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THE ANNALS OF THE SALJUQ TURKS

*Selections from al-Kāmil fī'l-Ta'rīkh
of 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr*

translated and annotated by

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The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original may be apparent.

[609] TUGHRIL BEG'S ARRIVAL AT BAGHDAD AND THE MAKING
OF THE KHUT'BAH IN HIS NAME THERE

We have previously mentioned that Tughril Beg went to Rayy, after his return from the raid on the Byzantines, to investigate those parts. When he had finished in Rayy, he returned to Hamadhan during Muharram of this year [April 1055], announcing that he planned to perform the Hajj and put the route to Mecca in good order, and to go on to Syria and Egypt and remove al-Mustansir the Alid, the ruler there. He wrote to his men in Dinawar, Qarmisin, Hulwan and elsewhere, ordering them to prepare provisions and fodder. Rumour spread vigorously in Baghdad and sapped people's strength. The Turks rioted in Baghdad and attacked the caliph's Diwan. The Sultan Tughril Beg reached Hulwan and his men spread along the Khurasan highway. Refugees flocked to the west side of Baghdad and the Turks moved their tents outside the city.

When al-Malik al-Rahim heard of Tughril Beg's approach to Baghdad, he went up to the city by river from Wasit. Basasiri parted from him on the way because of a despatch which came to al-Rahim from al-Qa'im concerning him, to the effect that he had cast off his allegiance and written to the enemy, namely the Egyptians, and that the caliph and al-Rahim had given various undertakings to one another, but, if he favoured Basasiri, everything between them was over and done with, whereas, if he cast him off and came up to Baghdad, he could take over the Diwan, controlling it as he wished. Al-Malik al-Rahim and those with him said, 'We are obedient to the commands of the Diwan and we shall dissociate ourselves from him.' The reason for this was what has been related already. Basasiri went to the territory of Nur al-Dawla Dubays ibn Mazyad because of the marriage connection between them, and al-Malik al-Rahim went on up to Baghdad. Tughril Beg sent an envoy to the caliph with exaggerated protestations of allegiance and submissiveness, and also to the Baghdad Turks promising them [610] fair and handsome treatment. The Turks rejected that and negotiated with the caliph on the subject. They said, 'We have acted towards Basasiri in the way that we did, although he is our leader and our commander, on the orders of the Commander of the Faithful. The Commander of the Faithful promised us to remove this enemy of ours far from us, but we see that he has drawn near and has not been prevented from coming.' They requested that he be commanded to withdraw, but they received a harsh reply. Ra'is al-Ru'asa was in favour of his coming and willing to see the collapse of the Daylami regime.

In the middle of Ramadan [November 1055] al-Malik al-Rahim arrived at Baghdad and sent messages to the caliph expressing his humble obedience and stating that he left it to him to act as his sentiments dictated to establish a basis for his relations with Tughril Beg, and the same was said by the emirs who were with al-Rahim. They received the reply that the best course was

for the troops to bring their tents inside the city and erect them in the Harem, and to send an envoy to Tughril Beg, offering him their allegiance and recognition. They agreed with that and acted accordingly, sending envoys to him. He granted what they requested and promised to give them good treatment.

The caliph gave orders for the khutbah to be said in the name of Tughril Beg in the mosques of Baghdad, which was carried out on Friday, eight days from the end of Ramadan [Friday = 15 December 1055]. Tughril Beg sent asking the caliph for permission to enter Baghdad, which was granted. When he came to Nahrwan, the Vizier Ra'is al-Ru'asa came out to meet him with a large retinue of cadis, syndics, sharifs, notaries, eunuch servants and leading state officials, and the leading emirs of al-Rahim's army accompanied him too. When Tughril Beg heard of their coming, he sent his emirs to meet them on the road and also his vizier, Abu Nasr al-Kunduri. Upon arriving before the sultan, the Ra'is al-Ru'asa handed him the caliph's missive, and then administered to him and to the emirs of his forces an oath to the caliph and to al-Malik al-Rahim. Tughril Beg proceeded to enter Baghdad on Monday, five days from the end of the month [Monday = 18 December], [611] and lodged at the Shammasiyya Gate. The lord of Mosul, Quraysh ibn Badran, who had submitted to him before this time, as we have mentioned, came to join him.

