

# Realpolitik and Jihād: Najm al-Dīn Ilghāzī's Relations with the Early Crusader States

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## Abstract

This study evaluates the policies of the Artukid emir of Mardin and Aleppo, Najm al-Dīn Ilghāzī, against the Crusader states. In the literature, Ilghāzī is commonly regarded as an emir who won a victory against the Franks of Antioch, but then wasted the golden opportunity to take it for lack of vision. On the other hand, on account of this policy that was directed at preserving his interests and included collaborating with Franks, it is rejected that his clashes with them could be regarded as jihād. This study first shows that the emir's strategies were consistent and directed at certain practical aims from the start, and that his "failure" to attempt taking Antioch stemmed from a judicious strategy. The second part argues that although Ilghāzī thus applied a pragmatic policy and sometimes collaborated with the Franks, this did not necessarily prevent him from regarding his clashes with them as jihād.

## Keywords

Ilghāzī, Artukids, Mardin, Aleppo, Franks, Crusader States, jihād, ghazā

Ilghāzī himself was only an uncouth boor (*soudard grossier*), incapable of political conceptions. Satisfied and proud of his victory, his massacres, his booty, he began to drink, not finding anything better to do than celebrating his success with his Turkomans in monstrous orgies (Grousset 1934-1936: I, 560).

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This is a rather colorful though hardly accurate portrayal of Najm al-Dīn Ilghāzī, the Artukid Lord of Mardin (1108-1122) and Aleppo (1118-1122), after he had annihilated almost the entire Frankish army of Antioch in an important battle near Balat in Syria. Amongst the dead was the army's leader, Roger of Salerno, regent of Antioch. This battle became known as the Battle of Ager Sanguinis (Field of Blood) on account of the huge loss the Franks suffered. Because Ilghāzī did not proceed to attack Antioch after this victory, the French scholar Grousset is calling his political acumen into question in the passage above. Elsewhere Grousset returns to Ilghāzī's family the Artukids, who at various times held Mardin, Aleppo, Hisn Kaifa, Harput and Diyarbakr, and comments on the same lines about their role in the development of a "Counter-Crusade":

The Artukids remained a dynasty that was too purely feudal, without a political spirit, and that did not know how to profit from its military successes to build. The situation changed when a veritable chief, the *atabek* Zengī, united to the realm of Mosul that of Aleppo; and it is here that really begins the work of the Muslim conquest (Grousset 1934-1936: III, xx-xxi).

There are two components in Grousset's view, which have been largely shared by later scholars, although they have been somewhat kinder to Ilghāzī. Firstly, he is usually regarded as a rather pale precursor of later leaders like Zangī, Nūr al-Dīn or Saladin. Ilghāzī is credited with having won a great victory against the Franks of Antioch, but then, because of a lack of political and strategic vision, failed to launch an ambitious jihād campaign to drive them out completely, whittling away the rest of his time and energies in insignificant operations or unnecessary adventures into remote lands like Georgia. Hillenbrand, for example, asserts that Ilghāzī "failed signally to follow up either the politico-military or the psychological advantages which he had gained. Instead, he basked in glory and then dissipated his energies in a series of minor military operations" (Hillenbrand 1981: 287). Even Khalīl, who calls the emir a "powerful leader, far-sighted in military matters, who was able... to lead the movement of jihād for five years" (Khalīl 1980: 262), deplors his failure to take Antioch and rise to the rank of a Zangī or a Saladin (see also Hillenbrand 1981: 275, 280, 1999: 109-10, Khalīl 1980: 248-49, 275-77, Runciman 1965: II, 155).

Secondly, Ilghāzī's concern with jihād or "Counter-Crusade" is called into question, both in respect of his assumed failure to attack Antioch and because he followed a very pragmatic policy. This was directed at the pre-

servation of his interests and possessions, the consolidation of his position in Aleppo and the preservation of the balance of power; he did not even flinch from collaborating with the Franks against Muslims when he saw it was necessary. Together with the fact that he is reported to have exhorted his troops for jihād only once, all these factors are taken to mean that he had no real personal concern with jihād —apart from occasional opportunistic use of it for practical purposes (Sivan 1968: 41, Hillenbrand 1981: 286-87, Köhler 1991: 140-44, Asbridge 1997: 309). This issue is important as it concerns the more general question of the compatibility of pursuing *realpolitik*, striving to preserve or increase one's possessions and interests and even collaborating with the "infidel" on the one hand, and subscription to the ethos of *ghazā* and *jihād* on the other. The debates around the Ottoman *ghazā* thesis are a case in point (Köprülü 1992, Wittek 2012, Lindner 1983, Jennings 1986, Káldy-Nagy 1979-80, İnalçık 1980, Kafadar 1995, Lowry 2003, Darling 2000, 2011). In particular, the answer to this question can shed light on the understanding of *jihād* in the first half of the twelfth century, before the development of what is known as the *jihād* movement during the times of Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin (Sivan 1968: 59-87, 93-124).

In the study I shall begin by considering the first point, and attempt to rehabilitate Ilghāzī as a strategist. I shall argue that Ilghāzī did not simply encounter a chance to drive out the Franks but then fail to exploit it because of his lack of vision. Instead he followed a clear and consistent strategy, both immediately before and especially after his victory at the battle of Ager Sanguinis. What he was continuously trying to do was to preserve the western line of defense between Aleppo and Antioch that lay beyond the natural barrier of Jabal-Ṭal'at and included the castles of A'zāz, Zardanā and al-Athārib. That was the most he could hope to accomplish in the circumstances. This aspect of Ilghāzī's campaigns has been pointed out by Thomas Asbridge in his insightful studies of the Battle of Ager Sanguinis (1997) and the Early Principality of Antioch (2000), but his focus throughout was on the Latin side, and no previous student of Artukid history seems to have discerned the full significance and implications of these observations for Ilghāzī's career and proceeded to use them to reevaluate the emir's strategy.

After having shown that Ilghāzī applied well-defined policies throughout, realistic and consistent, I shall come to the related second and main question of the paper: if all Ilghāzī did was to try to protect his interests and possessions in the system of constantly shifting alliances and enmities in

early twelfth-century Syria, can we state that he waged “jihād” against the Franks, or believed that he was doing so? Here I shall respond in the affirmative and argue that although Ilghazi pursued strictly pragmatic policies throughout, directed at preserving his independence, refrained from attempting to take Antioch, and collaborated with the Franks on occasion, this did not necessarily prevent him, and does not prevent us, from evaluating what he did as jihād whenever he clashed with the Franks. I shall point out the necessity of examining what Ilghāzī and his Turkomans themselves might have understood by jihād, and question whether they really regarded it as a “Counter-Crusade” that would involve the subordination of all other interests to an onslaught against the Frankish invaders. As an arguably relevant analogy I shall refer to how nomads of the early Ottoman *beylik*, not altogether dissimilar to Ilghāzī’s Turkomans, apparently saw no conflict between ghazā and practices such as allying with Christians, attacking Muslims and gaining earthly profit.

Apart from this analogical reasoning, I shall make use of the hints provided by Arabic chronicles contemporary to Ilghāzī as to how he could have viewed his struggles with the Franks, also tackling the issue of why he might have dropped—if he really did—the idea of exhorting his troops to jihād after its apparent success at the Battle of Ager Sanguinis. Evidence specifically concerned with Ilghāzī is not sufficient however, since Ilghāzī’s approach to ghazā and jihād cannot be handled in isolation from the Turkoman ghāzī circle to which he belonged as a typical nomadic chieftain. So, to place him in a wider context, I shall also dwell on the naming practices of his family, the Artukids, and more importantly on the Turkish epic, the *Dānishmendnāme*, a collection of traditions going back the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries and recounting the heroic exploits of the ghāzīs conquering Anatolia at that time. This work, which will provide us with some useful insights into the mentality of these circles, has further relevance for the subject insofar as it seems to have included some Turkoman followers of the Artukids among its original narrators and audience. Among other things, I shall show how the ghāzīs in the epic saw no conflict between gathering earthly profit in the form of booty on the one hand, and ghazā on the other—a finding that reflects on how Ilghāzī might have regarded his occasional conflicts with the Franks as ghazā, while pursuing an unflinching *realpolitik* to maintain and increase his interests and possessions.

