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The murder of Fātik and the Fatimid takeover of Aleppo

Abstract

The article summarises narratives concerning the murder of Fātik, an early 11th century Armenian ruler of Aleppo, and comments upon them. The sources include works of Al-Anṭākī, Kamāl al-Dīn (Ibn al-ʿAdīm), Al-Maqrīzī, and others. The course of events, the killer, and his alleged instigators, as well as their relations, and the outcome of the murder (reign of Badr and restoration of direct Fatimid rule) are discussed. Including a polemic with S.B. Dadoyan's claim that the Badr in question is Badr al-Ġamālī.

Keywords: Aleppo, Syria, Fatimids, Armenians

Abstrakt

Niniejszy artykuł stanowi opatrzone komentarzem podsumowanie relacji dotyczących zamordowania Fātika, ormiańskiego władcy Aleppo z wczesnego XI wieku. Źródłami są dzieła Al-Anṭākiego, Kamāl ad-Dīna (Ibn al-ʿAdīma), Al-Maqrīziego i innych. Omówione zostaną przebieg zajścia, osoby zabójcy i rzekomych podżegaczy, jak i relacje między nimi oraz efekty mordu (rządy Badra i przywrócenie bezpośredniej władzy Fatymidów). Podjęta zostanie polemika z S.B. Dadoyanem, utożsamiającym owego Badra z Badrem al-Ġamālīm.

Słowa kluczowe: Aleppo, Syria, Fatymidzi, Ormianie

The emirate of Aleppo, founded by Hamdanids (944), soon found itself squeezed between Byzantine Anatolia and Fatimid Egypt and Syria. After Hamdanids' fall and reigns of Lu'lu'ids and Fath, Aleppo was subdued by Fatimid Al-Ḥākīm (1016), who made Armenian ʿAzīz al-Dawla Fātik its governor (1017). Endangered by Al-Ḥākīm, he re-established autonomy of Aleppo, rekindling links with Byzantium. Al-Ḥākīm was irate, but died (1021), succeeded by his sister Sitt al-Mulk, the regent of Al-Zāhir. Fātik was killed nevertheless (1022), and this is the story of this scandal.¹

¹ Repeating *his master* by Al-Anṭākī (ANT), *Tārīḥ Al-Anṭākī ʿal-Maʿrūf bi-Ṣilat Tārīḥ Awṭīḥā*, ed. ʿU. Tadmurī, Tripoli (Lebanon) 1990, p. 377, and many sources stressing the victim was the benefactor of the killer.



Il. 1. The Gate of Antioch in Aleppo, with an inscription mentioning Fätik and Al-Ḥäkim (photo: M. Czyż, 2010)



Il. 2. A coin of Fätik. <http://numismatics.org/collection/1966.239.10>



Il. 3. The gate of Aleppo citadel (photo: M. Czyż, 2010)

The sources are Al-Anṭākī, a contemporary (11th century) source from nearby Antioch, Kamāl al-Dīn's *Zubda*, the major source for Aleppine history (13th century), Ibn al-Qalānisī (12th century) and Al-Šābi', a 11th century Iraqi source whose relevant part is found in Ibn Taġrī Birdī² and Al-Maqrīzī (15th century), etc. The renown historian Ibn al-Aṭīr is silent.

Al-Ḥākim's death was announced on the 27th of March 1021, and Fātik's situation stabilised. Sitt al-Mulk named him Taġ al-Milla *The Crown of Faith*³ and sent him robes of honour.⁴

² Ibn Taġrī Birdī (ITB), *Al-Nuġūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Al-Qāhira*, ed. Dār al-Kutub (publisher), Egypt, no date, v. 4, p. 194–195. The same text in *Mir'āt al-Zamān* (*Loc. cit.*, n. 1).

³ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376. Al-'Azīmī, *Tārīḥ Halab*, ed. I. Za'rūr, Damascus 1984, p. 335 speaks of a honour given by Al-Zāhir. He used ANT as a source (*Ibidem*, p. 346).