ACCOUNT OF THE BAGHDAD MOB'S ATTACK ON THE SULTAN TUGHRIL BEG'S FORCES AND OF THE ARREST OF AL-MALIK AL-RAHIM

After the Sultan Tughril Beg had arrived at Baghdad, his army entered the city to provision itself and to buy what it needed from the populace. They treated them well, but on the next day, which was Tuesday [= 19 December], some of the troops went to the Azaj Gate and took one of the citizens to ask him for straw, but he did not understand what they wanted and cried out for help. The mob then raised a clamour against them, and stoned and violently attacked them. The people heard the cries and thought that al-Malik al-Rahim and his troops had decided to fight Tughril Beg. The city was in an uproar on all sides. They came 'surging from every hill [and dell]'⁸⁰ to kill any Oghuz that were to be found in the districts of Baghdad, except for the inhabitants of Karkh, for they did not harm the Oghuz, but on the contrary, they gathered them together and protected them.

Having heard of the protection that the inhabitants of Karkh had provided for his men, Tughril Beg ordered that they be treated kindly. He sent Amid al-Mulk [al-Kunduri], the vizier, to Adnan ibn al-Radiy, the Syndic of the Alids, to order him to come before him, which he did. Amid

⁸⁰ Koran, xxi, 96.

al-Mulk thanked him on behalf of the sultan, and left some cavalry with him by order of the sultan to protect him and the quarter.

The Baghdad mob meanwhile were not content with what they had done, but they went with a company of [al-Rahim's] forces outside the city to attack the sultan's army. Had al-Malik al-Rahim followed them [612] with his army, they would have gained their objective, but they hung back. His leading officers entered the Caliphal Palace and remained there, to clear themselves of any suspicion, thinking that this would be of some use to them.

Tughril Beg's army, however, when it saw what the mob had done and that they had moved outside the city, engaged them, which led to many deaths on both sides. The mob was defeated, with many of them wounded or seized. The Oghuz plundered Yahya Street and Sulaym Street, in which were the residences of the Ra'is al-Ru'asa and his family. All were sacked, as was Rusafa and the Tombs of the Caliphs. More property than one could possibly list was taken from there, because the inhabitants of those parts had transferred their possessions there, in the belief on their part that they were sacrosanct. The pillaging reached as far as the Mu'alla Canal. The people were sorely oppressed and in great terror. They carried their possessions to the Nubian Gate, the Commoners' Gate and the palace mosque. Friday prayers were cancelled because of the vast crowd of people.

The next day Tughril Beg sent a complaint to the caliph, attributing [the blame for] what had happened to al-Malik al-Rahim and his troops, saying, 'If they present themselves, they will be acquitted of blame, but if they delay presenting themselves, I shall be certain that what happened was at their instigation.' He sent a guarantee of security to al-Malik al-Rahim and his senior companions, while the caliph ordered them to make their way to Tughril Beg. So they rode to him along with an envoy sent by the caliph to declare them innocent of the suspicions that possessed the sultan's mind. When they came to his tents, the Oghuz robbed them and they robbed the caliph's envoys too. They took their mounts and their clothes.

After al-Malik al-Rahim had entered the sultan's tent, the latter ordered his arrest and that of his companions. All of them were seized the last day of Ramadan [23 December 1055] and imprisoned. Later al-Rahim was taken to the citadel of Sirawan. Al-Malik al-Rahim's rule over Baghdad had lasted six years and ten days. [613] Quraysh ibn Badran, the lord of Mosul, and the Arabs with him were also robbed. He escaped, stripped of his possessions, and took refuge in the tent of Badr ibn al-Muhalhil. They threw rugs over him to hide him from the Oghuz. In due course the sultan learnt of that, sent him robes of honour and ordered him to return to his men and his encampment to appease him.

The caliph communicated to the sultan his disapproval of the arrest of al-Rahim and his men and of the sack of Baghdad, saying, 'It was at my command and with my guarantee of security that they went out to you. If you do not release them, then I shall leave Baghdad. For I chose you and

summoned you, in the belief that respect for my noble commands would increase, that the sanctity of the Harem would be greater, but I see that the opposite is the case.' Tughril Beg released some of them, but took all the fiefs of al-Rahim's forces and ordered them to work to gain their livelihoods for themselves. Many of them went to Basasiri and joined him, so his following grew numerous and service with him became in great demand.⁸¹

Tughril Beg gave instructions that the possessions of the Baghdad Turks be seized, and he despatched orders to Nur al-Dawla Dubays that he should expel Basasiri, which he did, so Basasiri went to Rabbat Malik⁸² in Syria, as we shall relate. He corresponded with al-Mustansir, the ruler of Egypt, about offering him allegiance. Meanwhile, Nur al-Dawla pronounced the khutbah for Tughril Beg in his lands, and the Saljuqid Oghuz spread throughout the fertile hinterland (the Sawad) of Baghdad and plundered on the West Bank from Takrit as far as Nil, and on the East Bank as far as Nahrawan and the Lower Districts. Their pillaging was quite terrible. The price of an ox in Baghdad reached from five to ten *qirats*, and of an donkey from two to five. The Sawad was ruined and the population fled from it.

