

MOSUL & ALEPPO GOVERNOR IMAD AL-DIN ZANGI'S FIGHT AGAINST THE CRUSADERS

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Abstract

Recognized as one of the greatest heroes of the Turkish and Islamic world, Imad al-Din Zangi b. Aq Sungur was the son of Aleppo Governor Qasim al-Dawla Aq Sungur. Following the death of his father, Imad al-Din was taken under protection and brought up by Islamic world's most important commanders Mosul Governor Kerbogha, Cokurmush, Chavli, Mawdud, and Aq Sungur al-Porsuki. Each being an important name in the fight against the Crusaders, these commanders took him with them to the wars in which they engaged, and thus enabled him to gain experience. Iraqi Seljuk Sultan Mahmud assigned Imad al-Din as the Military Governor of Baghdad and Iraq in 1127, and also assigned him as Governor of Mosul in the same year. He was also in charge of Jazeera and Northern Syria, and Sultan Mahmud approved his being assigned as the atabeg of his two sons, Ferruhshah and Alparslan. Thus the Atabegdom of Mosul was constituted. Imad al-Din Zengi's appearance on the stage of history coincides with the occupation and invasion of Anatolia, Syria and Palestine by the Crusaders, when there were Crusader States of Edessa, Antioch, Jerusalem and Tripoli. Imad al-Din Zangi aimed at ensuring a strong unity and order in the Turkish and Islamic world, followed by preparation of regular and well-disciplined military troops to fight the Crusaders since he considered a confrontation with them in the absence of a plan, a policy and sufficient military power to be extremely hazardous. This power and ideal had a significant effect on the ending of the Crusader County of Edessa by Zangi, and he realised his dream by conquering Edessa on December 24, 1144. Thus The Crusader County of Edessa which was the first Crusader state found in Anatolia also became the first county to collapse. This achievement which was received with extreme joy in the Turkish and Islamic world greatly impacted the Crusaders in Europe and the East, leading to the Second Crusade.

Keywords: Imad al-Din Zangi, Crusaders, Edessa, Montferrand, Joscelin II.

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MUSUL VE HALEB VALİSİ İMÂDEDDİN ZENGİ'NİN HAÇLILARLA MÜCADELESİ

Özet

Türk-İslam dünyasının en büyük kahramanlarından biri olan İmâdeddin Zengi b. Aksungur, Haleb Valisi Kasimüddeve Aksungur'un oğluydu. Babasının ölümünden sonra İslam dünyasının önemli komutanlarından Musul Valisi Kürboğa, Çökürmüş, Çavlı, Mevdüd ve Aksungur el-Porsuki'nin himayesine girerek onlar tarafından yetiştirildi. Her biri Haçlılarla mücadelede önemli isimlerden olan bu komutanlar katıldıkları savaşlara onu da yanlarında götürerek tecrübe kazanmasını sağladı. Irak Selçuklu Sultanı Mahmud tarafından 1127 yılında Bağdat ve Irak şahneliğine getirilen İmâdeddin Zengi aynı yıl Musul Valiliği'ne atandı. O aynı zamanda el-Cezire ve Kuzey Suriye'den de sorumluydu ve Sultan Mahmud, iki oğlu Ferruhsah ve Alparslan'ın atabegi olarak onun atanmasını uygun görmüştü. Bu sayede Musul Atabegliği de oluştu. İmâdeddin Zengi'nin tarih sahnesine çıktığı dönem Anadolu, Suriye ve Filistin'in Haçlılar tarafından işgal ve istila edildiği dönemdi ve bu süreçte Urfa, Antakya, Kudüs ve Trablusşam'da Haçlı devletleri bulunmaktaydı. İmâdeddin Zengi, Türk-İslam dünyasında birlik ve düzeni güçlü bir şekilde sağlamayı sonrasında ise düzenli ve disiplinli askeri birlikler hazırlayarak Haçlılarla mücadele etmeyi hedefledi. Çünkü onların karşısına plânsız, siyasetsiz ve askeri güçten yoksun olarak çıkmayı büyük bir tehlike olarak gördü. Zengi'nin Urfa Haçlı Kontluğu'na son vermesinde bu gücün ve idealin büyük tesiri bulunmaktaydı ve nitekim 24 Aralık 1144'te Urfa'yı fethetmek suretiyle bu düşüncesini gerçekleştirdi. Böylece Anadolu'da ilk kurulan Haçlı devleti olan Urfa Haçlı kontluğu aynı zamanda ilk yıkılan kontluk olarak kayıtlara geçti. Türk-İslam dünyasını büyük bir sevince boğan bu başarı Avrupa ve Doğu'daki Haçlıları büyük bir yıkıma uğrattı ve İkinci Haçlı Seferi'nin başlamasına neden oldu.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İmâdeddin Zengi, Haçlılar, Urfa, Montferrand, II. Joscelin.

Recognized as one of the greatest heroes of the Turkish & Islamic world, Imad al-Din Zangi b. Aq-Sonqur was presumably born circa 1084 as the son of the Aleppo Governor Qasim al-Dawla Aq-Sonqur. Until killing of his father in 1094 by Tutush, Seljuk Ruler of Syria, he received a decent education under his father's supervision. Having been trained in riding, archery and war tactics till then, Imad al-Din was taken under protection and brought up by the Islamic world's most important commanders Mosul Governor Kerbogha, Chokurmish, Chavli, Mawdūd, and Aq-Sonqur el-Porsuqi after the death of his father. Each being an important name in the fight against the Crusaders, those commanders took him with them to the wars in which they engaged, and thus enabled him to gain experience. As such, Imad al-Din joined Mawdūd in the Battle of Tiberias in 1113, and joined Mosul governor Aq-Sonqur el-Porsuqi who was charged to fight against the Crusaders in 1114.¹

1 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir fi'l-Davlat al-Atābakiya bi'l-Mavsil*, ed. Abdülkadir Ahmed Tuleymât, Baghdad-Cairo 1963, p. 15; idem, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, trans. Abdülkerim Özeydin, Istanbul 1987, X, p. 399; XI, p. 105; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric al-Kurūb fi Ahbār Banī Ayyūb*, ed. Cemaeddin eş-Şeyyāl, Cairo 1953, I, p. 28. See also. W.B. Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East*, Cambridge 1907, pp. 120-121; Coşkun Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi (521-541/1127-1146)*, Erzurum 1978, pp. 19-21.