⁴ Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-'Adīm (KAD), *Zubdat al-Halab min Tārīḥ Halab (Zubda)*, ed. Ḥ. al-Manšūr, Beirut 1996, p. 124; Al-Maqrīzī (MAQ), *Itti'āz al-Hunafā' bi-Aḥbār al-'A'imma al-Fāṭimīyyīn al-Ḥulafā'* (*Itti'āz*), ed. M. Ḥulmī M. Aḥmad, Cairo 1996, v. 2, p. 129; Sibṭ Ibn al-Ġawzī (SIB), *Mir'āt al-Zamān fī Tawārīḥ al-'A'yān*, ed. M.A. al-Ḥinn, K.M. al-Ḥarrāt, Beirut 2013, v. 18, p. 225–226.

Actor

Fātik's position and confidence increased,⁵ he calmed down,⁶ yet still took precautions, surrounding himself with slave boys⁷ taking turns in his personal service, and removing the ones whom he expected would agree to hurt him.⁸ Yet one of them did. It was Tīzūn⁹/Tūdūn,¹⁰ an Indian¹¹ young slave, *ḡulām*,¹² one of the boys (*ṣibyān*) around Fātik,¹³ whom he made his deputy/trustee (*wakāla*),¹⁴ was inclined towards,¹⁵ brought up, favoured,¹⁶ trusted, singled out,¹⁷ and loved a lot.¹⁸

Scene

Fātik was killed in his sleep,¹⁹ at the beginning of night,²⁰ after drinking.²¹ On Saturday night,²² Sunday,²³ the 7th of July 1022,²⁴ at the centre of the citadel.²⁵

⁵ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

⁶ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁷ *Ḡilmān* means boys here, which is confirmed by calling them later boys (*ṣibyān*), and *mamālik* (slaves) word, which would not be needed if it was implied by *ḡilmān*.

⁸ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

⁹ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

¹⁰ *Idem*, *Al-Inṣāf wa-āl-Taharrī fī Daf' al-Zulm wa-āl-Taḡarrī 'an Abī āl-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī (Inṣāf)*, <https://ketabpedia.com/تحميل/الإنصاف-والتحري-في-دفع-الظلم-والتجري>, p. 31, accessed on December 19, 2020, the same basic information. The name resembles Turkish Tüzün (ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 39; that's what Zakkar calls him), which may come from being captured by Turk Maḥmūd of Ḡazna, who raided India (J. Burton-Page, *Hind* [in:] *EI2*, v. 3, p. 415), including Fatimid supporters in Multan (1006 & 1010) (Y. Friedman, *Multan* [in:] *EI2*, v. 7, p. 549).

¹¹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129; Ibn al-Qalānisi (QAL), *Dayl Tārīḥ Dimašq*, no editor, Beirut 1908, p. 72; Al- Azīmi, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

¹² ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376; QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

¹³ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376, also MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130.

¹⁴ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

¹⁵ *Loc. cit.*; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

¹⁶ *Chose*.

¹⁷ QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹⁸ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129; *بيهور ويحبه حبا شديدا*; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195; *بيهور*.

¹⁹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377 or just laying; QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72; SIB, *op. cit.*, v. 18, p. 226 in his bed.

²⁰ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

²¹ QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

²² ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

²³ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

²⁴ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124; QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72 gives year 412 AH instead of 413; SIB, *op. cit.*, v. 18, p. 309 says 414, and 'Izz instead of 'Aziz (only here).

²⁵ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124. Which is interesting, as while in ANT Badr took over the citadel after Fātik's death, in *Zubda* he was responsible for it already. And if Fātik resid-

Action

Of the two main narratives, one is Al-Anṭākī's/Kamāl al-Dīn's. The Indian entered his master's chamber with unsheathed sword hidden in his sleeve.²⁶ He found his colleague massaging²⁷ Fātik.²⁸ The boy got scared of the sword²⁹ and shook (*moved*) Fātik to wake him up.³⁰ The Indian rushed forwards.³¹ Either the first blow woke Fātik up, and the second killed him (the fate of the boy being unknown),³² or the first blow killed Fātik, and the other – the boy.³³ The Indian was promptly killed.³⁴ Fātik's poet Al-Mufaḍḍal Ibn Sa'īd wrote:

لحامه المقضي ربي عبده ولنحره المفري حد حسامه

It was for his own preordained death that he brought up his slave,
And it was for himself to be slaughtered and butchered³⁵ that he sharpened his knife.³⁷

The sword may be the slave's or his own, which is more fitting. That goes against the source's story, but Ibn al-Qalānīsī and Al-Ṣābi' confirm it,³⁸ and say it was done after Fātik drank.³⁹

ed in his palace (*Loc. cit.* & *Idem*, *Buḡyat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīḥ Ḥalab*, ed. S. Zakkār, Beirut, no date, v. 1, p. 52–53) why did he drink and sleep in the citadel?

