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## Some Reflections of Köseadağ Defeat in Arabic Sources Köseadağ Bozgunu'nun Arap Kaynaklarındaki Bazı Yansımaları Üzerine

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**Abstract:** The biggest damage was brought to Islamic world by Mongols that took to the stage of history at the beginning of the 1220s under the leadership of Genghis Khan and conquered almost the half of the world within a half century. This invading power went down to Al-Jazeera after conquered Turkestan, Azerbaijan and Iran and almost wiped important centers of that period such as Gurgench, Samarkand, Bukhara, Marv, Isfahan off the map by destroying them. Khwarezm Shahs State that was one of the main Turkish States made ineffective in a trice. Then, just Anatolian Seljuks, namely the other major Turkish Power was continuing its existence against the invasion of Mongols stroked a nonrecoverable blow on the Islamic world.

In the period of Sultan Alaeddin Keykubad, Anatolian Seljuks that fortified the borders by taking serious precautions was both endeavoring to constitute the political association in Islamic world and create a block against Mongols by annexing the regions in the area of domination of Ayyubids and some of the beyliks in Eastern Anatolia. Considerable developments realized in the period of Alaeddin Keykubad in this sense. Indeed, Mongols who recognized the situation was waiting in their headquarters in Mugan and walking on thin ice about entering to Anatolia. On the other hand, this circumstance didn't take too long. Sultan Alaeddin was slaughtered by an assassination possible had Mongols' hand in and all the military balances changed in the region by Babaî Rebellion came to blows not long before. Seljuks had to cancel the great intrenchment on borderlines became open to the Mongol threat. As a matter of fact, Mongols subjugated Erzurum right after the rebellion and entered in Anatolia in a few months. Much as there was not a significant war between the parties faced in Köseadağ, Anatolian Seljuks was defeated. When the state was entering into the process of collapse, the change and transformations started which will shape the next centuries of Anatolia.

Several records reflected Arabic sources about the Köseadağ Defeat that is a significant threshold regarding the history of our geography are compiled, and the reflection of this defeat to Islamic world are evaluated in this study based on these records.

**Keywords:** Anatolian Seljuks, Mongols, Köseadağ Defeat, Arabic Sources, Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev.

**Öz:** 1220'li yılların başında Cengiz Han önderliğinde tarih sahnesine çıkıp yaklaşık yarım yüzyıl içerisinde dünyanın yarıya yakınına işgal eden Moğollar, bu süreç içerisinde en büyük zararı İslâm dünyasına vermişlerdi. Türkistan, Azerbaycan ve İran'ı işgal ederek el-Cezîre'ye kadar gelmiş, Gurgench, Semerkand, Buhara, Merv, İsfahan gibi devrin önemli merkezlerinde büyük tahribatlar meydana getirerek buraları adeta haritadan silmişlerdi. İstilacılara karşı durabilecek iki büyük Türk devletinden biri olan Harezmşahlar bir çırpıda etkisiz hale getirilmiş, İslâm dünyasına telafisi mümkün olmayacak bir darbe indiren Moğol istilası karşısında durabilecek tek bir devlet kalmıştı: Türkiye Selçukluları.

Sultan Alâeddîn Keykubâd döneminde Moğollara karşı güçlü tedbirler alarak sınır boylarını tahkîm eden Türkiye Selçukluları, bir yandan da İslâm dünyasında siyasî birliği temin etmeye, bu çerçevede Doğu Anadolu'daki bazı beylikler ile Eyyübîlerin hâkimiyet sahasında yer alan bölgeleri ilhak ederek Moğol karşıtı bir blok oluşturmaya çalışıyorlardı. Alâeddîn Keykubâd devrinde bu manada hatırı sayılır gelişmeler ortaya konulmuştu. Nitekim durumun farkında olan Moğollar Mugan'da bulunan