Staying in Mosul till death of Sultān Muhammad Tapar in 1118, Zangi then entered the service of Sultān's son and new Seljuk ruler Mahmūd (1118-1119), remaining loyal to him to the end. With the new era introduced with the defeat of Sultān Mahmūd in the Sāveh battle he engaged in against his uncle Sanjar in 1119, which opened the way for Sanjar (1119-1157) to accedeto the throne of Great Seljuk Empire, Mahmūd was assigned to Iraqi Seljuk Sultānate (1119-1131), continuing his rule there. In 1124, Sultān Mahmūd granted the city of Wasit to Imad al-Din Zangi as a iqta, and conferred him the Military Governorship of Basra together with Baghdad and Iraq in 1127. The reason behind such assignments was to attempt to prevent Abbasid Caliph al-Mustarshid (1118-1135) who then wished to build a worldwide dominance. Indeed, efforts of Zangi in the fight of Mahmūd, whom Sanjar urgently sent to Baghdad, against the Caliph ensured the Sultān to become victorious, and he contributed to efforts in damagingthe sole authority and dominance claims of the Caliph. Following deaths of Mosul Governor Aq-Sunqur el-Porsuqi and his successor son Mas'ud in the same year in 1127, Zangi was charged as Governor of Mosul. He was also in charge of Jazira and Northern Syria, and Sultān Mahmūd approved his being assigned as atabeg of his two sons, Farrukh shāh and Alparslan. Thus the Atabegdom of Mosul was constituted.² According to records of Ibn al-Athir and partially Abu'l-Faraj³, his being assigned as ruler of these districts was not only due to personal confidence of the Sultān in Imad al-Din but also support by prominent statesmen who were on the side of Imad al-Din. Actually, these statesmen pointed out that only a courageous, heroic and experienced person could stand against growing strength of the Crusaders in al-Jazira and Syria, and thus took a stand that brought Imad al-Din to the forefront. Actually, the Crusaders were continuing their moves to expand their presence further with an increase in their hostile moves against the Turkish & Islamic world. The Crusader County of Edessa founded by Baldwin of Boulogne on March 10, 1098 expanded its dominance over Turkish-held districts of Sarūj, Samosata, Rāvendān, Tell-Bashir, Duluk, Aintāb and Cyrrhus (Kūrus) during reigns of Baldwin and his successors Baldwin du Bourg (1100-1118) and Joscelin of Courtenay I (1119-1131), while the Crusader Principality of Antioch led by Bohemond remained as a treat in the region during reigns of Bohemond and his successors Tancred (1104-1112), Roger of Salerne (1112-1119) and Bohemond II (1126-1130). The Principality captured Byzantine Empire's cities of Misis, Adana, Tarsus and Latakia, along with Hārim, Esārib, Maarrat al-Numan and Kafartāb. Though the Crusader Principality of Antioch which organized continuous attacks on Northern Syria, in particular Aleppo was acting jointly with the Crusader County of Edessa, the Principality considered the County sometimes as a rival and sometimes as an enemy. The First Crusade led to the capture of Fatimid-held Jerusalem on July 15, 1099 and foundation of the Crusade Kingdom of Jerusalem on the Near East lands which continued its expansion during reigns of its first rulers Godfrey of Bouillon (1099-1100) and his successors King Baldwin I (1100-1118) and Baldwin

2 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir*, p. 24, 31; idem, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, X, pp. 509-510; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric al-Kurūb*, I, p. 30-31. See also. Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi*, pp. 21-27; idem, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, Istanbul 1985, p. 88-89.

3 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, X, 507, 509; Abu'l-Faraj, *Abū'l-Farac Tarihi*, trans. Ömer Rıza Doğrul, Ankara 1999, II, p. 360.

II (1118-1131). The state which attempted to capture coastlines to have access to sea also did not refrain from capturing the inland cities. Fulk of Anjou (1131-1143), son-in-law of Baldwin II who succeeded him upon his death, was not a king who was internalized and esteemed like the other kings yet he showed efforts for continuity of the state. Founded on July 12, 1109 by Bertrand son of Raymond St. Gilles, one of the most important leaders of the First Crusade, the County of Tripoli strived to expand their territory during the reigns of Bertrand (1109-1112) and his successors Pons (1112-1137) and Raymond II (1137-1152). It also endeavored for common Christian missions by taking sides with other fellow Crusade leaders in political conflicts in the region, reinforcing its status by gaining some strategically important positions.⁴

Upon his assignment as the governor of Mosul, Zangi first put the city in order, and then attempted to regain control over other territories which had been assigned to him. After capture of Nisibin controlled by the Mardin ruler Husam al-Din Timurtash, followed by capture of Sinjar and Habur, Zangi headed for Muslim-held Harran which had been under Crusader pressure for a long time. Purportedly, the Muslim people of the city were weary of Crusader attacks and could not find someone who would protect them against the Crusaders so they warmly welcomed Zangi, and did not refrain from submitting their city to Zangi. In doing this, Zangi did not have direct engagement with the Crusaders yet chose to make an agreement with Joscelin I, Count of Edessa, in order to gain more time to get prepared for a better planned and well-disciplined struggle against them, as well as capture the cities in Syrian territory, in particular Aleppo. When doing this, he was well aware of Joscelin I's intentions to capture Aleppo. Giving information on this matter, Matthew of Edessa⁵ told that Zangi went to Edessa in order to make an agreement with Joscelin, even asked assistance of Joscelin in order to establish a friendship with Bohemond II, Prince of Antioch. Supposedly, Joscelin I, who had problems with Antioch, also favored this peace offer of Zangi. This was the first time that Zangi revealed his perception of the Crusaders and his priority in waging a comprehensive fight against them. In other words, he chose to follow the same policy as his predecessor Mawdūd⁶, who had a significant role in his raising, and aimed at ensuring a strong unity and order in Turkish & Islamic world, followed by preparation of regular and well-disciplined military troops to fight the Crusaders because he considered a confrontation with them in the absence of a plan, a policy and military power as a great danger. Zangi never gave up this opinion of him till his death, and this power and ideal had a significant effect on the ending of Crusader County of Edessa by Zangi. Starting to adhere to this goal even stricter with the capture of Harran, Zangi sent troops to and conquered Aleppo; and when we headed Aleppo, he witnessed submission of cities of Manbij and Bizaa along the road to Aleppo. Subsequently, he

4 Birsal Küçüksipahioğlu, "Yakındoğuda Kurulan Haçlı Devletleri", *Sosyologca*, 3 (January-June 2012), pp. 55-62.

5 Matthew of Edessa, trans. Hrant Andreasyan, *Urfalı Mateos Vekayinâmesi (952-1136) ve Papaz Grigor'un Zeyli (1136-1162)*, Ankara 1987, p. 286-287. See also: Nikita Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din, Un Grand Prince Musulman De Syrie Au Temps Des Croisades*, Damas 1967, II, p. 335.

6 For fight of Mevdūd against the Crusaders, see: Küçüksipahioğlu, "Mevdūd b. Altuntekin: Haçlılarla Mücadele Eden Bir Selçuklu Komutanı", *TYB Akademi Dil Edebiyat ve Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 12 (September 2014), pp. 37-49.

entered Aleppo on June 18, 1128, and started reorganization of the city. Subjected to continuous attacks after the Crusaders arrived at the region, Aleppo had been ruled and defended against the Crusaders by Ridwan followed by Artuqid Ilghazi, Balak, Timurtash, and finally Aq-Sonqur el-Porsuqi. And then the city started to be ruled by Imad al-Din Zangi.⁷ As is known, Aleppo was a strategically important place both for the Turkish & Islamic world and the Crusaders. Therefore, the course of history witnessed continuous rivalry and confrontation of both sides over control of this city. Ibn al-Athir⁸ considered that the rule of Imad al-Din over Syrian cities was a grace of God, and if it weren't for him, the region would be completely captured by the Crusaders.