²⁶ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377; KAD, *Zubda*, p. 124 adds that the intent was to kill.

²⁷ Forms 1/2/4 of *ĠMZ* (غمز), which Troupeau&Micheau translate as massaging. The meaning is to make signs, conspire, check the fatness of an animal by palpating it, squeeze, find fault, slander. *ĠMR* (غمر) means overflowing, filling (esp. of feelings), covering, laying on, smearing (esp. with *ḡumra*, a female cosmetic made of *wars* plant), today also soaking, pouring water. While most likely the subject is the boy, and the object Fātik, it could be the opposite. The boy was massaging Fātik, maybe (without the dot) smearing him (with cosmetic), or pouring a liquid at him, or covering. Alternatively, either this boy was slandering the Indian, or the Indian was finding fault (the culprit being the object, the boy the subject, or the other way), but it is unlikely, albeit this gives a reason for the murder.

²⁸ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377 adds that the boy was at Fātik's feet.

²⁹ *Loc. cit.*

³⁰ ليو قظه (or: *to alarm him*). Without Micheau&Troupeau's *Zubda*-based correction: لي قبضه *so that he caught him*.

³¹ *Loc. cit.*; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

³² ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377; In MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130, the first blow slit his head open, the other killed him.

³³ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

³⁴ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

³⁵ Or ربي, which would be metrically proper, but ربي fits the other side better (opinion of H. Janabi, PhD).

³⁶ Slaughtered by slitting open, esp. lengthwise or improperly, as a sheep by a wolf. Or the slaughter was *improper* (in form? the culprit's identity?) or *reproaching*, or *surprising* even.

³⁷ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125 (p. 123 the poet is called Al-'Azīzī); QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

³⁸ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130; ITB, v. 4, p. 195, also QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

³⁹ *Loc. cit.*; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

In Al-Šābi' (ITB/MAQ), Fātik returned from hunting. He bathed, ate, and drank with his usual companions. He got up, visibly drunk, and went to bed, the Indian carrying his sword. He laid down and told the lad to massage him (As he often did: it was part of the plan).⁴⁰ When the first part of the night passed, the boy confirmed he's asleep and took out his sharp sword. The first blow split his head, the second killed him.⁴¹

The plot: *cui prodest*

Fātik was succeeded by Badr.⁴² In Al-Anṭākī, he is simply his *ḡulām*,⁴³ others say more. Abū ʾl-Naḡm Badr was a Turk, used to be slave of Manḡūtakīn/Banḡūtakīn, like Fātik, whose dear friend he was back then, as his companion. This made him close, chosen associate,⁴⁴ who controlled Fātik's affairs and *ḡulāms*,⁴⁵ and commanded the citadel.⁴⁶

Al-Anṭākī does not mention Badr had a role in the murder.⁴⁷ *Zubda* gives a long version close to Al-Anṭākī's, and a brief one that says Badr made Tizūn do it. He does not seem to believe it: mentions it briefly at the end, cautiously writes *they say (qīla)*, and that they do it, because (*fā-*) Badr took the city after Fātik,⁴⁸ implying there was no evidence but *cui prodest*. Moreover, *they* also *say* he was Fātik's slave, Badr al-Kabīr *The Old*.⁴⁹ That may be conflation⁵⁰ with Lu'lu' the Old,⁵¹ who overthrew his masters⁵² (or Badr al-Kabīr).⁵³

Blaming Badr is seen – together with another motif – in the Al-Šābi' versions: Badr mislead/seduced (*istaḡwà*) the Indian, saying his master got *bored* of him, changed his attitude, and decided to kill him, but

⁴⁰ MAQ only.

⁴¹ MAQ; in ITB one blow, cutting the head off.

⁴² ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁴³ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 1, p. 129; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125 either his companion, or his slave.

⁴⁴ *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129.

⁴⁶ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125. ANT's words that he took over the citadel may point against that: ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

⁴⁷ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376–378.

