equipments and their properties and kinds under the light of the data collected from Austrian archives.

Keywords: The Ottoman Empire, Habsburgs, Prince Eugen, Petervaradin, Cannon, Weapon.

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