The next confrontation of Zangi with the Crusaders was through the Crusader Principality of Antioch. Indeed, when the Prince Bohemond II of Antioch was killed by the Danismends in Aynzarba in 1130, his wife Alice assumed government of the state on behalf of his daughter Constance. Because of Zangi, the Crusaders did not approve government of Antioch by a woman because they considered Zangi as a threat not only for Antioch but also for all Crusader states as Zangi was reinforcing his strength and approaching to his ideals. Therefore, some notables of the city believed in the necessity of asking for help from the King of Jerusalem Baldwin II. However, according to records of Crusader historian Willermus⁹, Alice passionately wanted to rule Antioch so she assigned a reliable man to take a horse with silver harnesses and bridle, snow white silk saddle to Zangi in Aleppo, probably after the July of 1130, to ask for help. Alice sent him a message that she would recognize his dominance if her demand was accepted by Zangi. As Willermus told, before delivering the message to Zangi, the person who was assigned to take Alice's message to Zangi was caught by men of King Baldwin II who then came to Antioch, brought in front of the King, and revealed all details of her plan. Accordingly, it appears as if Zangi was not aware of that help request. However, the course of events suggests that Zangi probably knew that help request of Alice, and they might reached an agreement in one way or another. Actually, it appears that the attempts of Zangi towards the Crusader State of Antioch-held cities Esārib and Hārim were previously contemplated and planned operations which could be triggered by Zangi's wish to take advantage of the ongoing turmoil among the Crusaders as well as help Alice. Ibn al-Athir¹⁰ noted that companions of Zangi demanded, during his operation against Esārib, that Zangi should stop confronting the Crusaders for safety concerns, and Zangi told them such an approach would only encourage the Crusaders, and as such they would do more harm to Islamic territories. Indeed, Zangi defeated the troops sent by King of Jerusalem Baldwin II yethe chose to act cautiously and refrained from a comprehensive confrontation which denoted Zangi's adherence to his promise

7 Azimī, *Tārīh*, trans. Ali Sevim, *Azīmī Tarihi Selçuklularla İlgili Bölümler* (h. 430-538), Ankara 1988, p. 52; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir*, p. 35 et seq; idem, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, X, pp. 510-511, 513-514; Ibn al-Adīm, *Zubdat al-Halab min Ta'rih Halab*, ed. Sami ed-Dehān, Dımaşk 1954, II, p. 242; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric al-Kurūb*, I, pp. 34-39.

8 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, X, pp. 514-515.

9 Willermus Tyrensis, *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*, *RHC. occ.*, I, XIII, 27, p. 598 et seq., trans. E. A. Babcock - A. C. Krey, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea. By William Archbishop of Tyre*, New York 1943, II, 44 et seq.

10 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, X, pp. 523-524.

that he would start a comprehensive campaign against the Crusaders after establishing a strong Islamic union. Meanwhile, those who opposed to rule of Alice and called the king for help ensured that the doors of Antioch which Alice had ordered to be kept closed were wide open for King Baldwin II who forced her daughter to stay in Latakia and Jabala, while assigning government of the city to Count Joscelin I of Edessa under an oath of allegiance to his grand daughter Constance. This showed that Baldwin II was intimidated by Zangi so he tried to keep the Crusaders in concert under a common management to the extent possible.¹¹

Imad al-Din Zangi came to an agreement with the people of Hārim, according to which they would give half of their incomes to Zangi; and then he headed Aleppo to reinforce the city. He married Aleppo ruler Ridwan's daughter and reinforced his authority. Joining forces with Sawar, an important commander who left Damascus ruler Böri, Zangi improved his ever growing reputation. Extremely pleased with arrival of that commander, Zangi assigned him as the Military Governor of Aleppo showing how much he valued him. Indeed, when Zangi left the city for military campaigns, Sawar stayed back in the city and fought against the Crusaders; and Zangi, with the sense of security in leaving Sawar behind, did not hesitate to start a military campaign against Damascus which then started to be governed by Böri who succeeded upon death of his father Tugtegin. Consequently, by the end of summer of 1130, Zangi sent a message to Böri calling for help for a campaign that he would seemingly start against Azaz region controlled by the Crusaders. Accepting this call, Böri both sent a troop of 500 soldiers and ordered his son Sevinch, who held city of Hama, to go to Aleppo with his military troops to help Zangi. Complying order of his father, Sevinch went to Zangi who ordered capture and imprisonment of Sevinch. The reason behind this move was that Zangi wanted to weaken Damascus. After that, Imad al-Din Zangi marched toward Hama, and recognizing that the city was defenseless, regained control of the city probably in September of 1130. Following Hama, besieging Hims which was then controlled by Qir-Khān b. Qarāja, Zangi lifted the two-month siege, retreated from that city as winter was coming, and first returned to Aleppo in November 1130, and then went back to Mosul early 1131. With capture of Hama, Imad al-Din gained more power in the Syrian territory. Meanwhile, the Crusaders in the territory continued to strengthen their position with the advantage of having captured the coastal cities and ports, with access to manpower and materials thanks to uninterrupted helps from the West through Venice and Genoa. Moreover, they secured their defense by fortresses which they built in the interiors and, in particular, along important road routes, and tried to have a close eye on the Turkish & Islamic world.¹²

11 Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I XIII, 27, pp. 589 et seq, trans. II, p. 44 et seq.; Azimî, p. 54; Ibn al-Adîm, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, pp. 246 et seq; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 363. See also: Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East*, p. 128-129; Steven Runciman, *Haçlı Seferleri Tarihi*, trans. Fikret İşıltan, Ankara 1992, II, p. 151.

12 Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Tarih Dimaşk*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, London 1932, p. 200 et seq; Azimî, p. 54; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tarih*, X, p. 520-521; Ibn al-Adîm, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, 245 et seq; idem, *Buğyat al-Talab fi tarih Halab*, trans. Ali Sevim, *Biyografilerle Selçuklular Tarihi*, Ankara 1982, p.159-160; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric al-Kurūb*, I, p. 41. Cf. Elisséeff, *Nuraddin*, II, p. 341 et seq; Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi*, p. 50; idem, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, pp. 89-91; Demirkent, "Haçlılara Karşı Mücadelede Başarılı Bir Türk Kumandanı: Savar", *Haçlı Seferleri Tarihi. Makaleler-Bildiriler-İncelemeler*, İstanbul 2007, p. 52 et seq.