⁴⁸ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁴⁹ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁰ One of many in *Zubda*, but not obvious here.

⁵¹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 255; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁵² ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 314–315; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 109–114.

⁵³ <http://lib.efatwa.ir/40310/7/599/12.12.2020>, أبو النجم بدر.

he repeatedly defended him,⁵⁴ not wanting anything bad happening to him.⁵⁵ Then he left him for a while, gave him money and clothes and displayed love (*maḥabba*) to him. He “applied himself with courtesy to obtain a secret meeting with him in a secluded place”,⁵⁶ and told him that Fātik would kill them, either if he knew about this *change* (إن علم نياً),⁵⁷ or if he knew *of them* (إن علم بنا الأمير قتلنا).⁵⁸ And it was not himself, but him, he pitied.⁵⁹ The lad asked what he could do to/for his master. Badr said that *he knows he loves him*, and that, if helped, he will make him his protégé⁶⁰ and rich, and they will live happily together.⁶¹ He made the fearful boy swear and agree to kill Fātik, while convincing him it will make him feel safe.⁶² The dialogue takes place the day it happened. Badr said Fātik would drink that night, and he (Badr) would pour him more alcohol, to get him drunk, then he should kill him – this is ITB version. In MAQ, Badr’s instructions are precise, even how to explain getting up (from bed): shedding water. The lad agreed.⁶³

After the act, it was allegedly Badr, waiting at the door,⁶⁴ who entered, saw that Fātik was dead,⁶⁵ called *ḡulāms* to get the lad killed, and took over the treasuries.⁶⁶

Badr broke the trust of Tizūn in Fātik and frightened him, while presenting himself as his saviour, which led him to do whatever he was told in the face of false alternative: the life of Fātik, or his own.⁶⁷ But there’s also the issue of what Zakkar calls Fātik’s *love tendencies* to

⁵⁴ ITB. MAQ: *pushed him away from you*.

⁵⁵ MAQ. ITB: *I fear for you*.

⁵⁶ But if he controlled the *ḡulāms*, as the same source tells us, why was it hard? One can also translate it as *until he forsook him*, or *neglected him* (Tizūn Fātik; *ḥalā bibi*). MAQ only.

⁵⁷ MAQ text. This fits *change* towards Fātik, i.e. forsaking him.

⁵⁸ ITB. *Binā* → *nabʿ*, *al-amīr* → *al-taḡayyur*. Or the opposite, but *about us* makes more sense.

⁵⁹ MAQ only.

⁶⁰ MAQ only.

⁶¹ *Ġamiʿan* (*all*) is commonly used as *together* (*maʿan* would be better), and here it makes the most sense. Usage of it as *both* would be less proper than *kilā*.

⁶² ITB sentence.

⁶³ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

⁶⁴ ITB only.

⁶⁵ MAQ only, but he had to enter.

⁶⁶ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

⁶⁷ S. Zakkar, *The Emirate of Aleppo 392/1002–487/1094*, Phd thesis, University of London 1969, p. 58–59.

Tīzūn:⁶⁸ Badr also feigningly declared that he *loved* him,⁶⁹ using a carrot of love, clothes and money, not just a stick of loss of favour and fear of death. It was not rare for slaves, also male, to be used for sex.⁷⁰

Al-Antākī's relation, read in the context of *tendencies* only, can be seen as revenge of an abused boy, not the only such case. The Qar-ṣaṭiān leader Al-Ġannābī was killed by a Slavic servant/eunuch he tried to rape,⁷¹ and while *Zubda* says Zankī was killed by his eunuchs, whom he threatened with death for drinking of his cup, so they took a precaution,⁷² and in other sources the reason his servants killed him is not given exactly, or at all, in one it was the enslavement and emasculation. C.E. Bosworth suggests sexual aspect of it.⁷³

The story could also be read as Tīzūn's jealousy/envy, which is doubtful (esp. since in Al-Antākī, unlike in *Zubda*, Fātik is killed, but not the other boy), but fits Badr starting by saying Fātik was *bored* with Tīzūn, maybe exploiting fears he (rightly or not) had. And he tried to replace the link between Tīzūn and Fātik with one to himself. In ITB/MAQ the *tendencies* appear in mentioning boredom, Badr's claims of love and care,⁷⁴ the promises of happy life together, that "the emir would kill them if he knew of them" (ITB, right after feigning love), but also Fātik's love for Tīzūn, and maybe (indirectly) in Maṅḡutakīn's love for Fātik.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ But the poem's words that he was brought up by Fātik suggest fatherly love.