Considering the first of these two points, we observe a practical, strategically oriented way of thinking throughout Ilghāzī’s career, both in his

dealings with the Seljukids of Persia and after his consent to take over Aleppo. As long as the Seljukids tried to re-establish their control over the Jazīra and Syria by launching one expedition after another to the west, Ilghāzī either remained in a passive role, merely dispatching a small contingent, or actively collaborated with the Franks against them just like the *atabek* of Damascus and the former rulers of Aleppo. Of course, through this policy he contributed to the entrenchment of the Frankish occupation of North Syria (Hillenbrand 1981: 263, 291-92), but this was a price that had to be paid if he wanted to consolidate his own position in the Jazīra. Nevertheless, the cessation of Seljukid expeditions after the debacle of 1115 meant that the local emirs, including Ilghāzī, found themselves deprived of external support against the Franks, who proceeded to take advantage of this situation by gradually encircling Aleppo. Then Ilghāzī took up the defense of the city, seeing there was no one else in a position to do so, and that the fall of the city might entail grave consequences as far as his own lands were concerned. Nevertheless, after taking the city he continued this pragmatic approach and stuck to certain limited and well-defined goals, launching campaigns to protect the borders of Aleppo and refraining from any attempts to capture Frankish Antioch. To see all this, we shall now quickly trace the events of Ilghāzī's career, with an emphasis on how he practiced precisely directed strategies.

In 1110, not long after Ilghāzī had acquired Mardin, there began the series of great Seljukid expeditions, led by the governors of Mosul and finally by the lord of Hamadān, which were to last for the next five years. These were directed not only against the Franks, as they purported to be, but were also meant to restore central control over local emirs like Ilghāzī, who had become practically independent in the western lands of the Seljukid empire by taking advantage of the period of interregnum following Malik-Shāh's death in 1092. Aware of this situation, Ilghāzī only took part in the first expedition and refrained from participating in the others, sending a small contingent at most (Ibn al-Qalānīsī 1932: 101-5, Ibn al-ʿAdīm 1884: 595-97, Ibn al-Athīr 2006: 156-57, Matthew of Edessa 1993: 203-6, Anonymous Syriac 1933: 82-3, Fulcher of Chartres 1969: 197-99, William of Tyre 1943: I, 472-74, Albert of Aachen 2007: 788-99). It was for this reason, and perhaps also because Ilghāzī had secretly collaborated with the Franks (Michael the Syrian 1899-1910: III, 216-17), that the leader of the fourth expedition, Aksungur ibn Bursuki, attacked the lands of Mardin. He was thoroughly defeated as a result by Ilghāzī, who thus went into open rebellion against the sultan. The latter did not fail to take notice of this, and sent Bursuk ibn Bursuk, the lord of Hamadān, with the express

orders to subdue Ilghāzī and his father-in-law, Tughtekin of Damascus. Against this common threat Ilghāzī and Tughtekin swore oaths of alliance with Roger of Salerno, regent of Antioch, and they were joined in this alliance by the regent and the commander of Aleppo. After the Muslim leaders successfully denied Bursuk entry to Aleppo, they went to join the Franks at Apamea against Bursuk's army at Shaizar. The latter feigned retreat and returned after the dispersal of the allies to devastate the region, but was severely defeated by the regent of Antioch (Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 166-68, 172-74, Ibn al-ʿAdīm 1884: 607-610, Usāma ibn Munqidh 1987: 101-106, 120, 149, Michael the Syrian 1899-1910: III, 216-17, Matthew of Edessa 1993: 215-16, 218-19; Fulcher of Chartres 1969: 210-14, Albert of Aachen 2007: 852-57, Walter the Chancellor 1999: 86-106, William of Tyre 1943: I, 500-501, 503-5).

This disaster put an end to the series of expeditions sent by the Seljukids of Persia against the Franks and local Muslim emirs, and the latter achieved full de-facto independence from the Seljukid court. But Ilghāzī's satisfaction with this situation came to an end a few years later when, among other emirs, he was consulted about bringing succor to Aleppo against the Franks. The latter had now begun to take full advantage of the end of the Seljukid protectorate over Syria, as well as of the ravaged, impoverished and politically divided state of Aleppo, to work towards its capture. Accordingly they gradually encircled the city by seizing the castles around it one by one (Grousset 1934-36: I, 548-49, Asbridge 2000: 88). Hillenbrand considers Ilghāzī's consent under these circumstances to undertake the rule and defense of Aleppo as a serious blunder, not much different from his later arguably foolhardy acceptance of the summons to help against the Georgians (Hillenbrand 1981: 267). Yet, it was probably not merely out of rash eagerness that Ilghāzī agreed to take over Aleppo, as is also demonstrated by the reluctance he displayed in doing so. Stemming from the impoverished state of the city and the consequent difficulty of defending it against the Franks, this reluctance even went so far as to make him offer the rule of Aleppo to Tughtekin, his father-in-law (Ibn al-Furāt: 2, f.10b-11a, cited in Khalīl 1980: 239 n1). Neither the *atabek* of Damascus nor any other local emir in the region was in a position to undertake the task however, while Ilghāzī could use the economic resources and Turkomans of Diyār Bakr for the purpose. In this situation he had hardly any other option than to take over Aleppo, for its capture by the Franks might have tilted the power balance of the region in such a way as to enable them to threaten his interests even in Diyār Bakr (Stevenson 1907: 109, Grousset 1934-36: I, 549-50, III: xx-xxi, Cahen 1940: 284, Elisséeff

1967: II, 318). This was because the city was the pivot of a political map where Muslim Egypt, Damascus, Aleppo, Anatolia and the Eastern Jazīra were balanced by the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the county of Tripoli, the Principality of Antioch and the County of Edessa. The capture of Aleppo by the Franks could lead therefore to a significant strengthening of the Frankish position in northern Syria and, by extension, in Edessa (Runciman 1965: 2, 134-35; Gibb 1969: 449-50, Hillenbrand 1981: 267).

To prevent this from happening, Ilghāzī collected a large army of Turko-mans from Diyār Bakr and invaded the Principality of Antioch. He inflicted a crushing defeat upon its forces on 26 June 1119, the regent Roger being killed in the battle. Between this victory and a second, inconclusive battle fought in mid-August with Baldwin of Jerusalem, Ilghāzī refrained from attacking Antioch, merely allowing his troops to raid its territory in small groups (Ibn al-ʿAdīm 1984: 616-22, Ibn al-Furāt: 2, f.25a-26b, cited in Khalīl 1980: 242, Usāma ibn Munqidh 1987: 148-49, Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 204-5, Al-ʿAzīmī 1988: 34-5, Ibn al-Qalānisī 1932: 159-61, Matthew of Edessa 1993: 223-24, Anonymous Syriac 1933: 88, Michael the Syrian 1899-1910: III, 204-5, Bar Hebraeus 1982: 2, 356, Fulcher of Chartres 1969: 227-30, Orderic Vitalis 1978: VI, 104-9, Walter the Chancellor 1999: 110-32, 136-56, William of Tyre 1943: I, 528-35). Not surprisingly, the emir has been taken to task by many contemporary and modern historians for failing to attack Antioch while it was in a vulnerable position after the Frankish debacle. Ibn al-Qalānisī and Ibn al-ʿAdīm criticize him for allowing his troops to disperse in search of plunder and failing to attack Antioch as it lay prostrate before King Baldwin's arrival. Usāma ibn Munqidh even claims that after his victory Ilghāzī fell to drinking wine and entered one of his habitual periods of intoxication that lasted until the arrival of King Baldwin's forces in Antioch. As a result he lost the opportunity of attacking the city. This critical point of view has also been adopted by many scholars (Stevenson 1907: 104, Süsseim 1960: 1118, Sevim 1962b: 678, 691, Runciman 1965: II, 155, Nicholson 1969: 413, Khalīl 1980: 248, Vāth 1987: 78-9, Usta 2002a: 368 and 2002b: 473). Reflecting the general tenor of the criticisms, Hillenbrand attributes Ilghāzī's "failure" to attack Antioch to his lack of an "overall strategy," a "master plan," in contrast to a Zangī or a Nūr al-Dīn (Hillenbrand 1981: 277-78).

But once again these evaluations perhaps underestimate Ilghāzī as a strategist. In fact Ilghāzī's "failure" to attempt an attack on Antioch after the Battle of Ager Sanguinis seems to have been the product of a well thought-

out decision. To begin with, his target from the start had been different: far from being in a drunken stupor for two months between the two battles, he concentrated his efforts on successfully taking the two strategically important castles of al-Athārib and Zardanā (Ibn al-'Adīm 1984: 616-22, Ibn al-Furāt: 2, f.25a-26b, cited in Khalīl 1980: 242, Usāma ibn Munqidh 1987: 148-49, Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 204-5, Al-'Azīmī 1988: 34-5, Ibn al-Qalānīsī 1932: 159-61, Matthew of Edessa 1993: 223-24, Anonymous Syriac 1933: 88, Michael the Syrian 1899-1910: III, 204-5, Bar Hebraeus 1982: 2, 356; Fulcher of Chartres 1969: 227-30, Orderic Vitalis 1978: VI, 104-9, Walter the Chancellor 1999: 110-32, 136-56, William of Tyre 1943: I, 528-35). Previously, the possession of these castles by the Franks had brought the frontier of the Principality of Antioch dangerously close to Aleppo, that is, to the east of the natural boundary constituted by the hilly, arid region of Jabal Ṭal'at. Although the battle with Baldwin's army at Tall Dānīth put an end to further conquests, Ilghāzī did succeed in holding on to these castles and thereby securing the safety of Aleppo (Asbridge 1997: 309-13, 316).