Following death of King of Jerusalem Baldwin II on August 21, 1131, his son-in-law Fulk of Anjou who married Melisende, elder daughter Baldwin II, acceded to the throne. Same year, during siege of the Tell-Āran fortress located between Aleppo and Manbij, Count Joscelin I of Edessa died after being severely wounded as a result of collapsing trench which he ordered to be dug for pushing the fortress to fall. After his death, he was succeeded by his son Joscelin II (1131-1144) during whose reign the Crusader County of Edessa was driven to collapse by Imad al-Din Zangi. Acceding to the County throne at the age of 18, Joscelin II was, according to William Tyrensis, an alcoholic, extremely self-indulgent and sinner which cost him his country.¹³

When Joscelin II acceded to the county's throne, Imad al-Din was forced to get involved in the struggle among the successors of Iraqi Seljuk Sultān Mahmūd in September 1131, also had problems with Abbasid Caliph al-Mustarshid. Indeed, the Caliph besieged Mosul for three months starting from the end of July 1133 but siege failed and the Caliph was forced to retreat as a result of march of Imad al-Din toward Baghdad in the summer months of 1132 upon order of Sultān Sanjar.¹⁴ Subsequently, Zangi tried to capture Amid in the spring months of 1134, and also get into the act to besiege Damascus in 1135 because Ismail who succeeded Bōri who died in 1132 insistently requested Zangi to come and take the city, and he even threatened him that unless he came he would give the city to the Crusaders which denoted that Bōri was ready to accept rule and become a vassal of Zangi. However, before Zangi's arrival, Ismail was killed and succeeded by his brother Shihāb al-Din Mahmūd. Though the city people declared their support for the new ruler, Zangi did not give up Damascus and started to besiege the city as of February 1135. Muin al-Din Unur, one of Tughtegin's men, showed outstanding efforts refusing to give the city to Zangi. As a result, Zangi lifted the siege which lasted 1 month, and left the territory.¹⁵

After that, Zangi was witnessed to determine its target as the Crusader Principality of Antioch. Consequently, he captured Esārib in April 1135, followed by conquest of Zerdana, Tell-Aghdi, Maarrat al- Numan and Kafartāb. During those campaigns, in order to prevent any possible help which County of Edessa might send to Antioch, he sent a troop commanded by Sawar to the territory, and asked them to organize attacks on Tell-Bāshir, Azaz and Aytāb districts. After that event which was considered as Zangi's one of the most important victories against the Crusaders, the Crusaders were rumored to take action against Zangi but Imad al-Din Zangi did not give them a chance and forced them to retreat.¹⁶ After that, Zangi went back to Mosul, maintaining his effective position in the Iraqi Seljuk Sultānate. In 1136, his rule over Mosul was reiterated by the Iraqi Seljuk Sultān Ma'sud (1134-1152) and Caliph Muqtafi (1136-1160) after which Zangi returned to Syria in order to start a solid and comprehensive struggle with the Crusaders. Because

13 Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, XIV, 3, pp. 609 et seq., trans. II, pp. 51-53.

14 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tā'rih*, X, p. 535, XI, pp. 17-18. See also Runciman, II, pp. 158-159.

15 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tā'rih*, XI, pp. 29-31; Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Tā'rih Dimaşk*, p. 228 et seq. See also Runciman, II, p. 161; Alptekin, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, pp. 107-110; Demirkent, "Haçlılara Karşı Mücadelede..." pp. 58-60.

16 C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche*, Paris 1940, p. 355; Runciman, II, p. 162; Elisséeff, II, pp. 355-356.

the Crusader Principality of Antioch was meanwhile governed with no official prince in charge which Zangi did not ignore. In the meantime, Alice was in forced exile in Latakia, Joscelin I was dead so the city was governed by Patriarch Bernard de Valence under regency of King Fulk of Jerusalem. However, the patriarch died in 1135 and Misis bishop Raoul de Domfront was assigned as city's patriarch. Believing that the regency of Jerusalem over Antioch should come to an end, Raoul contacted Alice who wanted to take control. With the consent of Kingdom of Jerusalem, Alice returned from Latakia to Antioch, and established her dominance over the city with the help of patriarch. Even she contemplated to improve her domination by marrying her daughter Constance and Manuel, son of Byzantine Emperor Ioannes Komnenos. However, the notables of Antioch thought that the city would fall under domination of Byzantine Empire, and contacted Jerusalem, and approved to invite Raymond of Poitiers, son of Duke of Aquitania Guillaume IX, from West to East to marry Constance. Raymond did not refuse that invitation, and came to Antioch in April 1136, married Constance, and took control of Antioch (1136-1149). This was perceived as the beginning of an era which would witness a more powerful Antioch, and Raymond, among others, rose as a power against Imad al-Din.¹⁷

In that political environment, one of the most important stages of Zangi's confrontation with the Crusaders was witnessed during capture of the Montferrand (Ba'rin) Castle held by the Crusader County of Tripoli. On June 14, 1137, getting into the act following killing of Crusader Count Pons of Tripoli, Zangi marched toward Hims which was then under dominion of Damascus Atabegdom and controlled by Muin al-Din Unur, besieged the city on June 23, 1137 but failed to capture the city, lifted the siege on July 11, 1137 and headed County of Tripoli-held Montferrand (Ba'rin) Castle which linked Hims to Aleppo.¹⁸ Meanwhile, Crusader County of Tripoli was governed by Raymond II son of Pons. Zangi appeared to choose Montferrand as his target in order to take advantage of the on going political chaos. The Crusader historian Willermus¹⁹ noted that upon the siege of Montferrand in July 1137 by Zangi, Count Raymond II fussed and immediately sent a message to and called for help from King Fulk of Jerusalem. Accepting call of Raymond II, King Fulk collected troops, and went to Tripoli. When Fulk arrived Tripoli, envoys of Raymond of Poitiers, Prince of Antioch, were also there, and asked the king to immediately help Antioch as Byzantine Emperor Ioannes Komnenos (1118-1143) had headed Antioch to besiege the city. Indeed, the emperor was on a campaign toward Syrian territory. Seeing that both Crusader States of Tripoli and Antioch were expecting his help, Fulk could not decide what to do, and then decided to negotiate with his counselors to reach a decision. The joint decision taken in this meeting was that the County of Tripoli should be given the precedence, and then all of them should help Antioch all together.²⁰

Then King Fulk and Count Raymond II joined their forces, and get into the act against Zangi

17 Willermus Tyrensis, XIV, 9, 10, 20, pp. 618 et seq., 635 et seq, trans. II, pp. 59 et seq, 77-79. See also. Runciman, II, pp. 162-164.

18 Birsal Küçükspahioğlu, *Trablus Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi* (1109-1187), Istanbul 2007, pp. 132-133.

19 Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, xiv, 25, p. 643 et seq, trans. II, p. 85.