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*karargâhlarında bekliyor ve Anadolu'ya girme konusunda temkinli davranıyorlardı. Öte yandan bu durum fazla uzun sürmedi. Muhtemelen Moğolların da parmağının olduğu bir suikastla Sultan Alâeddîn katledildi ve aradan çok zaman geçmeden patlak veren Babaî İsyanı ile bölgedeki büyük askerî dengeler değişti. İsyanı bastırmak için sınır boylarında kurmuş oldukları güçlü tahkîmatı bozmak zorunda kalan Selçuklular, Moğol tehdidine açık hale geldiler. Nitekim isyanın hemen ardından Erzurum'u işgal eden Moğollar, birkaç ay sonra Anadolu'ya girdiler. Köseadağ'da karşı karşıya gelen taraflar arasında kayda değer bir savaş gerçekleşmediği halde Türkiye Selçukluları ağır bir bozguna uğradılar. Devlet yıkılma sürecine girerken, Anadolu'da sonraki yüzyılları da biçimlendirecek olan değişim ve dönüşümler başladı.*

*Bildirimizde, yaşadığımız coğrafyanın tarihi açısından önemli bir eşik olan Köseadağ Bozgunu ile ilgili olarak çağdaş Arap kaynaklarına yansımış olan bazı kayıtlar derlenecek, bu kayıtlar temel alınarak bozgunun İslâm âlemine yansımaları değerlendirilmeye çalışılacaktır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Türkiye Selçukluları, Moğollar, Köseadağ Bozgunu, Arap Kaynakları, Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev.*

## Introduction

The way of constructing the historical events in a history text is as relative as the way of comprehending of these developments. The determining factors such as geography, period, political and socio-cultural context on forming of a case are also decisive on the way of comprehending of the case subject. This is one of the reasons of being discussed of historical events within the frames referred to different meanings by the communities lived in a different time and places. The other reason that may be accepted as more important one is the changes happened in the perception of a human being who is the subject of the history. The person has been experiencing a mental evolution during the history looks at the historical events from different aspects due to each metamorphosis in question. Thus, although a historical case is a thing is always in the same position as concrete, it is shaped in each perspective, become material for new outlooks and almost rebuild as information again and again. The big philosophical metaphor as it is something non-stop changes as paradoxical takes its source definitively from here.

We can explicitly follow this theoretical base through the popular ways of comprehensions. For example, let us discuss the comprehensive way of Manzikert Battle, and the victory won here about our perspective. The strong and unignorable meaning that we referred to this incomparable success at the point of the development of Turkish history in Anatolia is the product of a modern eye. This modern eye represents the original approach, and the conscious for being conquered this motherland by ancestries of us as the subjects live the short and long termed results of the war and can watch a ten centuries history after the battle. So, we can point out that neither Ottomans and Turkmen beyliks nor Seljuks attached importance to this war such as we do.<sup>1</sup>

This condition that can be summarized as 'being the way of interpretation of the world is decisive on the attempt to the explanation of the history' comes to the fore in conceptions of the history of political and social ideologies was determinant in the 20th century such as Communism, Socialism or Liberalism. All the ideologies are history reading and also impose upon a history approach uses oneself as the base. Being fictionalized of some of the marginal religious-political movements such as Qarmatians or Shiite-Ismaelite in our history within the outline of Islamic history by Western historiographies, notably Soviet historiography that

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<sup>1</sup> See for a brief evaluation about the process of approaches concerned Manzikert Battle in history to Mustafa Alican, *Kıyametin İlk Günü, Malazgirt 1071*, Kronik Book, İstanbul 2017, p. 223 et al.

considers the history as a laboratory where they prove their thoughts in, not only that using the intellectual background of the 20th century as the base.

This theoretic and abstractive introduction that is about constructing and reflection of historical information can act as a key to analyze the reflections of Köseadağ Defeat in Arabic sources. There is a weird as is seen below. Köseadağ Defeat that corresponds with a deep breaking to form the next centuries regarding both Turkish and Islamic history reflected Arabic sources unsatisfactorily, despite the fact that these sources present detailed information about the previous periods of Seljuks. In this research, we spread on the effort to examine the reasons for this situation concerning the theoretical base that we try to draw the frame of it.