Moreover, Ilghāzī must also have taken notice of the fact that taking and holding Antioch, even in its relatively vulnerable state, would have been difficult. The prospect of Frankish reinforcements led by the king of Jerusalem (even though it took them around six weeks to arrive in the event), the virtual impregnability of at least the citadel of Antioch, and the difficulty of establishing control over the wider principality, may all have contributed to Ilghāzī's decision to refrain from attacking the city (Asbridge 1999: 314-15 and 2000: 79). His attitude in this respect resembled that of Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd later. The latter similarly defeated the Antiochene army at the Battle of Ḥārim in 1164, but refused to attack the city while it lay relatively defenseless and merely dispatched raiding bands. His ground was that capturing the citadel would be difficult and that the city could be delivered to the Byzantines (Ibn al-Athīr 2006: II, 148). Fear of Byzantium may also have influenced Ilghāzī, as is shown by his hurry to release the captured Byzantine envoy to Antioch (Orderic Vitalis 1978: VI, 128-131, Ibn al-'Adīm 1884: 622). A successful assault on Antioch would have removed the chief bone of contention between the Byzantines and the Franks, and this in turn might prove more dangerous to Muslim Syria than the mere presence of Latins in Antioch.

The argument that Ilghāzī, lacking political or strategic vision, wasted the rest of his career in minor-scale operations is not convincing either. As Thomas Asbridge points out (1997: 309-13, 316), Ilghāzī's main purpose

in these operations, just as it was before Ager Sanguinis, was to push the border between Aleppo and Antioch beyond the natural barrier of Jabal Ṭal'at and thereby to re-establish the security of Aleppo. He had a precise and clear strategy in this respect. Thus his next campaign, in 1120, the year after the battle of Ager Sanguinis, was directed at the important castle of A'zāz, north of Aleppo. This castle stood at the northern end of the frontier with Antioch. Taking it would have complemented his capture of al-Athārib and Zardanā the previous year, and would have further secured Aleppo from attack. However, he was forced to raise the siege of A'zāz by the Frankish army and in retaliation marched toward Antioch to raid its territory. Ilghāzī was eventually compelled by the disbanding of his army to conclude a very disadvantageous treaty with the Franks, having to abandon his claims to many towns, lands and revenues. He also razed the fortifications of Zardanā, which he felt himself no longer in a position to protect (Anonymous Syriac 1933: 88-89, Michael the Syrian 1899-1910: III, 205, Matthew of Edessa 1993: 225-26, Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 214-15, Ibn al-'Adīm 1884: 625, Al-'Azīmī 1988: 35, Ibn al-Qalānisī 1932: 162, Fulcher of Chartres 1969: 232-34, William of Tyre 1943: I, 522). The campaign in 1120 was clearly a failure, but that did not make it frivolous or ill-conceived.

Ilghāzī spent most of the next year, 1121, away from Syria, preparing for a campaign which he undertook in response to a call for help against the Georgians from the Muslim inhabitants of Tiflis and from Tughrul Shah, the Seljukid prince of Arrān (Matthew of Edessa 1993: 226-28, Ibn al-Qalānisī 1932: 164, Ibn al-'Adīm 1884: 623-25, Ibn al-Azraq 1990: 150-52). The pragmatic reason why he accepted such a call at a time when Count Joscelin of Edessa had invaded the valley of Buṭnān and his truce with King Baldwin had expired should be sought in the fact that he was still much of a chieftain of widely roaming Turkomans like his father Artuk and quite unlike his descendants who would settle down in what eventually became territorial princedoms (Cahen 1935: 237). Rejecting such an attractive offer with its promise of ample material gains and prestige as a mujāhid (more of that later), so that he could systematically concentrate his energies on the defense of his "territory" in Syria, was still an alien idea for Ilghāzī. Although he tried as best as he could to prevent Aleppo from falling into the hands of the Franks, it was still a remote dependency for him. His previous success in the Battle of Ager Sanguinis may also have inspired him with the false confidence that he could easily recover from the Franks whatever he might lose to them while in Georgia. Nevertheless, Ilghāzī's preoccupation with this ultimately disastrous campaign caused

him to suffer new setbacks and forced him to make further compromises in Aleppo, including the cession of half of the area around the city and the entire plain to the north of it. Rather astonishingly he also consented to cede al-Athārib, but this may have been a ploy to secure the conclusion of peace before he set out for Georgia, since in the event the garrison refused to surrender the castle to the Franks. Baldwin responded to this by fortifying a monastery called Dair Sarmadā, near the castle, to restrict al-Athārib's garrison and to carry out attacks against it (Ibn al-ʿAdīm 1884: 625-28, Al-ʿAzīmī 1988: 36, Asbridge 2000: 82).

Indeed, the recapture of al-Athārib and Zardanā and thereby the restoration of the frontier between Antioch and Aleppo to its state before the year of the Battle of Ager Sanguinis was the primary aim of the Franks in these years. They came one step nearer this aim when Ilghāzī's son and deputy in Aleppo, Shams al-Dawla Sulaimān, revolted against his father, no doubt encouraged by the latter's defeat in Georgia. Taking advantage of this situation, the Franks rebuilt and occupied Zardanā. After suppressing the revolt, Ilghāzī had to buy one year's peace from the Franks by ceding the region around Zardanā and al-Athārib —a concession that left the latter isolated in the midst of Christian territory (Ibn al-ʿAdīm 1884: 628-31, Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 231, Ibn al-Furāt, f.161b, cited in Cahen 1940: 293 n24, Al-ʿAzīmī 1988: 36).

After this incident Ilghāzī launched an ambitious offensive to take back Zardanā and restore the western borders of Aleppo to those he had established after Ager Sanguinis, enlisting for this purpose the services of an additional body of Turkomans, as well as his nephew Balak of Kharput. Taking advantage of Baldwin's absence on account of a dispute with the count of Tripoli, Ilghāzī laid siege to Zardanā until the Frankish forces led by the king hurried to take up a position by the nearby monastery of Dair Sarmadā, fortified the previous year. Ilghāzī was compelled twice to abandon the siege by the Frankish army, with some maneuvering going on in between as he tried in vain to draw them into a pitched battle. At this point he fell sick with an ailment that was to prove mortal within a month, and was compelled to return to Aleppo. Having discerned the difficulty of taking Zardanā with a Frankish force in position at Dair Sarmadā, he resumed his former strategy of attacking Aʿzāz by sending a raiding force against the lands of this town. Before his death, however, he still expressed his intention to recapture Zardanā, since the danger posed to Aleppo by this stronghold in Frankish hands was demonstrated by the attack of its lord upon the raiders returning from Aʿzāz (Ibn al-ʿAdīm

1884: 631-33, Al-ʿAzīmī 1988: 36-7, Ibn al-Qalānīsī 1932: 165, Matthew of Edessa 1993: 228, Fulcher of Chartres 1969: 236-37, Walter the Chancellor 1999: 170-71).

Thus Ilghāzī's strategy before his takeover of Aleppo was strictly directed at preserving his de-facto independence against the Seljukid sultan, if necessary by collaborating with the Franks. After the final defeat of the Seljukids and his takeover of Aleppo to prevent its falling into the hands of the now all-too-powerful Franks, his operations, apart from the campaign against Georgia, became consistently directed at securing the castles beyond Jabal Ṭalʿat that protected Aleppo against attacks from Antioch. His policies against the Franks were thus always in strict conformity with his strategic needs and interests, and had restricted goals of practical relevance. Claude Cahen (1969: 171) puts this very succinctly when he remarks: "In the struggles of the sultans against each other or against forces of the sultans, as well as in the holy war, the Artukid policy was a perpetual double game with a single goal, the acquisition and retention of autonomous territories." What chiefly concerned Ilghāzī was not a struggle with the Franks per se but rather a perilous dance in the midst of a variety of rivals and threats. If the Seljukids were to resume their efforts to bring him to heel he might well need the Franks as allies again. On the other hand, he could not comfortably acquiesce in the increase of Frankish power that their control of Aleppo would have represented. Yet if he could have captured Antioch after Ager Sanguinis, this could have led in turn to the formation of a dangerous Byzantine-Frankish alliance against him. For all these reasons, although Ilghāzī tried his best to keep the Franks at bay from Aleppo, he had no reason to launch a fully-fledged jihād campaign to expel them from Antioch, trying as he was to survive in the extremely fragmented political geography of the region. So, *pace* Hillenbrand, Ilghāzī's "failure" to launch a full scale jihād campaign targeting the city of Antioch does not seem to have resulted from a habit of following a short-sighted, opportunistic realpolitik and from a concomitant lack of awareness of the larger-scale political realities. On the contrary, he was quite aware of these realities and followed policies that conformed with them.