20 Küçükspahioğlu, *Trablus Haçlı Kontluğu*, pp. 133-135.

who besieged Montferrand. As Willermus noted²¹, the guides who guided the Crusaders along the way either did not know the route or intentionally dragged them into a steep mountainous route which put the army into a difficult situation not only in terms of defense but also any against attacks. Learning advancement of the Crusader power toward him, Zangi interrupted the siege and deployed his soldiers in battle order against them, as well as learnt that they were misled by their guides. A very experienced commander, Zangi pondered to create an opportunity out of this and take advantage of this. He gathered his army, gave them an encouraging speech, stood right in front of the army, and attacked the Crusaders on the hilly lands near the castle. Tired and exhausted, the Crusaders were raided as a result of which the frontline was routed, and started to run away. Those seeing the routed frontline were dragged into depression, and desperately understood that there was no hope. More than 2000 crusaders lost their lives in the battle field. Most of crusader soldiers were killed by Zangi and his army, and most of them were taken captives. The Crusaders advised King Fulk to take care of Himself, and take shelter in the adjacent Montferrand Castle. Upon this advice, Fulk retreated back to the castle with couple of his men. However, Count Raymond II of Tripoli and his knights could not escape being captured. This battle which was an overwhelming defeat for the Crusaders which Ibn al-Athir noted to be “*the most violent battle that the people have ever seen*” caused the Crusaders to lose their dominance. Fulk and his soldiers who took shelter in the castle escaped being captured but they did not take any food with themselves which caused such a big starvation that they slaughtered and ate their horses. Before Zangi approached and besieged them in Montferrand, King of Jerusalem Fulk held a meeting with his men upon which they sent messages to Patriarch of Jerusalem Guillaume, Count Joscelin II of Edessa and Prince Raymond of Poitiers of Antioch, and asked their urgent help. Given this case of emergency, the three leaders started their preparations to send help though especially Prince Raymond of Antioch was extremely worried about a potential siege by Byzantine Emperor Ioannes Komnenos. Ibn al-Athir²² stated that the monks and priests went to territories under the dominance of Byzantine and the Crusaders, and urged the people to fight against the Muslims, telling that if Zangi were to capture the Montferrand Castle and the Crusaders in it, he would shortly dominate all Crusader territories, and that the only wish of the Muslims is to capture Jerusalem. As a consequence, the Christians gathered and get into the act marching toward Syria under challenging and difficult conditions.²³

King Fulk who was then in Montferrand Castle offered surrender to Zangi provided that he let him go to his country but Zangi refused the offer, telling them that he would capture the castle by force and depressing them. Zangi organized such a powerful siege of Montferrand Castle that no messages could be received by the castle as a result of which the Crusaders did not have any information about what was going on around them and in their countries. As a consequence, King

21 Willermus Tyrensis, *ibidem*. Cf. Küçükspahioğlu, *Trablus Haçlı Kontluğu*, p. 135.

22 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tā'rih*, XI, pp. 54-55.

23 Azimī, p. 60; Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Tā'rih Dimāşk*, p. 240 et seq; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tā'rih*, XI, p. 54-55; Ibn al-Adīm, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, p. 261 et seq.; Abū Shāma, *Kitāb al-Ravdatayn fi Ahbār al-Davlatayn al-Nūriya va'l-Salāhiya*, ed. Muhammed Hilmi, Cairo 1956, I, p. 87-88; Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, xiv, 25, p. 643 et seq., trans. II, p. 85-86. Küçükspahioğlu, *Trablus Haçlı Kontluğu*, pp. 135-136.

Fulk did not know that Count Joscelin II of Edessa and Prince Raymond of Antioch set off for help together with Baldwin, the Seigneur of Marash. Zangi learnt campaign of that Crusader group, and he was also worried that Emperor Ioannes might march to Antioch. Therefore, he thought that it would suitable to come to an agreement with the Crusaders before the emperor would get there because, as Willermus told, he was concerned about campaign of the emperor as the protector of Christians, and recognized necessity of sending an envoy to offer truce to the captives in the castle before arrival of allied Crusader troops. Zangi instructed the envoy to tell the king and his companions that they could not stay anymore in that ruined castle, that his soldiers were hampered by starvation and thus lost their courage and bravery. Given that they were starving, run out of water and hope, and unaware of the Crusader powers coming to save them, the King received this offer favorably. Actually, in the very beginning when they took shelter in the castle, the King sent a message to Zangi and offered truce to him. However, given the then strong position, Zangi did not want to come to an agreement with Fulk. However, he now had concerns about Byzantine & Crusader cooperation, deeming an agreement as suitable. According to the agreement reached between August 10 and 19 1137, in return for surrender of the castle, Zangi would free all captives, including Count Raymond II of Tripoli as a sign of respect for King of Jerusalem Fulk who was considered as an overlord by all Christians in the East, as well as allowed Fulk and his entourage to peacefully and safely return to their country. Ibn al-Qalanisi and Ibn al-Athir told that Zangi asked for liberation compensation in the amount of 50.000 Dinars. In fact, Zangi liberated all captives including Count Raymond II of Tripoli, and treated King Fulk and his guards well, and had the King to wear Khil'a as a sign of respect. When the king and his companions left, Montferrand Castle was completely captured by the Turks. Ibn al-Athir considered capture of Montferrand Castle by Zangi as a "Fath al- Mubin", and tried to emphasize importance of the castle saying that "anybody who sees it will understand correctness of my words". As he also recorded, the people reached peace and safety upon Zangi's capture, and the castle was reconstructed with an increase in incomes. With the capture of Montferrand Castle, Zangi aimed to keep under control the city of Hims held by Damascus, as well as prevent the Crusaders from entering the Orontes River valley.²⁴

Upon capture of Montferrand, some sources suggest that Zangi went back to Aleppo while others suggest that he returned to Mosul, and he was concerned about Byzantine Emperor Ioannes Komnenos' campaign to the south. Though this campaign was seemingly claimed to aim Crusader States of Antioch and Edessa and the Armenians in the Cilician region, it seemed that Zangi was also among Emperor's targets. Indeed, Ibn al-Athir indicated that the Crusaders were concerned about conquests of Zangi so they sent envoys to and called the emperor.²⁵

During said Cilician and Syria campaigns of Ioannes Komnenos in 1137 and 1138, Zangi made preparations against a potential confrontation with the emperor. The emperor spent winter of 1137 & 1138 in Tarsus, and sent envoys to Zangi telling him that he would not attack him in

24 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, p. 55; Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Ta'rih Dimaşk*, p. 243; Ibn al-Adim, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, p. 262; Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, xiv, 29, p. 650 et seq., trans., II, p. 91. Cf. Küçüksipahioğlu, *Trablus Haçlı Kontluğu*, p. 137 et seq.