### Köseadağ Defeat And Its Importance In Terms Of Our History

Köseadağ defeat what is one of the tragical routs of Turkish history and made marks on our geography regarding short, and long termed consequences broke out in the first days of July in 1243 in Köseadağ that placed approx. 80 kilometers northeast of Sivas. Soldiers of Seljuk army that were amounted to 80 thousand with a unit sent by the ruler of Ayyubids was overcome with Mongols without even going into a thorough skirmish. Mongols led by Baycu Noyan conquered Sivas and Kayseri where was one of the most important centers of Anatolian Seljuks after the defeat in which the political leaders, notably Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev<sup>2</sup> and military leaders fought for their's life by escaping from the battlefield.

If the narratives are true, Mongols grabbed articles of gold and silver worth reaching 3000 mules and 40 carloads of armor besides 300 camel load gold from the headquarter left by Seljuks and also commandeered on economic wealth of Kayseri and Sivas. On the one hand, they were collecting the valuable goods with the treasures of Sultan of Seljuks in Sivas where they seized by compromisingly and confined themselves to loot, on the other hand, they fleeced Kayseri where they entered by force of arms. Again they grabbed all the properties of the rich people by dragooning and left the region after doing the same in Erzincan. Finally, they turned back to their headquarter in Azerbaijan.

Sultan's vizier, Mühezzibüddin Ali who took shelter in Amasya after escaped from the battlefield like Sultan took along Kadi Fahreddin and followed Baycu Noyan. They made a deal with them in Mugan. Much as the agreement requires Seljuks to give 10 thousand sheep, one thousand cattle and other various presents besides 3 million 600 thousand dirhams cash in every year means the honor loss; Sultan took kindly to this agreement. But, this was just a start, Anatolian Seljuks would enter into the domination of Mongols by becoming a colony regarding the economy after a while and lose actually their political sovereignty<sup>3</sup>.

Being demolished of a psychological barricade of Mongol progression is one of the major results of Köseadağ Defeat rendered Seljuks as a colony of Mongol. This also means that the process ended which started by being murdered of Sultan Alaeddin Keykubad<sup>4</sup> and continued

<sup>2</sup> See Osman Turan, "Keyhüsrev II," *Makaleler*, Prepared by. Altan Çetin, Bilal Koç, Kurtuba Publishing, Ankara 2010, p. 481-501 concerning Seljukid Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev.

<sup>3</sup> See Osman Turan, *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye*, Ötüken Publishing, İstanbul 2004, p. 446 et al.; Faruk Sümer, "Köseadağ Savaşı," *DİA*, 26, Ankara 2002, p. 272-273; Claude Cahen, *Osmanlılardan Önce Anadolu*, Turkish trans. Erol Üyepazarcı, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Publications, İstanbul 2000, p. 225 et ; Mehmet Ersan and Mustafa Alican, *Osmanlı'dan Önce Onlar Vardı, Türkiye Selçukluları*, Timaş 2016, p. 156-160; Erkan Göksu, "Köseadağ Savaşı (1243)," *Tarihin Peşinde*, 2, 2009, p. 1-14; Mustafa Alican, *Tarihin Kara Yazısı Moğollar*, Timaş, İstanbul 2016, p. 103 et al. for more information on the reasons, development and results of Köseadağ Defeat.

<sup>4</sup> See. Salim Koca, "Türkiye Selçuklu Tarihine Damga Vuran Menfur Bir Cinayet: Sultan I. Alâeddin Keykubad'ın Zehirlenmesi," *Selçuklu Siyasi Tarihi (Bildiriler)*, Published and Prepared by Metin Hülagü, Abdulkadir Yuvalı,

by Babai Rebellion confirms the politic and military weakness. It was understood that the precautions inactivated and the barricade demolished which obliged Mongols to wait at the east boundaries of Anatolia. Seljuks entered into the fall process gradually after the Köseadağ Defeat.