The Sultan Tughril Beg accepted the farm of Basra and Ahwaz from Hazarab ibn Bankir ibn Iyad [614] for 360,000 dinars and gave him Arrajan as a fief. He ordered him to put his own name in the khutbah in Ahwaz, but not in the other districts he farmed. He gave to the Emir Abu Ali, son of Abu Kalijar, Qarmisin and its dependent districts as a fief, and he ordered the population of Karkh to make the call to prayer in their mosques at dawn [with the formula] 'Prayer is better than sleep', and he ordered the Royal Palace to be repaired. This was done and its size was increased. He moved into it in Shawwal [24 December 1055-21 January 1056].

MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS

This year there was an outbreak of civil disturbance between the Shafi'i and Hanbali lawyers in Baghdad. The Hanbalis were led by Abu Ali ibn al-Farra and Ibn al-Tamimi, who were followed by a large mass of the common people. They disapproved of the loud pronouncement of 'In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate' and forbade the 'repetition'⁸³ in the

⁸¹ Lit. 'his market became brisk.'

⁸² Of the several Rahbas recorded this one is on the Euphrates between Raqqa and Baghdad. It is named after its foundation by Malik ibn Tawq, who is variously identified, in the reign either of al-Ma'mun or Hārūn al-Rashīd (see Yāqūt, ii, 764-7).

⁸³ The term translated here is *al-tarjī*. It refers to the repetition of the two parts of the confession of faith (*al-tashahhūd*) in a louder voice during the call to prayer (*al-adhān*). According to al-Qaffāl, *Hilyat al-'Ulamā' fī Ma'rīfat Madhāhib al-Fuqahā'*, Amman, 1988, 39, Ahmad b. Hanbal himself took a non-committal attitude to *al-tarjī*.

call to prayer and the personal supplications⁸⁴ during the dawn prayer. They attended at the caliph's Diwan, but the situation remained unresolved. The Hanbalis went to the mosque at the Barley Gate and prevented the imam from pronouncing the formula 'In the name of God etc.' out loud. He produced a copy of the Koran and said, 'Remove it from this text and then I will refrain from reciting it.'

— [615] — 85

In Dhu'l-Qa'da [22 January-20 February 1056] Dhakhirat al-Din Abu'l-Abbas Muhammad, son of the Commander of the Faithful, died. He was born in Jumada II 431 [18 February-17 March 1040].

This year, before the arrival at Baghdad of Tughril Beg, al-Malik al-Rahim arrested the Vizier Abu Abd Allah Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Husayn ibn Abd al-Rahim. At the Royal Palace he was thrown into a well which was then filled in. He had been a strong, effective vizier in his period of office.

— [616] — 86

[617] The Year 448 [1056-57]

THE CALIPH'S MARRIAGE TO THE DAUGHTER OF DA'UD, THE BROTHER OF TUGHRIL BEG

In Muharram of this year [April 1056] the Commander of the Faithful al-Qa'im bi-Amr Allah held a public session,⁸⁷ which was attended by Amid al-Mulk al-Kunduri, Tughril Beg's vizier, and a number of the emirs, including Abu Ali, the son of Abu Kalijar, Hazarab ibn Bankir ibn Iyad al-Kurdi, Ibn Abu'l-Shawk and other Turkish emirs from Tughril Beg's army.

Amid al-Mulk, Tughril Beg's vizier, took his place, mace in hand, and then the Ra'is al-Ru'asa proposed the marriage and a contract was drawn up

⁸⁴ The meaning of the Arabic term *qanāt* is disputed. One usage of the term is for personal prayers uttered at some stage during the formal rituals of the *ṣalāt* or regular prayer. See *EI*, 2nd ed., v, 395, s.v. *qanāt*.

⁸⁵ Omitted: i) Famine in Mecca (no food exported from Egypt this year), ii) 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Ṣulayḥī's take-over of Yemen and his Fatimid allegiance, iii) Mahmūd al-Khafājī's declaration of Fatimid allegiance, iv) Death of Chief Cadi Ibn Mākilā, succeeded by al-Dāmaghānī, a Hanafi.

⁸⁶ Omitted: i) death of Abū'l-Qāsim 'Alī b. al-Muḥassin al-Tanūkhī, ii) four other *tarjamas*.

⁸⁷ Held 'the eve of Thursday eight days from the end of Muharram [Thursday = 11 April 1056]' (*Mir'āt*, 2).