25 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, p. 55-56.

any way. Zangi received and hosted the delegation very good, and in return, sent a delegation led by Hajib Hassan to the emperor with invaluable gifts. With the comfort of emperor's promise, Zangi set off for besieging Hims. However, capture of Hims was to happen at a later date. Zangi sent a message to Shihab al-Din, ruler of Damascus, telling him that he wanted to marry his mother Zumrud Khatun. Then Zangi married that lady in May or June 1138, and became patron of Hims. This city was very important for Zangi because if he was to put Syrian territory under complete dominance, then this city must be captured together with Damascus which inevitably would drag him into a sovereignty struggle with the Atabeg of Damascus.²⁶

In his Syrian campaign, Ioannes Komnenos made an agreement with the Crusaders, and promised to give them the places which he would capture with their help. Indeed, the Emperor conquered Bizaa on April 8, 1138, and gave the city to Joscelin II, and then headed Aleppo held by Imad al-Din. In fact, as mentioned above, Ioannes assured Zangi that he would not confront Zangi which that attack proved to be a false assurance. That was the clear evidence that Zangi was also among emperor's targets. Zangi who was then in Hims could not respond call of the city people but sent Sawar with 500 horsemen for immediate intervention, and then personally arrived at the city immediately. The emperor attacked Aleppo in April 20, but failed and retreated. However, he did not leave the region and captured Esārib in April 22, established a garrison in and then left the city. Learning that, Sawar promptly marched toward Esārib, and put the garrison to the sword, liberated the Muslim captives who had been captured in Bizaa and brought to that city, and sent them to Aleppo. Following Esārib, Emperor Ioannes captured Kafartāb, and came to Shaizar ruled by the Munquidhs, and besieged the city from the end of April 1138 to May 21. Thereupon, ruler of the city Ebu'l-Asakir called for help from Zangi. Purportedly, Zangi favored that request but tried to act cautiously as he was concerned about emperor's power. Nevertheless, he came near Shaizar with his forces trying to menace the emperor. Even, as Ibn al-Athir recorded, Zangi sent an envoy to the emperor offering him a battle, and told him that if he was victorious all the Muslims would be liberated, otherwise Ioannes would easily capture Shaizar. Indeed, he further attempted to provoke Edessa and Antioch Crusaders against the Byzantine Empire which was no more than a strategic plan which Zangi had contemplated and implemented in order to prevent any potential coalition of the Crusaders and Byzantine against Turkish & Islamic world. In this period, the Crusaders were reported to provoke the emperor to fight Zangi. However, the emperor refused their demands, indicating that Zangi had more soldiers than he was supposed to have. Ioannes struggled hard but could not take the city, and lifted the city siege on May 21, 1138 and headed Antioch. After his departure, Hama Governor Salah al-Din al-Yaghisiyāni followed the imperial army, recapturing the city of Kafartāb which had been captured by the emperor, followed by capture of Bizaa and Esārib in the fall of 1138.²⁷

26 Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Ta'rih Dimāşk*, p. 245 et seq.; Azimī, pp. 59-61; Ibn al-Athir, *el-Kāmil fi't-Ta'rih*, trans. XI, p. 58; Ibn al-Adīm, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, p. 263. Cf. Alptekin, *Dimāşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, p. 113, 116; Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi (1118-1146)*, Ankara 1987, pp. 120-121.

27 Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Ta'rih Dimāşk*, p. 249 et seq.; Azimī, pp. 61-62; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, p. 58 et seq.; Ibn al-Adīm, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, pp. 265-269. See also: Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord*, p. 361 et seq.; Alptekin, *Dimāşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, p. 118 et seq.; Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı*, p. 121 et seq.

In addition to his victories until then, Zangi added new victories, continuing his attempts to become more powerful. Taking advantage of killing of Damascus Ruler Shihab al-Din Mahmūd in 1139, he attempted to take Damascus. Purportedly, it was Zumrud Khatun who influenced him to take such a decision as it was recorded that Zumrud Khatun wanted to take revenge for killing of his son. Actually, when Zangi made required preparation and set off for Damascus, he learnt that people of Damascus had taken necessary measures against him, whereupon he gave up the campaign, and marched toward Baalbak. He arrived nearby the city in August 1139, and started the siege which put people of Baalbak into a very difficult situation, as a result of which they asked for mercy, and surrendered their city to Zangi.²⁸ Atabeg who then directly targeted Damascus arrived at Damascus in the fall of 1139, and demanded surrender of the city. In return for surrender, he promised to give city governor Jamal al-Din the city of Hims, Baalbak or any other city that he wanted. First, Jamal al-Din received this offer favorably but then he gave up as his entourage, especially Unur, told him that it would be wrong for him to accept such an offer. Thereupon, Zangi increased his pressure on the city. However, things changed when Jamal al-Din died in March 1140 and succeeded by his son Mujir al-Din Abaq because Muin al-Din Unur who previously governed that city did not hesitate to make an agreement with the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem as Zangi arrived in front of the city again. For this, he sent Usame b. Munquidh as envoy promising to give them 20.000 Byzantios per month, as well as the city of Banyas if that city were captured from Zangi. He also told the Crusaders that they would also be in trouble in case of capture of Damascus. Acknowledging such claims of Unur to be right, the Crusaders thought that fall of Damascus would cause their being expelled from the territory so they approved an agreement with Unur. Indeed, King of Jerusalem Fulk who was desperate against the ever growing power of Zangi instantly accepted the offer. Zangi was forced to lift the siege in June 1140 upon coalition of the Crusaders with Unur. Banyas was also taken from the Atabeg, and given to the Crusaders in return for their helps. As can be seen, Muslim rulers did not hesitate to make an agreement with the Crusaders when they were stuck in a difficult situation, and tried to take advantage of every possible way in order to continue their presence in the territory.²⁹

Death of Emperor Ioannes Komnenos in 1143 pulled Zangi and Crusader States of Antioch and Edessa away from a great danger. Though Atabeg Zangi, who then grew even stronger, faced reaction of İraqi Seljuk Sultān Ma'sud, he succeeded to regain trust of Sultān. Indeed, Sultān personally encouraged Zangi to capture Edessa. Actually, Zangi clearly targeted Edessa as evidenced by his capture of many castles to the east and north of the county starting from 1139, as well as Siirt and Maden in Diyarbakir region in 1143, along with conquest of county's castles such as Tell-Mavzen, el-Muvazzir, Cemlin.³⁰

28 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, pp. 68-69. See also: Alptekin, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, pp. 122-123.

29 Ibn al-Kalānisi, *Zayl Ta'rih Dimaşk*, p. 252 et seq.; Azimi, p. 64.; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, pp. 72-74; idem, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir*, p. 58; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric al-Kurūb*, I, 85 et seq.; Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, XV, 7-11, p. 668 et seq., trans. II, 105 et seq.; Runciman, II, pp. 186-187; Alptekin, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, p. 124 et seq.

30 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, pp. 90-91; idem, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir*, pp. 65-66; İbn Wāsil, *Mufarric al-Kurūb*, I, pp. 91-92.