It can be stated according to metaphor cancels the state-mind of Seljuks that Köseadağ Defeat that caused Seljuks to fall into a vegetative state was the beginning of going out of the existence of Seljuk experience who gave a new direction to Islamic history. The conception of centralist Sunni political power established within the frame of caliphate found its biggest representative in Seljuks fell into ruin by being exposed to disintegration due to this defeat. This conception mentioned would evolve to a different structure by entirely losing its ground by getting out of the hand of Baghdad in 1258. In this regard, we don't see any harm to say that Köseadağ Defeat dynamited the ground of Sultanate establishment such as transforming of caliphate foundation into a titular position by losing historical, social and collector, even unitive features by the invasion of Baghdad.

Damaging of 'sultanate' notion by Köseadağ Defeat corresponds with a differentiation had an influence on whole Islamic world. Except for the fact that whether such a distinction emerged based on the failure, it is seen that this distinction became explicit by this defeat. Thus, if we think that political institution in our history organized around the sultanate fact, it can be easily understood that how a serious breakup happened by damaging of this fact. However, Turkish history of the period after Köseadağ in which the state apparatus passified and bureaucratic elites lost their *political kiblah* explicitly explained this breakup<sup>5</sup>. Anatolia Turks hid under the leaves of the history till Ottoman period developed a new political approach bases the holy war and jihad understanding on.

#### **Reflections of The Defeat in Arabic Sources**

We can point out when we look at the past that Köseadağ Defeat is one of the biggest and challenging turning points of Turkish history. But we need to underline that we consider this defeat as the subjects who know the events of approximately eight centuries period. The people who haven't a grasp of this extended period don't understand this fact like us. We can ideally follow this through the records as to Köseadağ Defeat in Arabic sources.

As far as we are concerned by our trackings in Arabic sources written since the second half of the 13th century that the sources have sufficient data about the political history of Seljuks don't contain enough information about Köseadağ Defeat. There are just nine sources have various records as to the defeat, and some of these sources are the small data. It is a big possibility to find other sources that we've never seen. But, we think that our compilation from the widely used records via chronological line is enough to present a positive sample at the point of the attitude of Arabic sources for the defeat.

The first Arabic record about the defeat that we determined is a reference in İbn al-Adim (d. 1260). It is expressed in this author's record called *Bugyat at-Talab* that a person whose name was Racih b. Ebi Bakr in Aleppo went Egypt after this defeat due to the fear<sup>6</sup>. After this

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Erhan Yoska, Ali Aktan, Muhittin Kapansahin, Türk Tarih Kurumu Publications, Ankara 2014, p. 537-559 for regarding the politic activities of Sultan Alaeddin and his killing.

<sup>5</sup> See. Nejat Kaymaz, *Anadolu Selçuklularının İnhitatında İdare Mekanizmasının Rolü*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Publications, Ankara 2011 for the most important text related to the corruption of the bureaucratic elites and the transformation of the state apparatus into a gun that is aimed at itself. See Mehmet Ersan, *Türkiye Selçuklu Devletinin Dağılışı*, Birleşik Publishing, Ankara 2010, p. 45 et al. for another text which deals with the same issue in a different framework.

<sup>6</sup> İbn al-Adim, *Bugyat at-Talab fi Tarihi Halab*, cited by. Süheyl Zekkar, Dâru'l-Fikr, Beirut, no date, p. 3547.

record is remarkable with regards to being referred to a fear about entering of Mongols to Syria, relatively first detailed information about the defeat is narrated by Abu'l-Fida (d. 1331) after a long time.

According to the narrating of Abu'l-Fida, Sultan of Seljuks asked for help from the ruler of Ayyubids via a messenger after Mongols attacked to Rum cities in 641 (1243) under the domination of Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev. The Aleppo accepted this help call and sent a militant union. This military union at Nasıhuddin Farisi's command and the other units "came from everywhere" joined to Seljuk army, but the vast size of this army could not avoid being ultimately defeated "ugly" against Mongols. Mongols who killed and captured a lot of people domineered the cities of Anatolia and also occupied the settlements of Eastern Anatolia, notably Ahlat and Amid. Seljukid Sultan Gıyaseddin who escaped first and asked for mercy secondly was subjugated of Mongols and lived under this domination until he died in 654 (1256-1257). According to the additional information of Abu'l-Fida about the defeat and the period after the defeat, Sultan left two children called Rukneddin and İzzeddin, Rukneddin was inherited the throne by escaping of İzzeddin to Istanbul. Moreover, the state administration was in Muineddin Süleyman's power whose nickname was 'Pervane' means 'hacib' in Persian language and the little son of him was enthroned after being assassinated of Rukneddin <sup>7</sup>.