Now, having seen that Ilghāzī acted in accordance with his own strategic needs and interests, and in conformity with the system of shifting alliances that prevailed in the fragmented political geography of twelfth-century Syria, can we still assert that he pursued "jihād" against the Franks, or believed that he was doing so? This has been denied by scholars (Sivan 1968: 41, Hillenbrand 1981: 286-87, Köhler 1991: 140-44, Asbridge

1997: 309). However, I shall argue that it is indeed possible to do this, provided that we focus on what jihād may have meant for Ilghāzī and his contemporaries, and dispute that jihād was for them necessarily a “Counter-Crusade” that would sacrifice self-interest for an all-out onslaught against the invading “infidels.”

One of the important aspects of Ilghāzī's approach to jihād might be sought in his use of the exhortation of his troops to jihād. Emmanuel Sivan regards Ilghāzī as one of the first Muslim leaders who took an interest in the idea of jihād when he was confronted with Frankish aggression and successfully used it for purposes such as keeping up the morale of his troops, consolidating his position as the ruler of Aleppo, and bolstering his prestige (Sivan 1968: 39-42). Hillenbrand largely disagrees with this view, contending that Ilghāzī used exhortation to jihād only once, to motivate his troops before his victory at the Battle of Ager Sanguinis, and then abandoned it (Hillenbrand 1981: 286-87). Against this, in the first instance, it is possible to point out the dangers of arguing from the absence of evidence. A detail like the exhortation of troops before battle may simply have seemed unworthy of record to contemporary chroniclers as they related other campaigns of Ilghāzī, far less successful or important than the one that resulted in the victory at Ager Sanguinis. In contrast, it was only natural for them to elaborate on the account of that moral turning point by including such details of dramatic import. But even if Ilghāzī applied a special effort to urge to jihād only once, and did not have recourse to it later, despite its apparent success, I shall argue that this does not necessarily show that he was indifferent to jihād. The reason might simply be that the prominence of jihād preaching on this one occasion was not his initiative and that he was unconvinced of the benefits of preaching by the Arabic-speaking ulama of the urban religious establishment to Turkoman ghāzīs who had their own understanding of jihād.

Indeed it should be noted at this point that the very word used by Ilghāzī and his Turkomans would have been ghazā rather than jihād. Şinasi Tekin has examined at length the use of the words ghazā-ghāzī and jihād-mujāhid in medieval Turkish in his two articles on the subject (Tekin 1993a: 9-18 and 1993b: 73-80). He argues that ghazā (a word with the original meaning of raiding) was used at the time for offensive warfare against an enemy afar, incumbent upon the community as a whole, and jihād for defensive warfare against an attacking enemy, incumbent upon all members of the community. He attributes the reemergence of the word ghazā in the twelfth century to the ongoing warfare between the Crusader

States and the Muslim populace of the Near East, even though the latter were in effect fighting a defensive war. In this context Kafadar (1995: 79-80) rightly points out the difficulty of distinguishing between defensive and offensive war, but insists that there was indeed some difference observed in the sources between jihād and ghazā, insofar as the latter was used for irregular raiding activity undertaken by volunteer ghāzīs to expand the abode of Islam. He also draws attention to the fact that ghazā was not subject to the same strict legal prescriptions and prohibitions as jihād, with codebooks even making an allowance of booty to the “infidels” who had taken part in the raids (compare however Imber 2000: 165–178, who argues that the two words were used more or less synonymously). So there is reason to believe that Ilghāzī and his Turkomans, coming precisely from the stock of such volunteer ghāzīs, and now about to invade the territory of Antioch, would have called their warfare ghazā even though they were in effect defending Aleppo. Their understanding of it would also be correspondingly flexible.

To return to the discussion, both Sivan and Hillenbrand agree that exhortation to jihād worked very well before Ager Sanguinis, causing the Turkomans to “fight like lions” and enhancing Ilghāzī’s own reputation. However, even on that single occasion before Ager Sanguinis, it is doubtful either that Ilghāzī had recourse to such exhortation on his own initiative, or that it really had any tangible effect on his Turkoman troops. It was probably upon the suggestion of Ibn al-Khashshāb, the leader of the pro-jihād circles in Aleppo, that Ilghāzī used systematic exhortation to jihād during his preparations for the campaign. While collecting Turkoman troops in Diyār Bakr he exhorted them to “carry out the obligation of Holy War” and to “destroy the factions of infidelity and error” (Ibn al-Qalānīsī 1932: 158-59), and then made his emirs and officers swear to “sacrifice their lives in jihād” (Ibn al-‘Adīm 1884: 617). Finally, just before the battle of Ager Sanguinis, Ibn al-Khashshāb himself delivered an exhortatory speech on jihād to Ilghāzī’s army. Since Ilghāzī does not seem to have resorted to similar measures in the campaigns that followed, he may have given only indifferent assent to these proposals, without much conviction about their efficacy, and rather with the aim of securing the loyalty of the pro-jihād ulama in Aleppo and consolidating his position as the new lord of the city.

Indeed, the assumption of Sivan and Hillenbrand that the exhortations of Ibn al-Khashshāb before the battle had a tangible effect on the fighting fervor and capabilities of the Turkomans, and thus helped Ilghāzī to win

the day (Hillenbrand 1981: 287, Hillenbrand 1999: 109, Sivan 1968: 41-2), is based on the rather implausible report of a single Arab chronicler, Ibn al-ʿAdīm (1884: 617-18). It could be questioned whether the Turkomans could even understand an oration delivered in flowery Arabic rhetoric or that, alternatively, Ibn al-Khashshāb could wax eloquent in Turkish, in either case to a degree sufficient to bring tears to their eyes after they had mocked “this turbaned fellow”, as they called him. In fact during the Frankish siege of Aleppo in 1124 Ibn al-Khashshāb made a similar speech to the troops of Aksungur al-Bursuki, and, like Ilghāzī, this ruler too is not reported as having used such exhortation to jihād in his later campaigns (Sivan 1968: 43). It seems more likely therefore that Ilghāzī’s “failure” to have recourse to such urging to motivate his troops in his later campaigns was due to his awareness of its negligible effect on their fighting spirit. As we shall see later, they were probably already eager enough to carry out what they perceived as ghazā, and did not need the preaching of a member of the Arabic urban religious establishment, apparently quite odd-looking and barely comprehensible to them, to kindle their spirits.

Seeing that this was so, is it possible to conclude with scholars like Sivan, Hillenbrand and Asbridge (1997: 309) that Ilghāzī was not really concerned with jihād except perhaps for practical, provisional purposes, like the consolidation of his position in Aleppo? As we shall presently see, this is not necessarily the case. The reason why the scholars in question assume this position might be that they seem to conceive of jihād solely as an ideologically motivated struggle against the “infidels”, and distinguish it sharply from the daily pursuit of the strategic needs and interests incumbent on contemporary emirs. They do not deny in theory that religious motives can co-exist with others, like expansionism, political and military imperatives, xenophobia, fear of attacks from the West, economic losses, appetite for booty, the quest of personal prestige and bravura etc., and concede that it would be vain to try to pinpoint an action stemming purely from the idea of jihād, or again to isolate the influence of this factor from others (Sivan 1968: 204, Hillenbrand 1999: 248). In practice, however, they still appear to draw a sharp line between religious and other motives, assuming that the presence of the latter should imply some degree of deficiency in the former. Because Ilghāzī accepted payment from the Aleppans when he took over the city, and had previously allied with the Franks, for example, Sivan concludes that he was not quite imbued with the zeal of a “champion of the faith”, though he later discovered that exhortation to jihād could prove advantageous to his personal interests (Sivan 1968: 41). Similarly, Köhler denies that Ilghāzī conducted jihād on

the grounds that he pursued practical goals like capturing the castles around Aleppo to secure the city for himself as well as to prevent the Franks from growing too powerful in the region (Köhler 1991: 140-41). The religiosity of the contemporary actors is also called into question in this connection: Hillenbrand asserts that the religious commitment of Ilghāzī and his Turkomans was “only superficial” and “pragmatic”, drawing attention to his drinking orgies which were excessive even by the standards of that time (Hillenbrand 1981: 289 and 1999: 110).