Since the very first day of its foundation, the Crusader County of Edessa had been a threat for the Islamic world. The county which recently started to cause harm everywhere in the al-Jazira region was posing danger against Harran, Nisibin, Ra's al-Ayn, Raqqa, and Amid. Therefore, Zangi decided to conquer the city. Zangi had full confidence in Himself and his army, and then current political situation was suitable for this. Actually, the Crusaders were at enmity with the Byzantine Empire due to campaigns of Emperor Ioannes. Furthermore, there were conflicts between Crusader States of Antioch and Edessa, bearing hostility and even hatred against each other. As Willermus noted, either state was happy when the other was in trouble. It seemed quite difficult that Kingdom of Jerusalem would come for helping the Crusaders as King Fulk died in 1143, and the kingdom was ruled by his wife Melisende and his minor son Baldwin. That is why Zangi deemed fit to take advantage of those circumstances and decided to besiege the city. His only concern was that Edessa had very strong and reinforced walls, which was the main reason behind the failure of previous Edessa sieges. Therefore, Zangi planned to conquer Edessa when the Count Joscelin II was not in the city. For this purpose, he sent spies to the city, and tried to collect intelligence about when Joscelin II would leave the city. He even tried to give a false impression that he was in a fight against Artuqids in Diyarbakir region. He also besieged the Amid Castle which had an agreement with Qarā Arslan, ruler of Hisn Keyfa. According to Anonymous Syriac Chronicle, against this attempt of Zangi, Qarā Arslan called for help from Joscelin II, promising that he would give him Bābalou (Babalu) Castle in return. With the idea of expanding his dominion, Joscelin II accepted help request, and set off from Edessa with a force that he prepared, and headed Amid to help Qarā Arslan. Purportedly, Amir Fadlullah b. Ja'far of Harran, informed Zangi about his departure from Edessa, and finding the opportunity which he had been seeking, Zangi lifted Amid siege, and started to march toward Edessa. However, Zangi preferred to send an army commanded by Salah al-din al-Yaghisiyāni to the city before hand. Two days later, he arrived in front of Edessa with his all forces.³¹

When Zangi arrived in front of Edessa he asked that the city surrendered in order to prevent bloodshed according to Islamic traditions. The offer was rejected by Latin Archbishop Hugh II and Armenian and Assyrian clerics who were then in charge of city's defense. They rejected it because they believed that Antioch and Jerusalem would come for help when they called for help. Upon refusal of the offer for surrender of the city according to Islamic traditions, Zangi decided to besiege the city from all directions. Meanwhile, Zangi was accompanied by Amir Zayn al-Din Ali of Irbil, Amir Isa of Siverek, Amir Ebu Ali of Ergani, Amir Hasan b. Gumushteghin of Manbij, and el-Yaghisiyāni. With available siege equipments and catapults, Zangi besieged the city from all directions and then ordered destruction of walls. They also attempted to put the city into a difficult situation by shooting arrows. Zangi further ordered mining of city's weak northern walls. Meanwhile, Joscelin immediately came to territory, and started to organize an

31 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, pp. 94-95; idem, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir*, 66-68; Ibn al-Adīm, *Buḡyat*, p. 162; Ibn al-Kalānisī, *Zayl Ta'rih Dimaşk*, p. 266; *Anonymous Syriac Chronicle*, trans. A. S. Tritton, "The First and Second Crusades from an Anonymous Syriac Chronicle", *JRAS*, 1933, pp. 280-281; Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, XVI, 4, pp. 708-709, trans. II, pp. 140-141. Cf. Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı*, pp. 141-144; Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi*, p. 63 et seq; idem, *Dimaşk Atabegliği*, p. 130.

operation to save Edessa from the east of Euphrates. He even did not hesitate to ask for help of Prince Raymond of Antioch whom he considered as an enemy. However, Raymond made many excuses and did not accept that request. Upon consultation of Queen Melisende with high rank statesman, the Kingdom of Jerusalem decided to assign Count Philip of Nablus, Elinand of Tiberias, and Connetable Manassé de Hierges with their military units for helping Edessa. However, they seemed to have no possible chance of victory against Zangi. As Zangi continued siege of city, he made a second surrender offer which failed once again. Thereupon, he ordered that flammable materials inserted in the mines be burnt to destroy the walls. Flammable materials placed in the mined section of walls were set on fire, destroying the wall on December 24, 1144, and Turks achieved to enter the city. Frightened and worried, people started to rush in the inner castle. However, Archbishop Hugh ordered that the gates should not be opened unless he ordered so as a result of which the people amassed in front of the door, crushing and killing each other in stampede. According to Matthew of Edessa³², the number of people who then died was around 2000. Archbishop Hugh was also among the victims. Willermus Tyrensis³³ recorded that there were people who thought Hugh deserved death, and high amounts of donations which they granted for being used for the military troops had not been given to them, and retained by the archbishop for himself. When Zangi entered the city and witnessed what happened, he sorrowed, and ordered that the city not be destructed, the captives taken be liberated, and the articles and booties be returned. Then he negotiated surrender of the city with those in the inner castle, and ensured its surrender on December 26. Except for 100 Crusaders whom Zangi ordered to be killed, Zangi forgave all people in the city, and then ordered reconstruction of the city. He even kept churches of Christian people intact, and recognized their freedom of belief. Turkish & Islamic world was extremely delighted with the abolishment of this county which put the Turkish & Islamic world into very difficult situation since 1098, disconnecting the link between Mosul and Aleppo thus separating Muslim in Syria from the Muslims in the East from each other. At the same time, it made them to think that the Crusaders would be wiped off the lands they live in. Zangi who made them cherish such a victory was honored with the most glorious titles. Indeed, Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtafi deemed Zangi worthy of titles: al-Malik al-Mansūr, Nasir Amir al-Mu'minin, and Zayn al-Islam. Conquest of Edessa had a grave impact on the West and the Eastern Crusader States. Other three Crusader States that thought that they would be the next fell in despair, and sent messages to Europe to get into the act for organizations for a new Crusade. As a result, on the grounds of Imad al-Din's capture of Edessa, Europe organized the Second Crusade which would be destined to fail.³⁴

Capturing Edessa, Imad al-Din showed his predecessors how an important successor he was.

32 Matthew of Edessa, p. 298.

33 Willermus Tyrensis, XVI, 5, pp. 711-712, trans. II, p. 143.

34 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fī'l-Tārīh*, XI, p. 95; idem, *al-Tārīh al-Bāhīr*, pp. 68 et seq.; Ibn al-Kalānisī, *Zayl Tārīh Dimaşk*, pp. 266-267; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 378 et seq.; *Anonymous Syriac Chronicle*, p. 281 et seq.; Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, XVI, pp. 4-5, p. 708 et seq., trans. II, p. 143 et seq.; Matthew of Edessa, pp. 297-298. Cf. Runciman, II, p. 194 et seq.; Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi*, pp. 64-66; idem, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, pp. 130-131; Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı*, p. 144 et seq.

The Crusader County of Edessa which was the first Crusader state found in Anatolia also became the first to collapse. This was completely the victory of Imad al-Din Zangi and his soldiers.

