

Qara-Sonqur's pre-eminence became manifest in 533/1139, when he obtained the head of Mas'ud's *wazīr*, replacing him with his own *wazīr*.

Military operations, restarted in 541/1146, culminated the next year. By then, the *amīr-atabeg* of Fars, Boz-Aba, allied to the great *amīrs* of Rayy and eastern Azerbaijan, had Mas'ud totally at his mercy. Mas'ud devised a bold plan to break the stranglehold with the help of his Turkmen *amīr*, Khāṣṣ Beg. After his two allies were assassinated, Boz-Aba occupied Hamadān with the Saljūq princes Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd (d. 554/1159) and Malikshāh (d. 555/1160) in his custody. A great battle was fought in nearby Qara-Tegin involving all the *amīrs* of western Iran. Boz-Aba's eventual defeat saved Mas'ud's sultanate but left him at the mercy of his saviour, Khāṣṣ Beg, who became the sultanate's new strongman, until Mas'ud's death in Hamadān in 547/1152.

Mas'ud's life is relatively well documented compared to that of other sultans. Beyond the Iraqi chronicles of Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200–1) and Ibn al-Athīr (d. 606/1210), the three key sources are 'Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī's (d. 597/1201) chronicle, abridged by al-Bundārī (which contain first-hand accounts by Anūshirawān b. Khālid and 'Azīz al-Dīn Mustawfī, two key figures during Mas'ud's reign); Zāhīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī's *Saljūq-nāma* (he arrived at Mas'ud's court at the end of the reign); and Najm al-Dīn Qumī's *Tārīkh-i wuzarā'*.

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Mehmed I (1306–53)

Mehmed I (Mehmed, r. 816–24/1413–21) was the fifth Ottoman sultan. He prevailed over his brothers in the civil war that followed the defeat of their father, Bayezid I (Bāyezīd, r. 791–805/1389–1403). He was known as Çelebi (“of high descent,” “prince”). There are two main historical concerns around the life of Mehmed I. First is the question of how he came to triumph over his brothers in the civil war that followed the defeat of their father, Bayezid I, at the Battle of Ankara in 804/1402 and Bayezid's death in captivity the following year. Second is the question of how he reunified the Ottoman Empire under his sole rule and how the empire reemerged as the dominant state in the Balkans and Anatolia after the crushing defeat by Timur (Tīmūr Lang, Tamerlane, d. 807/1405), which resulted in the disintegration of Bayezid's empire of vassals.

During the period known as the Ottoman interregnum, Mehmed ruled over parts of Anatolia, initially the province of Rum (Rūm), from Tokat, Amasya, and then later also Bursa between 804–16/1402 and 816/1402–13. Meanwhile, his brothers Süleyman (Süleymān,