In analogy with what Cemal Kafadar points out in respect of Ottoman ghāzīs however, it is not right to look for “straw men relentlessly fighting for their lofty, untarnished ideals” in Ilghāzī and his contemporaries, and to conclude that they had little to do with jihād when, being historical entities, they naturally fail to have measured up to this ideal. Similarly, it is more judicious to allow them to have been champions of what they understood from Islam, rather than to pass judgment upon the degree and nature of their religious commitment according to the criteria of the urban Muslim establishment (Kafadar 1995: 53, 57). At any rate the problem of religious or personal motivation cannot be solved easily, not least because it is far from certain that such a sharp line between religious motive and personal interest was drawn by the contemporaries themselves. As Richards points out for the case of Saladin, “the question of motives, possibly irrelevant in the last resort, cannot be satisfactorily answered. Ambition and a consciousness of personal worth and fitness for a task are not incompatible with a high moral purpose” (Richards 1995: 910).

Also in a more general sense, the analogy with the debates surrounding the Ottoman ghazā thesis is pertinent here. Kafadar (1995: 62-90) made use of a wide variety of original sources to show that the ghāzīs themselves did not seem to perceive any contradiction between acting in their own interests, collecting booty, collaborating with Christians, and attacking Muslims on the one hand, and making raids into Christian territory with a religious ring to them on the other. By focusing on such texts to grasp what the ghāzīs themselves may have made of ghazā, Kafadar calls for a historicization of the concept against scholars like Lindner (1983), Jennings (1986: 151-61) and Káldy-Nagy (1979-80: 467-73) who question the Ottomans’ commitment to ghazā on grounds that they continued pre-Islamic and heterodox beliefs and practices, kept Turkic names, showed no zeal to convert and indeed had many unconverted Christians among their numbers, displayed a remarkable deal of toleration and conciliatory attitude toward their Christian subjects, and even frequently collaborated

with Christians against their Muslim neighbors. Like Köprülü (1992: 77-108) and Wittek (2012: 46, 57) before him, Kafadar draws attention to the special social milieu that came into being in border areas, where collaboration and commingling was as much the rule as conflict, and insists that we should take into consideration the particular historical circumstances in which the ghāzīs found themselves and how they saw what they did—rather than measuring their actions against yardsticks derived from normative texts as well as from our modern separation of the sacred and the secular (Kafadar 1995: 47-59). This is also a valid line of criticism against Lowry's (2003) sharp distinction between the Ottomans' material quest for booty and their possible attachment to a religious ghazā ideology, and his denial of the latter on the basis of that distinction.

Kafadar also points out that attempting to understand the ideas of a group serves to reach a better grasp of their interests, demands and relations with other groups, while it does not have to lead to the conclusion that their actions were necessarily “fueled” by those ideas (Kafadar 1995: 58). Thus Halil İnalçık (1980: 71-79) and Linda Darling (2000: 133-63), rather than focusing on whether the early Ottomans were indeed driven on by the ghazā ideology, prefer to examine the useful social functions it served, like rallying former tribesmen around ghāzī leaders or bringing together these two with other diverse social groups like orthodox ulama and antinomian sufi dervishes in a single polity. Focusing on a group's particular view of ghaza may therefore provide us with more profound insights than a simplistic search for motivations.

There is no reason to assume that all these considerations cannot have been equally valid for Ilghāzī and his Turkomans, and a deeper grasp of their outlook on ghazā and jihād seems mandatory. As in the case of Ottoman ghāzīs, neither Ilghāzī's alliances with Christians nor his strict attachment to the preservation and promotion of his interests -his contentment with defending Aleppo and “failure” to launch a jihād campaign to take Antioch- need exclude the possibility that he saw what he did as ghazā whenever he happened to clash with his Frankish neighbors. Indeed there is some evidence suggesting that Ilghāzī did regard and represent himself as a ghāzī/mujāhid, or at least responded positively to being seen and shown in this guise by his contemporaries. This is revealed by the letters he sent to the sultan and the caliph to report his victory at Ager Sanguinis and the honorary robes he received from the caliph in thanks for his attacks on the Franks (Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 214), by the eulogizing poems of jihād composed in Aleppo to celebrate the same victory (Al-

‘Azīmī 1988: 34-5, Ibn al-Athīr 2006: I, 204-5), and finally by his acceptance of the summons to aid against the Christians of Georgia.

We already saw that the pragmatic reason for the Georgian campaign lay in Ilghāzī’s character as a nomadic chieftain with a huge geographical range of activity, always on the lookout for possible gains in the form of spoils and territory. But the prestige inherent in such a campaign may also have been meaningful for him. Imad al-Dīn Khalīl, in this connection, attributes Ilghāzī’s expedition to what he calls his “readiness to assume the responsibility of defending the lands of Islam” (Khalīl 1980: 257). There is no reason why Ilghāzī should not have viewed his venture both ways: by taking part in the campaign to Georgia he would have indulged the taste he shared with his father for adventure and gains in far-away lands, while he would also have been able to look upon it as a continuation of his recent role as “defender of Muslims”, now consisting in repelling the Georgians —a task easier at first sight than taking and holding Antioch.

In a wider context, Şinasi Tekin suggests that Ilghāzī’s name itself was a sign of the rehabilitation of the word *ghāzī* as a result of the daily conflicts with the Crusader states in the early twelfth century (Tekin 1993b: 78-79). This is not very accurate, for Ilghāzī had been born and received this name some quarter of a century before the arrival of the Crusaders. But it is quite possible that he was given this name in the context of the inroads that his father was making against the Christians of Anatolia in the early 1070s, around the time of his birth (Yinanç 1944: 86, Kafesoğlu 1953: 65-66). On the other hand, his grandson Najm al-Dīn Alpı (*alp* or *alpı*, a Turkish word originally meaning “brave” or “hero”, frequently used in combination with *ghāzī* to form the title *alp-ghāzī* during the Seljukid period, see Köprülü 1963: 343-46, 348-49) and great-grandson Qutb al-Dīn Ilghāzī were indeed born at the time of the conflicts with the Franks. In any case, the concept of *ghazā*, whether against the Byzantines, Franks, Armenians or Georgians, seems to have been important enough for Ilghāzī’s family to serve as inspiration for the proper names given to their members.

In a still wider context, yet another kind of evidence seems to be supplied by the *Dānishmendnāme*, one of the sources used by Kafadar himself. It is an epic or rather a folk romance that was first set down on paper in 1245 by a certain Mevlana ‘Ibn ‘Alā at the behest of the Seljukid Sultan ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaikā’ūs II, but the oldest extant version dates from 1361, when the *dizdār* of Tokat Castle, Ārif ‘Alī, reedited it with various additions in verse (Melikoff 1960: Introduction, Köprülü 1943: 425-30). The use of the

Dānīshmendnāme in this context is valid, because the oral traditions that went to its making originated from the ghāzī circles belonging to the contemporary northern neighbors of the Artukids in the first half of the twelfth century and very likely reflected a parallel, comparable sentiment. Probably it is possible to go even further and suggest that they were originally the product of a common milieu comprising the Turkomans of both the Dānīshmendids and the Artukids. Indeed Artuhi, one of the three main characters, is directly identified by Mükrimin Halil Yinanç with the founder of the Artukid House, Artuk ibn Eksük. He even attributes to Artuk most of the conquests shown in the epic as accomplished by Dānīshmend in the Yeşilirmak and Kızılırmak valleys, and argues that all Dānīshmend did was to complete them by capturing the regions of Niksar and Amasya. (Yinanç 1944: 89, 92-3, 103 and 1997: 468-69).

Irène Melikoff, on the other hand, in the relevant part of the introduction to her edition of Dānīshmendnāme (Melikoff 1960: I, 122-26), rejects the identification of Artuhi with the historical Artuk or any of his sons. She points out that Artuk went away from Anatolia after 1075, and argues that if Artuhi had been the same figure as the historical Artuk, he would not have been introduced as a Greek convert to Islam (for the conversion of Artuhi see *Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 14a, and for Artuhi reading and speaking Greek 77b, 103b), in view of the importance of the Turkoman chief. But precisely because he was so important, some of the narrators may have chosen to depict him as such to prevent him upstaging Dānīshmend himself in the story, apart from the fact that the converted comrade-at-arms of the hero was a topos that had to be present in any case. So while Melikoff seems right in criticizing Yinanç for taking the conquests of Artuhi in the epic too seriously and ascribing to him most of those made in the region (Melikoff 1960: I, 76, 123), she seems to go to the other extreme herself in denying even the possibility that Artuhi might have been a remote popular reminiscence of the historical Artuk. As she says, beneath the Christian veneer it can easily be understood that Artuhi was the son of a nomadic Turkoman chief with many thousands at his call, which strongly suggests Artuk's father Eksük (for Artuhi's father as a nomadic chieftain of the mountain with 12.000 soldiers under his command, see *Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 14a), and if Selāhil can be identified with St Gilles and Atush with Hugh de Vermandois solely on the basis of the similarities in written form (Melikoff 1960: I, 135-36, 141-42), there should be no great problem in treating Artuhi as a faint reminiscence of Artuk and/or his sons. This would be true even if we could not find any parallels to Artuhi's actions among the deeds of the historical Artukid emirs.