The next record about Köseadağ Defeat belongs to Davadari (d. 1335). According to his narrating via the book called *Kanz ad-Durer*, Mongols invaded the Anatolian cities and made havoc of the soldiers of these regions. The Seljukid Sultan who first made a peaceful agreement with Khwarezmis also allied to the rulers of Miapharqin, Aleppo, and Mardin against Mongols. Even if they all in one fight against Mongols 'line by line' and also even they 'outcompeted for a while,' they were beaten at the end. A lot of Muslim were killed and the each malik in the army fled. While the Mongols were invading the cities of Anatolia, the soldiers of Aleppo turned back to their hometown under the harrow. Sultan of Seljuks entered into an agreement with them to get them off and be sure. As regards to the provisions of the agreement that, Seljuks would pay a thousand dinar cash for each day and give horse, mamluk, odalisque (cariyah), and hounds. Davadari additionally expressed that the Sultan of Seljuks who loved to play dogs and wildlife was "weak-minded" and enmeshed these predators in people and also caused them to die by being bitten; this is an impressive record. This same writer pointed out that İzzeddin escaped to İstanbul after the death of the Sultan and the other son, Rukneddin was enthroned as the Sultan of Seljuks <sup>8</sup>.

More detailed information is obtained by the records of Ibn al-Vardi (d. 1349) after the short record of Dhahabi (d. 1348)<sup>9</sup> who mentioned that Mongols came to Anatolia in 639 (1241/1242) and Sultan Gıyaseddin escaped from them. After Ibn al-Vardi<sup>10</sup> who expressed all the records of Abu'l-Fida as a summary, the famous Ibn Kathir (d. 1373) mentioned short but original brief about the case. According to the text of Ibn Kathir that (most probably wrongly) remarked "who are conquered the Rum country and dispossessed this land from the son of Alaeddin are Khwaremians," the "weak-minded" Sultan (it was occupied the territory of

<sup>7</sup> Abu'l-Fida, *Tarihu Abi'l-Fida al-Müsemma al-Muhtasar fi Ahbari'l-Başar, II*, Pub. Mahmud Deyyüb, Beirut 1997, p. 276.

<sup>8</sup> Ebi Bakr Abdullah b. Aybek ad-Davadari, *Kanz ad-Durar ve Cami al-Gurar, VII*, Pub., S. Abdülfettah Aşur, Cairo 1972, p. 352-353.

<sup>9</sup> Hafız Şemseddin Ebi Abdullah Dhahabi, *Duvel al-İslam*, Beirut 1985, p. 348.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-Vardi, *Tarihu Ibn al-Vardi, II*, Beirut 1996, p. 168-169. Krş. İbnü'l-Verdî, *Bir Ortaçağ Şairinin Kaleminden Selçuklular*, Prepared by. Mustafa Alican, Kesit Publishing, İstanbul 2014, p. 111.

Seljuks in his sultanate period) who loved play dogs and lions, and enmeshed predators in people died by a beat of a lion as well.<sup>11</sup>

The next historical record belongs to Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406). As regards to Ibn Khaldun, several units from Mongols came to Anatolia in 641 and Sultan of Seljuks asked for help from Ayyubids and other neighboring Turks. The Seljuks that became crowded by the military helps came from everywhere walked all over Mongols, but firstly the advance guards were defeated and then the Seljuks army went down in defeat. Much as the Sultan of Seljuks saved him and his family by escaping from the battlefield, Mongols spread to “each location of Anatolia” and occupied Amid and Ahlat by destroying the cities of Anatolia. In response, the Sultan asked for mercy from Mongols by accrediting and managed the state affairs with Mongols until his ‘pretty close death.’ Mongols caught Kayseri as well<sup>12</sup>.