⁶⁹ ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

⁷⁰ C.E. Bosworth, *Ġhulām ii. – Persia* [in:] *EI2*, vol. 2, p. 1082: *In considering the personal relationship between master and slave, the sexual aspect should certainly not be neglected.* About the Persian world, but the examples include Zankī, a Turk in Syria, like Maṅḡutakīn.

⁷¹ ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 3, p. 182. Also killed by the Slavic servant in the baths, but no rape mentioned, no reason given, Ibn al-Aṭīr (IAT), *Al-Kāmil fi āl-tārīḥ*, ed. Maktab al-Turāt, Beirut 1994, v. 5, p. 46 rape unmentioned.

⁷² KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

⁷³ C.E. Bosworth, *op. cit.*, p. 1082, based on 'Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb Tārīḥ Dawlat Āl Salḡūq*, ed. Al-F. al-Bundārī, Cairo 1900, p. 189–190, but the castration's goal is not so obvious, and it's not the only motive; QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 284 the motive is some past harm, the victim loves the killer, like Fātik; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 5, p. 279 no motive; IAT, *op. cit.*, v. 7, p. 55 little on the motive.

⁷⁴ Bigger than about himself in MAQ, but not in ITB.

⁷⁵ Such word is also used for Al-Ḥākīm's attitude towards another emir of the emirs, eunuch 'Ayn/Ġayn, whom he exalted, but crippled (ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 309–311). It does not have to denote the same. Concerning his sexuality: *Ibidem*, p. 304: he was fond of sex with women, had children; p. 329: he had his black slave rape a man.

Cherchez la femme

There's another motif, occurring in Al-Šābi': Sitt al-Mulk courted Fātik, sending him robes and horses with (golden)⁷⁶ gear, gaining his sympathy, while plotting against him until she corrupted Badr.⁷⁷ She made him promises, including making him Fātik's successor.⁷⁸ Other sources do not mention it. Al-Anṭāki's silence could be due to that he considered Sitt al-Mulk Christian-friendly.⁷⁹ But he was objective, mentioning her actions contrary to Christian interest,⁸⁰ her killings too.⁸¹ *Zubda's* silence cannot be explained. QAL does not mention it too, but he was concise.⁸² Al-'Aẓīmī says Fātik revolted, *so/after which (fa-)* he was killed, which may suggest it.⁸³

Zakkar compares this murder with that of Al-Ḥākim,⁸⁴ suggesting a conflation. But it could be confirmation. Yet Al-Ḥākim wasn't killed indoors and drunk, and not by his page, although he was close. And while Zakkar claims Sitt al-Mulk is blamed by *most sources*, and some do mention such option,⁸⁵ others blame robbery,⁸⁶ Al-Ḥākim's alleged apostasy's punishment,⁸⁷ revenge of his victims,⁸⁸ or precaution taken by a victim-to-be, later, punished by Sitt al-Mulk.⁸⁹ On another hand,

⁷⁶ ITB only.

⁷⁷ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195; also SIB, *op. cit.*, v. 18, p. 225 robes.

⁷⁸ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129 but he had to remove Fātik himself, in fact. ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195, n. 1, relating to *Mir'āt al-Zamān* & *'Iqd al-Ġumān*, in the main source it was missing. But SIB, *op. cit.*, v. 18, p. 325–326 has a briefing only, blaming Sitt al-Mulk and unnamed Badr. Of *'Iqd*, only parts on Ayyubids are available to me.

⁷⁹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 373, 375–376.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 366–370, 372–374.

⁸² Interestingly, the new governor of the citadel was eunuch Al-Qalānisi: KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁸³ Al-'Aẓīmī, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

⁸⁴ S. Zakkar, *op. cit.*, p. 60; also QAL, *op. cit.*, p. 72 n. 1, referring to Al-Šābi'.