Nevertheless, if we did seek such parallels or otherwise interesting associations, it is not impossible to find them in Artukid history, and some of these can be deduced from Melikoff's historical analysis itself (Melikoff 1960: I, 122-26). To begin with, although it may be wrong to ascribe most of Turkish conquests in the Kızılırmak and Yeşilırmak valleys to Artuk, as Yinanç does, it is impossible not to see in the tales of Artuhi's conquests in this region a faint echo of the incursions of Artuk and his Turkomans into these regions prior to 1075, as reflected in place names like Artukova and Artukâbâd near Amasya. Similarly, in the struggles of the epic's heroes with numerous powerful Franks, it is possible to discern the reflections of Artuk's struggles with Roussel de Bailleul, one of the several mercenary Norman chiefs in Anatolia during the time of his conquests there (Sevim 1962a: 125-27). As for the collaboration of Artuhi and Dānīshmend in the epic, although the two were probably never in Anatolia at the same time, with Dānīshmend arriving after Artuk's departure, this might be a reminiscence of an actual case of collaboration that took place between an Artukid and a Dānīshmendid in the geography of the epic: the Artukid Belek (Artuk's grand-son) joined forces with Dānīshmend's son Emir Ghāzī against Constantine Gabras of Trebizond and the Mangujak prince of Erzincan, defeating them both (Turan 2001: 76-77, 169, Kayhan 2008: 478-79).

There are some other parallels as well, not hinted at in Melikoff's analysis. In the epic the caliph is shown appointing Artuhi as the vizier of Sulaimān Shah and advising the latter to consult Artuhi, since the latter knows the easy routes and settlements of Rum (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 256b). Of course Artuk was no "vizier" of Sulaimān ibn Kutalmish, but this can be a faint reminiscence of the times when they were independently active in Anatolia before the arrival (in the epic, after the death) of Dānīshmend. In another instance, after the capture of an important castle, the caliph is informed about the successes of Artuhi and Dānīshmend and sends them various gifts in return (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 51a-b). This was true for the sons of both emirs, Ilghāzī and Emir Ghāzī, who received honorary robes and other gifts in appreciation of their successes against the Franks: the former had defeated and killed Roger of Antioch in 1119, and the latter had done the same to Prince Bohemond II of Antioch in 1131 (Michael the Syrian 1899-1910: III, 227, 233, 237, Anonymous Syriac 1933: 99). Finally, Artuhi's wife Efrumiyye in *Dānīshmendnāme*, a reflection of Gabriel of Melitene's daughter Morphia (Melikoff 1960: I, 129-31), was in real life married to none other than Baldwin du Bourg—the most formidable Frankish adversary of Artuk's sons Sokman and Ilghāzī and his

grandson Belek, both as count of Edessa and king of Jerusalem. Baldwin indeed troubled them greatly in the Jazīra and North Syria, and was captured twice by them in the course of these conflicts. The fact that this man's wife in real life is shown as the wife of an Artukid in the epic is rather significant and appears to be more than a simple coincidence.

But even if we, like Melikoff, associate Artuhi not with the Artukid chief or his descendants but solely with the Turkoman followers of Artuk in the Yeşilirmak valley, some of whom had stayed there after the Roussel de Bailleul affair (Melikoff 1960: I, 126), the fact that an Artukid and his exploits play so important a role in the *Dānīshmendnāme* would still suggest that there were Turkoman followers of the Artukids among its narrators and audience. What all this amounts to is that the tales in the *Dānīshmendnāme* were the product of a common milieu that included some Turkoman followers of the Artukids as well as those of the *Dānīshmendids*. Accordingly, even if first set down in writing in mid-thirteenth century, it might be useful as a source for how Ilghāzī and his Turkomans would likely regard *ghazā*. Of course there is the significant difficulty that the work has reached us only through an author of the mid-fourteenth century. But Melikoff observes that the parts contributed by the writer of the extant version, Ārif 'Alī, were only the verse portions, the detailed descriptions of the daily life of Turkomans and what Melikoff calls the "mystico-religious ideal/spirit", which involved, for example, showing dervishes from the order of Abu Ishak Kāzerūnī among *Dānīshmend's* troops. In contrast, the depiction of a nomadic social organization and the conflicts of Turkomans with the various autochthonous Christian peoples of Anatolia were already found in the original version, which she says combined the reminiscences of *Dānīshmend's* era with the ambience of the thirteenth century (Melikoff 1960: I, 64-66, 139-41).

In the light of this, it does not seem sensible to assume that all traces of a *ghāzī* ideology were absent from the original tales, and were only added in the context of the mid-thirteenth or mid-fourteenth century: otherwise it becomes difficult to explain why the narrators and their audience took pains to dwell so long on the stories of conflicts between the Muslim and Christian peoples of Anatolia, which constitute the main subject matter of the whole epic. It could be argued that the same tales could have been told originally without the religious trappings, simply as fights between the incoming Turks and the various ethnic groups in Anatolia, but this is undermined by the fact that the "Muslim camp" in the epic includes not

only Turks but numerous converts from those ethnic groups as well (the word Turk is not encountered for that matter), while no less than two out of the three protagonists are introduced as Greek converts to Islam. So, in the extreme scarcity of any other source that could be used to delve into the mindset of Ilghāzī and Turkomans as they confronted the Franks, all these considerations lead to the result that the *Dānīshmendnāme* is better than nothing and can be, arguably should be used—with due caution—for the purpose at hand.

If we turn then to what *Dānīshmendnāme* might reveal about Ilghāzī and his Turkomans' outlook, we see that it shows some degree of religious accommodation and commingling of communities. It also shows that the Turkomans thought of *ghazā* whenever they clashed with Christians, while feeling no misgivings about its compatibility or otherwise with the riches they acquired in the process. As far as examples of the first point are concerned, Kafadar (1995: 66-68, 141) has already cited some examples: converts, who later become apostates and even begin looting Muslims, are forgiven by *Dānīshmend* (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 104a), Artuhi and Efrumiyye, although shown converting to Islam, fail to change their names (probably due to the fact that these were very close to the names of their historical counterparts), they get married rather late in the narrative, and Efrumiyye freely communicates with men as well as fighting them, even though—contrary to Kafadar's remark—she is referred to once as being covered (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 119a-b). There also seems to be a critical stance towards imposing too strict a regime on very recent converts to Islam, like prohibiting wine and obliging them “whether necessary or not” (*gerek gerekmez*, Melikoff 1960: II, 197) to perform their ritual prayers five times a day. It is shown how the imposition of such a regime on the populace of Sisiyye (Gümenek) by their zealous governor Halil led to their apostasy and desertion during a battle with the Christians, leading to the death of Halil himself and the Muslim loss of the town (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 173a-174a).

Beside the examples cited by Kafadar, there are others as well that point to the presence of such an accommodating stance. Thus in the narrative, the *ghāzīs* are regularly shown offering defeated Christians the choice of the sword or conversion, and usually kill those who do not convert. But in some passages the Christians are also offered the option of paying the poll tax and keeping their faith, even when they resist the Muslim army all night long like the populace of Mankuriyye (Gangra) (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 159b). In a similar case, the Muslims refrain from executing nine

thousand captives from Amasya, most of them clergy and the old, who refuse to convert. Even though Amasya's lord, Shattat, the most hardline "infidel" in the narrative, refuses to pay the tax or to convert, and escapes repeatedly, the Muslims do not kill him immediately, but in each case prefer to wait and see if he will change his mind. In the case of Shattat no change of heart takes place, although his daughter Efrumiyye is sent to persuade him, and he is executed after being given one last chance at the gallows (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 209a-b, 212b-214b). But in most other cases conversion does happen through the persuasion of venerated Islamic figures, as in the case of Dānişmend's wife Gulnush Banu, princess of Mamuriyye (Ankara), who sees the Prophet himself in her dream (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 168a-b, 169b, 192a, 195b-196a).