The other record that we analyzed belongs to Makrizi (d. 1442) who was a Mamluki historian. It is read in his monumental work called ‘as-Suluk’ that Mongols defeated Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev by entering in the region of Anatolia and conquered Sivas, Kayseri, Ahlat, Amid by force of arms. Mongols obliged the ruler of these two cities to pay 400 thousand dinars in each year and vassaled Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev. Then, Makrizi who uniquely and of course incorrectly wrote that Gıyaseddin escaped to Istanbul and his little son, Rukneddin was enthroned and fulfilled this duty until death<sup>13</sup>.

The owner of the last record that we could determine is Ibn Tagribardi who died in 1470. According to the records of this author, the ruler of Anatolia who was “the son of Alaeddin Keykubad” accepted to pay a thousand dinar for each da and also give horses, servants, odalisque, and hounds to Mongols as a result of the agreement for peace. Moreover, Ibn Tagribardi stressed that Sultan Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev is a “young, game lover, tyrant and weak-minded person” and enmeshed wild animals in people and finally is killed by a lion among his animals. Our this author completed his record by transferring information that can not be found any other sources; ‘Mongols assigned a military governor (şahne) to Anatolia’<sup>14</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

As is seen above, the data about Köseadağ Defeat in Arabic sources are extremely inadequate, empty of detail and by way of contradicting with each other. The foremost matter that can be described as the common point is their expressions to show this defeat as an imaginary event happened in a distant geography. They seem to mention about a war that has come to fruition among states that have no contact with them and geography of Egypt and Syria. It appears to like to have been forgotten that Seljuks was the leader of the Islamic world just before one-two centuries. In almost none of the records, the Sultans of Seljuks are called as ‘Sultan,’ these authors preferred to use ‘Dominant of Rum (Anatolia)’ ‘Owner of Rum.’ What is the reason for this? How the Seljuks who provided the political association and even the religious organization relatively once upon a time, organized the military energy of Muslims against ‘rafızis and heathens’ by mobilizing the jihad thought and also brought Byzantium to his knees became an insignificant detail? Why is Köseadağ Defeat ignored by Muslim Arabs? Why is the importance of this war not understood? Why the deep cleavage occurred in Turk and Islamic history is not distinguished?

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<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Kathir, *al-Bidaya va'n-Nihaya*, Pub., Hasan Abdulmannan, No printhouse, no date, p. 2026.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *Tarihu Ibn Khaldun (al-Ibar)*, Pub., Ebu Suhayb el-Kerrâmî, No printhouse, no date p. 1337.

<sup>13</sup> Makrizi, *as-Suluk Lima'rifati Duvel al-Muluk, I*, Pub., Muhammed Abdülkadir Ata, Beirut 1997, p. 417.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn Tagribardi, *an-Nucum az-Zahira fi Muluki Misr va'l-Kahira, VI*, Pub., Muhammed Hüseyin Şemseddin, Beirut 1992, p. 307.

We can find the answers to these questions by discussing the records mentioned within the scope of the subject-history relationship. The disinterestedness towards Köseadağ is also related to the mentality change occurred in parallel with the Mongol invasion. There has been an axis shift in the center of the Islamic world by falling behind of ‘Sultanate-Sunni Caliphate centered’ approach adopted by the rise of Great Seljuks. Becoming helpless of the geographies such as Turkestan and Iran where were the sources of the Seljuks’ policy accelerated the demolition process of this state in parallel with Mongol invasion. As an outgrowth of this situation, the way of comprehending of Islamic history changed and the history built as Syria and Egypt centered. Being used to the title of “Sultan” for just the rulers of Ayyubids and Mamluks is a consequence of the center differentiation.

In here, the point that we want to underline as an attempt of experimental resolution is the effort for a ‘legitimacy construction.’ In the record that we analyzed, there was especially emphasized on ‘help call’ of Seljuks from Ayyubids and other communities against the Mongol threat. Their other focus is the inadequateness of the Sultan who was “weak-minded”. Finally, we want to indicate that situation may relate to an unconscious motive to reframe the axis shift by fictionalizing a kind of previous period story.

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