⁸⁵ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 115; *Idem*, *Al-Mawā'iz wa-āl-I'tibār bi-Dīkr al-Ḥiṭaṭ wa-āl-Ātār (Al-Ḥiṭaṭ)*, ed. M. Zaynuhum, M. al-Šarqāwī, Cairo 1997, v. 3, p. 250–251 while many think so, it was not true, but slander made by the Easterners; Ibn al-'Ibrī (Bar Hebraeus), *Tārīḥ al-Zamān*, tr. Ishāq Armaleh, Beirut 1986, p. 79–81; Ibn Ḥalīkān, *Wafāyāt al-A'yān wa-Anbā' Abnā' al-Zamān*, tr. de Slane, Paris 1842–1848, p. 453 many think so (but not necessarily the author); IAT, *op. cit.*, v. 5, p. 566–568.

⁸⁶ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 360–363; IAT, *op. cit.*, v. 5, p. 646–647 or people's annoyance.

⁸⁷ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 3, p. 250–251.

⁸⁸ S.A. Assaad, *The Reign of Al-Hakim Bi Amr Allah. A Political Study*, Beirut 1974, p. 190.

⁸⁹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

in 1021 she killed the drinking companion of Al-Zāhir, afraid that drinking enables a plot against him...⁹⁰

Fātik's death comes in *Zubda* immediately after arrival of robes from Egypt.⁹¹ The gifts came for Fātik, but perhaps also for one who would kill him.⁹² It's tempting to see this as confirmation of Sitt al-Mulk's guilt, especially as the talk between Badr and Tizūn took place the same day as the murder. But Badr was coaxing Tizūn for a prolonged time already. On another hand, the long fight for Tizūn's mind is consistent with that Sitt al-Mulk was long plotting against Fātik, while displaying friendship (but if there was no sign of hostility, this may be later interpretation). But then this could be also consistent with the embassy theory, because Fātik's trust disregarded it as a threat.⁹³ It is more likely a person from within managed to surprise Fātik, especially since Al-Anṭākī's words suggest Fātik was aware someone may want the boys to kill him (retrospective opinion, perhaps).

But was Badr involved? He took over the city on the 13th, a week later. Why so late, if he was prepared, and the commander of the citadel, the obvious successor? He eventually submitted it to Cairo on the 10th of October 1022 (*when* Al-Ḍayf took the citadel from Badr, he handed it to the new governor, that day), 3 months after Fātik's death. It required courting and pressuring him, but there was no fight.⁹⁴ What was his goal? Could the caliph give him more than he would get as an emir, or his deputy? Money surely, power – doubtful. If loyalty to the Fatimids or money were the reason, why did not he submit immediately? If power, why did not he fight? He seems surprised, unsure. Perhaps he did not expect Fātik's death (likelier), or Fatimids betrayed him. Why would they? They minded the autonomy of Aleppo, but it was larger under Fātik. Badr was weaker, but more dependant. Why risk conflict, if he loyally murdered his emir friend? And chain him, if he submitted? Perhaps he promised ceding Aleppo,⁹⁵ then hesitated. That makes his guilt less likely, but explains his mistreatment. But could

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 374.

⁹¹ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁹² S. Zakkar, *op. cit.*, p. 58 also had the idea the embassy could be the moment of bribing Badr, or some merchant's visit.

⁹³ Al-Ḥākim was aware of such danger. In MAQ, *Itti'āz*, v. 2, p. 108, he treats Byzantine envoy nicely, yet kills those accepting his gifts.

⁹⁴ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125. It is unlikely Badr was chained while still in power, with guards. But if so, he was removed when Al-Ḍayf came with the letter (not the army).

⁹⁵ But that goes against the story, and robs him of motive to an extent.

be prevention, not punishment. There did not have to be any rupture, either. Fatimids made him do it or not, they still could, as Zakkar claims, consider his rule temporary.⁹⁶ But more so if he was not their pawn.