Perhaps the most interesting example of such a tolerant attitude is encountered in a sort of love story: a certain Kara Tigin, whom Artuk encounters on his way to rescue Efrumiyye from captivity and takes along on that mission, explains how his father, originally a Muslim peddler from Baghdad, seemingly converted to Christianity when he fell in love with the daughter of a village priest. It is interesting how the text recounts this event: "The priest said: 'Come, become an infidel and I shall give my daughter to you'. Such things happen in love (*ışk hālidür*): my father said 'let it be, yes' with his tongue, but not with his heart. They gave the girl to my father." Then Kara Tigin goes on to relate how his father secretly converted his mother to Islam and received the village in inheritance from the clueless priest, and states that the entire Greek village is now crypto-Muslim, unbeknownst to other "infidels." It is curious how pretending to apostatize and live like infidels, among infidels, is so lightly condoned by referring to love as an excuse and exoneration (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 151b-152b).

Not all is accommodation though, there are also elements of a ghāzī ideology in the *Dānişmend-nāme*. All the heroes are depicted as having adopted as their vocation and profession ghazā against Christians of all sorts, be they Greeks, Franks, Armenians or Georgians. These heroes are continuously shown fighting almost single-handedly against thousands of "infidels" and slaughtering most, up to and including monks; they openly intend their battle to be a ghazā and fight out of "love of religion", complete with tekbir, ezan and Koran recitation. Nor do they neglect to ask for permission from the Caliph to wage jihād, necessary for it to be legitimate, receiving rewards from him at the end for their accomplishments in

the struggle against the Christians —just like Ilghāzī himself did following his victory at Ager Sanguinis.

To begin with, the ghāzīs in the epic seem to regard it as their vocation to wage ghazā, which they feel should not be neglected for a long time. Thus, after the wedding celebrations of Artuhi and Efrumiyye, Melik Dānīshmend tells the ghāzīs that they should make for Amasya to destroy its lord, Shattat, and the Emperor's chief commander, Nastor. In response the ghāzīs remark that it is appropriate for them, since they have not carried out ghazā for God knows how many days (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 108b). When they are going into battle against the Christians, they seem to openly intend it to be a ghazā against infidels, rather than an ordinary clash of rivals: “Resting that night, the next morning they beat the drums, moved off, took along the banners and standards. Respectfully, they said: ‘with the intent of ghazā’. Pronouncing the tekbir, they marched and made for Karkariyye” (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 97a). When they arrive on the battlefield, the confrontation of the two religions is emphasized. In one such case we read that bells toll and priests sing hymns in the army of Nastor, the imperial commander, who anoints his face with holy water and incense; the Christian troops perform magic with the Cross. On the Muslim side, the soldiers pronounce the tekbir and hafīzs recite the Koran “with their beautiful voices” (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 123a-b; see also 132a-134a for another example). Once the battle begins, the ghāzīs go into attack and the world echoes with the voices of tekbir (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 87b) while they slaughter “innumerable infidels” (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 48b). Urging them on in one case, Dānīshmend makes clear who the fight is against: “Exert yourselves, don’t let them go. Maybe you will destroy the enemies of the faith” (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 205b). The religious confrontation is also made clear in two passages where the Muslims, fighting at night, find themselves hard pressed among a horde of “infidels”. Ascending a hilltop, Dānīshmend recites the ezan with his beautiful voice, indicating in this way to leave their positions among the enemy troops and gather under the standard. They do so, and the adversaries, unable to understand what message is delivered as they are alien to the Islamic faith, end up killing each other until the morning (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 92b-93a, 121b).

One of the passages where the ghāzī ideology is most clearly articulated is where the original author of the text, Mevlana ibn ‘Alā, takes up the word and reports the comments he had heard from previous narrators:

Ibn ‘Alā said: I heard from the narrators who came before us that there took place such a battle on that day that the Muslims cut down ten thousand infidels in a moment. The narrators relate that if it had not been for Melik Dānishmend, if Artuhi and Efrumiyye had not brought it about, nobody could have taken the district of Rum from the infidels. Thousands of divine mercy to the souls of Melik Dānishmend and the ghāzīs. Thousands of light drops to the tomb of the illustrious prophet (peace be upon him). Showing benevolence and bestowing his favors, he sent the ghāzīs to this land, who conquered it from infidelity and made it Muslim (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 134b-135a).

This passage seems to have been copied more or less directly from the original version of 1245, and the author himself refers to previous narrators as its source, so we have reason to believe that it is fairly close to the spirit of the original stories making up the Dānishmendnāme. If this is true, the mood of religious confrontation in the passage becomes all the more significant. It may also allow us to be somewhat more at ease about a similar but more elaborate passage with no such hints about its provenance, in which the Muslims are shown fighting the armies of Amasya and Gangra:

The ghāzīs joined forces and delivered such sword blows on the infidels that the angels were applauding from the sky. You would think that day was the doomsday itself... On that day, until noon, they slaughtered innumerable infidels. They fought for the love of Mohammad, on the path of Islam... Five thousand ghāzīs, mujahids devoted to their prayers, uttered “Ya Allah”, and sacrificing their heads and lives for the faith of Mohammad, on the path of Islam, marched with love and began to fight. They killed a thousand infidels within one hour, and put the infidel army to rout (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 115b-116b).

A particular case of this religiously confrontational mindset is offered by the passages where the ghāzīs directly fight with monks, attacking castle-monasteries that are said to be magically securing the safety and impregnability of the Christian towns near them. In one instance, Artuhi and another companion of Melik Dānishmend report how they have heard from their fathers that nobody can take Niksar as long as the Monastery of Sematorgos stands, since the city is bound to the monastery with a magic link. By using a ruse they take the monastery and burn it along with the hundred monks and two abbots in it. Hearing this, the people of Niksar

despair of their lives (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 233b-236b; see 56a-58a for another example).

In the epic ghāzīs are also shown to be very conscionable about the legal validity of their jihād, duly receiving permission from the caliph and informing him about their successes, receiving honorary robes, firmans and other gifts in return. Hence in one episode the people of Melitene call upon Dānişmend and another emir to rescue Muslims from the pressure of infidels. But Dānişmend states that they have to consult the emir of believers, the caliph first, and act with his permission. So they send envoys to Baghdad to meet the caliph, who grants them an authorization for the conquest of Rum, along with honorary robes, banners, drums, horses, slaves and money (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 4a-6a). Further into the conquest, on taking the castle of Derbendpes near Tokat, the heroes send ten loads of goods to the caliph, together with an envoy who reports about the state of the ghazā. The caliph appreciates the bravery of Dānişmend, accepts the gifts, and in return sends honorary robes to Dānişmend, Artuhi, Efrumiyye and other important individuals. To the first he also sends a firman giving him the rightful possession of all the places he had conquered in Rum (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 51a-b). We saw before how this reflects actual exchanges that took place in early-twelfth century between Dānişmend's and Artuk's sons and the caliph.

Speaking of rewards, the ghāzīs in *Dānişmendnāme* do not seem to distinguish between the riches to be gained in this world and those to be gained in the hereafter for fighting the “infidels.” Instead of drawing that sharp line between personal gain and religious struggle that Ilghāzī's modern students are apt to use to reject his possible concern with jihād, again and again the *Dānişmendnāme* tells us how rich the ghāzīs became on overcoming the “infidels” (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 61b, 96b, 194a, 211b). One particularly illustrative passage relates how the ghāzīs surrounded the infidels and killed them all, and entering the castle, “took out so many goods and treasures that only God knew how much.” After we are told that they consequently became “rich, so much so that it cannot be described”, the text drives the point home with innocent frankness: “they are reveling in richness” (*bunlar toyumlukda, ber-murād olmakda*) (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 86a). They had a right to do so, as we are given to understand in a passage which describes how Dānişmend divided the spoils “among the ghāzīs who had put their lives and necks at stake on the path of religion” and made them “very rich” (*Dānişmend-nāme* 2002: 75a). Apparently, all these material gains were seen as the justly deserved

rewards of those who had risked their lives for religion. The acquisition of these riches and being happy with them in no way detracted from the religious nature of the warfare, as long as it was associated with serving the faith.

This is still more apparent in the passages where defeated Christians, newly converted to Islam, are shown receiving arms and “rich treasures” from Dānīshmend, who apparently aimed by this move to bolster them in the new faith (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 227b). A particularly striking passage is the following: “When Melik defeated the numerous army, he made the newly converted Muslims rich with goods. Giving them horses, clothes and arms, he pleased them. And they became believers at heart (*derūnī mūʾmin*)” (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 192a). Here it is interesting how the text does not seem to draw any implicit contradiction between material acquisition received in turn for conversion and the sincerity of conversion—on the contrary, we are given to understand that the converted Muslims have received the earthly portion of their reward immediately, and that this binds them still more firmly to the new religion.