Zangi assigned Zayn al-Din Ali as governor of the city, and continued his conquests in the region. He captured Sarūj in 1145, he also besieged Birejik but he lifted the siege and went back to Mosul as his fellow friend Nasr al-Din Chaqir whom he assigned as acting governor of Mosul in his absence was killed by Malik Alparslan son of Iraqi Seljuk Sultān Mahmūd. As Ibn al-Athir recorded, Malik Alparslan ordered killing of Nasr al-Din Chaqir as he was influenced by some people who encouraged him to come to power, telling him that he would be the ruler of Mosul and other cities. These people told him that if he did it, Imad al-Din Zangi would be isolated; as such they tried to spoil the favorable impression of the atabeg in the Turkish & Islamic world but as a result they failed because military troops of Zangi in Mosul caught and imprisoned Malik Alparslan, thus preventing a potential commotion. Following Zangi's departure due to death of Nasr al-Din Chaqir, Armenian people in Edessa contacted Joscelin II, and tried to recapture the city. However, Zayn al-Din Ali who was in Edessa did not let it happen. Though Joscelin lost Edessa, he maintained his title, and maintained his dominance on Tell-Bashir, as the headquarters, in the lands to the east of Euphrates, in Birejik, Samosata, Duluk, Ayntāb and Rāvendān till he was taken captive by Nur al-Din Mahmūd in 1150. During his captivity, his wife Beatrice sold his lands to Byzantine Empire which lands would later be captured by Turks.³⁵

Shortly after returning to Mosul following death of Nasr al-Din Chaqir, Imad al-Din Zangi went to Aleppo and started his efforts for domination of Damascus. If he were to achieve this, he would be the only power in the region. For this, he planned to capture the Qal'at Ja'bar (Castle) along the road to Damascus connecting Mosul to Aleppo ruled by Ukailids Shihab al-Din Ali b. Salim b. Malik, capture of which castle would enable Zangi to ensure military security in the region. However, on September 15, 1146, during his attempt to capture the castle, he was martyred by his own men when he was sleeping. Ibn al-Adim³⁶ stated that he was killed by his man named Yarinquş as Zangi had scolded and threatened him. Even that person told the people in the castle that he killed the atabeg, and they damned him telling him that he killed all Muslims by killing Zangi. Ibn Kasir³⁷ told that Shihab al-Din bribed Zangi's men to kill him while Abu'l-Faraj³⁸ told that Zangi was killed by his 3 men, and they went to the city guards telling them that they killed Zangi as they wanted that news quickly disseminated throughout the city. In his another rumor, Abu'l-Faraj told that when Zangi was looking at a golden bowl prepared by the workers for him, he was beheaded from behind by one of the armored slaves. Willermus Tyrensis³⁹, on the other hand, noted that Zangi was killed by his men who were

35 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, pp. 96-97; Ibn al-Adim, *Buḡyat*, p. 163; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 380. See also. Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi*, p. 87; idem, *Dimaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, p. 132; Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı*, p. 150 et seq.

36 Ibn al-Adim, *Buḡyat*, pp. 167-171.

37 Ibn Kasir, *el-Bidāye ve'n-nihāye, Büyükk İslām Tarihi*, trans. Mehmet Keskin, Istanbul 1994, XII, p. 407.

38 Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 381.

39 Willermus Tyrensis, *RHC. occ.*, I, XVI, 7, p. 714, trans. II, pp. 145-146.

induced by owners of Ja'bar Castle, and those murderers were allowed in the city and protected. Zangi was buried in Raqqa, and his murderers were killed by his son Nur al-Din Mahmūd. A person who saw Zangi in his dream asked Zangi how the God treated him, and he told him that the God forgave him for Edessa.

Following death of Imad al-Din Zangi, his lands were shared among his sons who would make good successors of him. Of the four sons of Imad al-Din, Nur al-Din Mahmūd took Aleppo, Sayf al-Din Ghazi took Mosul, Qutb al-Din Mawdūd took Sanjar.⁴⁰

Imad al-Din Zangi was an extremely merciful person with sense of justice. During his rule, the people lived in peace and justice, and the strong did not have the chance to oppress the weak. In this regard, Zangi was told to say that two tyrants cannot agree and ally. Imad al-Din always emphasized the importance of justice, asking his officers to be fair. Indeed, his words to the Qadi whom he assigned to Aleppo reflect his sensitiveness: “*Qadi! I take this duty off me and assign it to you. When you perform this duty, beware of the God... be fair between opposing people, do not take sides, strike a balance between them. Never be afraid of anyone. Know it that we stand behind you should anybody resists you or opposes you*”.⁴¹ When he was on a campaign with his army, he never allowed his soldiers to plunder, telling them that they should not take anything from the villagers without paying them. Should anybody act in the contrary, he would immediately order his execution in front of the village, and if he heard that a soldier attacked a villager, he would immediately dismiss that soldier from the army. He treated his people well, showed no mercy to those who caused disorder and were up to mischief. He was religious and extremely loyal to God, and was extremely annoyed when somebody told him: “Are not you beware of God!”⁴² Imad al-Din cared for, protected and guarded the people working for him, never allowing anybody to do any harm to them. He also looked after families of soldiers who joined a campaign with him, thinking that their honor and dignity should always be protected. He showed the same care to his people, as well.⁴³ He was a good administrator and a good strategist, closely following up any developments in his vicinity, and making his plans accordingly. His intelligence organization which he established for this purpose was considered to be one of the best of its age. He kept his country's order and security above anything else, and never hesitated to take any action to maintain the order and security. When he was making a decision about a matter, he pondered on it, making preparations according to the worst case. He was a respected and loved person with a great reputation in the eye of his people and soldiers. He was never hesitated to fight his enemies, and even when he was defeated, he would take it in his strike and continue his struggle.

40 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, pp. 96, 103-105; Abu'l-Faraj, II, p. 381; Matthew of Edessa, p. 298-299; Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi*, p. 89-92; idem, *Dımaşk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliler)*, pp. 132-133. Regarding Imad al-Din Zangi, see also: Alptekin, “Zangi”, *İA*, XIII, pp. 526-532; Gülay Ögün Bezer, “Zengi, İmâdüddin”, *DİA*, XLIV, pp. 258-261.

41 Ibn al-Adım, *Buğyat*, pp. 165-166.

42 Ibn al-Adım, *Zubdat al-Halab*, II, pp. 283-284; idem, *Buğyat*, p. 158, 164.

43 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rih*, XI, p. 105; Ibn Kasır, XII, p. 407.

Imad al-Din Zangi is recorded as one of the greatest heroes that the Turkish & Islamic world has ever seen. Islamic sources consider him as the bravest, boldest, and the most heroic servant among the servants God has created, even the Crusaders claimed that such a hero could be born to a Crusader lady. However, Imad al-Din's mother was a Turk and known to be one of the ladies who brought up Sultān Malik-Shāh. In that era, when somebody was praised for his bravery, he was called "a valiant just like Imad al-Din".⁴⁴

44 Ibn al-Athir, *al-Ta'rih al-Bāhir*, p. 80. For character of Zangi see also. O. Gürbüz, "XII. Yüzyıl İslām Dünyasında Örnek Bir Yönetici: İmâdeddin Zengî", *Atatürk Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 38(2012), pp. 51-66.

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