The Fatimids took Aleppo from Badr. Undoubtedly Al-Ḍayf came to Aleppo with his army and got it without a fight.⁹⁷ He was the one who took the city from Faṭḥ before (1016),⁹⁸ and was the inspector of Syria now.⁹⁹

In *Zubda*, Badr quickly received (maybe not in reward, but as courting) the title Wafī ʾal-Dawla wa-Amīnuhā, *The Faithful and Loyal (Keeping Promises)*, first.¹⁰⁰ This name could reflect his killing Fātik at Fatimids' request (reward), or handing over Aleppo (fawning and expectation). Zakkar claims it indicates his guilty conscience.¹⁰¹ If direct, it is doubtful: he did not chose the title, the Fatimids did. Referring it to Fātik would be rubbing in his fault, unless it was to indicate that even if he betrayed him, it was the loyalty to the caliph that counted. But officially, neither had anything to do with the killing; on another hand, there were rumours about it, thus such title could attempt to dispel people's, maybe Badr's own, doubts. This name puts him in position of loyalty, and can refer to both Fātik and Cairo. If he was not involved, to Cairo only. But if he was, then it gave him the alternative: loyalty to Fātik or to the caliph. Only one option remained. Zakkar rightly sees anxiousness in Badr's actions, and awareness the Fatimids could do what they did.

Al-Ḍayf was sent to hand him a letter (second; his title was in the first).¹⁰² Friendly at first, later he put shackles on Badr's feet, and removed him from the citadel.¹⁰³ This took place before the 10th of October 1022, when he handed over the citadel to the new governor.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ S. Zakkar, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁹⁷ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 378 he returned, and the army was with him the last time, and it is unlikely he was without it anyway; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 131.

⁹⁸ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 314–326; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 109–122.

⁹⁹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 378; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 131.

¹⁰⁰ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 130 Wafī ʾal-Dawla only; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195 mentions robes only.

¹⁰¹ S. Zakkar, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

¹⁰² KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, 130 mentions this reply of Sitt al-Mulk; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195 indirectly.

¹⁰³ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125; MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 131.

¹⁰⁴ KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

The matryoshka version of Al-Šābi' (MAQ, ITB to an extent), in which Sitt al-Mulk convinced Badr, and he convinced the Indian, are close to *Zubda*, but add some elements. Badr wrote to Sitt al-Mulk about Fātik's death, she displayed sorrow,¹⁰⁵ thanked him for guarding the city and the treasuries, made him Fātik's successor, and *gave* him his possessions. As allegedly promised, but this may be retrospective explanation.¹⁰⁶ ITB ends here, MAQ goes on.

Al-Dayf coaxed Badr until he gave the city and the citadel to the Fatimids after obtaining a letter from the caliph himself, on silk paper, which resurfaced in the times of Riḍwān (12th century). It was gracefully double-faced. It says the caliph understands what Badr has in mind, and no rumour nor slander will make him think worse of him; he sends Al-Dayf to renew the *ahd* 'alā Badr. But while it should read *ahd al-'ahd 'alā*, renewal of taking homage from him, *ahd* on its own, with other preposition, could mean taking, punishment.¹⁰⁷

But what was this slander? Disloyalty, when he agreed to hand over Aleppo? There was one he faced: killing Fātik. The source says it was Sitt al-Mulk who made him do it. But what it said about her role in her brother's death: that it was a slander made by the Easterners,¹⁰⁸ may apply here too. The Abbasids (Fatimids' archenemies), endangered by Al-Hākīm's propaganda even in Iraq,¹⁰⁹ questioned Fatimids' legitimacy and Alid origin, pressuring people to smear them.¹¹⁰ Is it a coincidence the uprising in Syria attempted to create Alid anti-caliphate then?¹¹¹ Unlike the letter, the story of *Al-Hākīm's sister's* guilt comes from Al-Šābi'. Who, at the time of the Baghdad manifesto, was an official of the Buwayhids (who controlled Abbasids).¹¹² Also, how does the far Iraqi know the details, especially the intimate talk between Badr and Tizūn they could not pass on, one being dead, and the other imprisoned, and not proud of it?

¹⁰⁵ ITB stresses insincerity.

¹⁰⁶ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 131; ITB, *op. cit.*, v. 4, p. 195.

¹⁰⁷ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 131.

¹⁰⁸ *Idem*, *Al-Hiṭat*, v. 3, p. 250–251.

¹⁰⁹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 302–303; IAT, *op. cit.*, v. 5, p. 587–588.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*, v. 5, p. 11–12; Sh. Jiwa, *The Baghdad Manifesto (402/1011): A Re-Examination of Fatimid–Abbasid Rivalry* [in:] F. Daftary, Sh. Jiwa (eds), *The Fatimid Caliphate. Diversity of traditions*, London 2018, p. 22–79.