Keeness on the acquisition of riches is rebuked only when it leads away from religion, not when it bolsters it. Thus the captive lord of Amasya is able to persuade his newly converted guards to let him escape by promising to make them rich and give them a *beylik* each. Although some of the guards first hesitate and refuse to apostatize, we are told that “they were finally taken with greed” and “led each other astray like devils”, escaping with the prisoner (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 195a). In another case the lord of Amasya and the imperial commander send a letter to Dānīshmend, making the usual threats and demanding his withdrawal from Anatolia as well as the abandonment of the new converts to Islam. In return they offer to send all his goods after him, to pay for the rebuilding of the castles he had destroyed, and to give in addition a hundred slaves, concubines, horses, mules and many goods. Dānīshmend simply orders the letter to be torn up: riches are deplorable when they detract from religion, not when they strengthen it (*Dānīshmend-nāme* 2002: 77b-78a).

It turns out from all this that in the Turkoman milieu from which the tales in the *Dānīshmend-nāme* originated, and which probably also included some followers of the Artukids, there was some degree of religious accommodation, tolerance and commingling, including good relations with Christians, but this did not preclude the Turkomans from taking what they did as *ghazā* seriously, whenever they confronted the Christians as enemies. What is more, the personal interests protected or gains won in

these clashes strengthened rather than weakened their self-image as ghāzīs. Of course we do not observe their keenness on ghazā in the epic to the same degree in their actual deeds. For example, although the epic often shows the heroes converting defeated Christians by force, ghāzī leaders like Dānishmend or Ilghāzī's nephew Belek were praised by contemporary Christian authors like Matthew of Edessa for their mild treatment of Christian subjects and for non-intervention in their faith (Matthew of Edessa 1993: 194, 232). But such discrepancies between the text and the actuality do not necessarily mean that all elements of ghāzī ideology in the epic should be regarded as spurious, late additions. It is just as possible that the Turkomans derived personal satisfaction from conceiving of their role and ethos in such a manner, without necessarily carrying out all the relevant actions in practice. Conceiving of their warfare as ghazā, whenever it was directed against Christians, and themselves as ghāzīs bent on conquest and conversion, was the personal fulfillment they derived from their daily job of going about living and surviving and "earning their bread", if not becoming rich, in the exacting circumstances of the time and the geography.

In this context Albrecht Noth underlines the private nature of jihād, citing examples that show how contemporary emirs, including Ilghāzī's brother Sokman, regarded it as their personal cause (Noth 1986: 252-53). Indeed Noth himself denies that the Turkoman troops themselves, as opposed to their emirs, could have any personal concern with jihād, on the grounds that they were so quick to disperse after gathering their booty. But if it were just as personal an affair for them as for their emirs, it should not surprise us that, after fighting the "infidel" and gathering their heavenly and earthly rewards, as we saw them doing in the Dānishmendnāme, any longer-term plans that the emir himself might entertain would matter little to them. So it does not seem misplaced to argue that although the Turkomans had to do the same things basically against all their neighbors, in order to preserve and increase their rights and possessions, they looked upon their actions as ghazā and themselves as ghāzīs whenever they happened to do these things against the Christians. This was what made a "career" out of their perennial warfare, with a personal value of its own, providing the feelings of self-worth and self-realization so evident in the Dānishmendnāme.

We do not have any good reasons therefore to assume that the recipes of jihād that are extracted from idealistic, ahistorical definitions, and then used to decide whether the dealings of Ilghāzī and other emirs with the Franks could

be called jihād or not, had any validity in the eyes of the contemporaries. Even if subordinating one's interests to an all-out onslaught against the "infidels" on Muslim territory was something that could have been demanded by the pro-jihād ulama of the time, it was not something that Ilghāzī or other emirs could have afforded. For this reason it makes little sense to claim that what Ilghāzī and other emirs did when they confronted the Franks was not jihād, or that they could not have regarded what they were doing as such, just because their policies against the Franks were determined by strategic needs and interests. It is both possible and necessary therefore to try and formulate a more realistic and flexible definition of jihād that comes closer to what Ilghāzī and his Turkomans may have made of it. Jihād was apparently the form that warfare in the area assumed in the eyes of contemporaries when the adversaries who challenged one's claims to certain properties and strategic interests in a particular case happened to be the Franks rather than any Muslim power, as was just as often the case. For Ilghāzī specifically, it was the form assumed by the task of taking the necessary strategic measures to protect a city of his, in this case Aleppo, insofar as those who tried to wrest it away from him were no longer the Seljukids but the Franks. In such cases, like the ghāzīs in the *Dānishmendnāme*, he does appear to have looked upon his clashes with the Christians as jihād and derived satisfaction from being seen and represented as a mujāhid who functioned as the protector of all Muslims in the region.

In this respect Ilghāzī reflects the ambience of the era that preceded the development of the historical "jihād movement", systematically cultivated on the ideological plane during the reigns of Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin (Sivan 1968: 59-87, 93-124). Whereas the latter launched a full-fledged campaign that promoted the idea of expelling the Franks from Jerusalem and the Holy Lands, we have seen that Ilghāzī never espoused the idea of using Aleppo as a base for a systematic campaign to expel the Franks from Antioch. However, this does not necessarily show that he was oblivious of jihād, but rather that he had his own understanding of it, much more akin to that of Turkoman ghāzīs of which the early Ottomans were yet another example.

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# Reel Politika ve Cihad: Necmeddin İlgazi'nin Erken Dönem Haçlı Devletleri ile İlişkileri

Selim Tezcan\*

## Öz

Bu çalışma, Mardin ve Halep'in Artuklu emiri Necmeddin İlgazi'nin Haçlı devletlerine karşı politikalarını değerlendirmektedir. Literatürde İlgazi'ye çoğunlukla hasbelkader Antakya Haçlılarına karşı bir zafer kazandıktan sonra bu büyük fırsatı kaçırmış, geri kalan zamanını ikincil önemde işler ve maceralarla boşa geçirmiş bir emir gözüyle bakılmaktadır. Diğer yandan da gerek bu nedenle, gerekse de Haçlılarla işbirliğini de içeren, kendi menfaat ve bağımsızlığını muhafazaya dönük politikası nedeniyle yaptığının cihad olduğu reddedilmektedir. Bu çalışmada önce olayların üzerinden giderek emirin stratejilerinin baştan sona tutarlı ve belli pratik hedeflere dönük olduğu, Antakya'yı almaya teşebbüs etmemesinin de vizyonsuzluktan ziyade akılcı bir stratejiden kaynaklandığı gösterilmektedir. Makalenin ikinci kısmındaysa İlgazi her ne kadar pratik ve çıkarlarını gözeten bir politika izlemiş ve yeri geldikçe Haçlılarla işbirliği yapmış olsa da onlarla çatışmalarını yine de cihad olarak görmüş ve göstermiş olabileceği sergilenmekte, asıl onun ve izleyicisi Türkmenlerin kendi yaptıklarına ne gözle baktığının önemli olduğu vurgulanmaktadır.

## Anahtar Kelimeler

İlgazi, Artuklular, Mardin, Halep, Haçlılar, Haçlı Devletleri, cihad, gaza

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## Реальная политика и джихад: отношения между Неджмеддином Ильгази и государствами крестоносцев раннего периода

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### Аннотация

Эта работа исследует политику Артуцкого правителя Мардина и Халеба Неджмеддина Ильгази, проводимую против государств крестоносцев. В исторической литературе Ильгази, в основном, рассматривается как эмир, который после случайной победы против Антиохских крестоносцев упустивший эту прекрасную возможность и занимавшийся все оставшее время делами второстепенного значения. С другой стороны, по данной причине и по причине того, что проводимая им политика, направленная на защиту своих интересов и сохранение своей независимости, включала в себя сотрудничество с крестоносцами, в литературе отрицается расценивание его деятельности как джихада. В данной работе на основе хронологического анализа событий показано, что стратегия эмира от начала до конца была последовательной и направленной на достижение конкретных практических целей и отсутствие попыток взятия Антиохии объясняется не отсутствием его дальновидности, а является результатом его рациональной стратегии. Во второй части статьи показано, что насколько бы Ильгази не проводил прагматичную политику в целях защиты своих интересов, а иногда и сотрудничал с крестоносцами, он всегда расценивал и показывал столкновения с крестоносцами как джихад, а также подчеркивается, что наиболее важным является то, как он сам и туркмены оценивали свои поступки.

### Ключевые слова

Ильгази, Артукцы, Мардин, Халеб, крестоносцы, государства крестоносцев, джихад, газа

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