¹¹¹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 290–292; MAQ, *Itti'āz*, v. 2, p. 87 & 95; IAT, *op. cit.*, v. 5, p. 519; Al-Rūdrāwari & H. al-Šābi', *Ḍayl Kitāb Taḡārib al-Umam / Continuation of the Experiences of the Nations*, ed. H.F. Amedroz, D.S. Margoliouth, London 1916, v. 3, p. 249–253.

¹¹² D. Sourdel, *Hilāl b. al-Muḥassin b. Ibrāhīm al-Šābi'* [in:] *EI2*, v. 3, p. 387–388.

It did not come from Al-Musabbiḥī, the contemporary Fatimid source of Al-Maqrīzī. In the extant part, he mentions Aleppo rarely and briefly.¹¹³ It was taken from Al-Ṣābi'. Al-Maqrīzī did not grasp Aleppo issues. *Zubda* lists several governors of it and its citadel after Badr. Al-Maqrīzī mentions just Al-Ḍayf governing it for a year (unlike in *Zubda*), and erroneous¹¹⁴ information of Mawṣūf giving Aleppo to Al-Zāhir, not Mirdasids (which he also mentions).¹¹⁵ On the same page, he claims Al-Ḍayf remained there for **two** years before giving it to Mawṣūf, speaks erroneously of assuming Aleppo by Al-Ḍayf from Fātik,¹¹⁶ calls Ibn Ṭu' bān *Ibn Niqyān*, and puts his arrival to Aleppo **after** it was taken by Mirdasids, which is absurd.¹¹⁷

Moreover, while Sitt al-Mulk was not keen on Fātik's independence, and did not want it to happen again (she appointed separate governors for the city and the citadel, lest case of Fātik repeat itself),¹¹⁸ the claims that their good relations, and her mourning death were false, could be either reason or outcome of the accusation. He did not necessarily break with the Fatimids completely (Al-Anṭākī points to actions, not declarations; Ibn al-Qalānīsī calls him governor), and the relations improved after Al-Hākīm's death: Al-Anṭākī says he received his second title then.¹¹⁹ Al-Zāhir's (who ruled after his revolt) name is on his coins,¹²⁰ and the role of Sitt al-Mulk may be a slur. Thus Badr could write to reassure her after her governor was killed.

In Al-Anṭākī, Al-Ḍayf returned, kept fawning Badr, appealing to his desires, until he *decided with him* to hand over Aleppo. Then he was sent away.¹²¹ The result was the same, but there's no mention of compulsion, nor it was a central initiative. His narrative does not deny that outrightly, but seems to.

¹¹³ Al-Musabbiḥī, *Aḥbār Miṣr*, ed. A. Fu'ād & T. Byānkī (Bianquis), Cairo 1978, p. 89.

¹¹⁴ Unless he commanded the city under Badr, and the citadel under Fatimids. But it is shown as happening after Al-Ḍayf's rule.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*, v. 2, p. 171.

¹¹⁶ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 131. He likely means Al-Ḍayf handed it over to Mawṣūf, Al-Zāhir's man, but misquoted his source. Or he means Al-Ḍayf was behind the murder?

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*, v. 2, p. 147.

¹¹⁸ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 378; KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

¹¹⁹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 376; others say he had it from the start.

¹²⁰ <https://www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=3628&lot=443>, accessed on December 19, 2020. Confirmed by D. Malarczyk of the National Museum, and I. Baghava.

¹²¹ ANT, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

Undead

Zakkar says Badr met his fate, suggesting death,¹²² but it is unknown. S.B. Dadoyan identifies him with Badr al-Ġamālī,¹²³ famous Armenian Fatimid vizier. Both were Abū ʿl-Naġm Badrs, but:

1. **Difference of ethnicity.** Al-Ġamālī was Armenian. *Zubda* mentions Badr as Turk. Dadoyan ignores this, and makes him Armenian, using a footnote to *Kunūz al-Dahab*. But there seems to be no such mention there.¹²⁴

2. **Coincidental similarity.**¹²⁵

3. **Difference in position.** To be Al-Ġamālī, Badr would have to be a *ġulām* of the governor of Tripoli¹²⁶ Ġamāl al-Dawla, unlikely for a former ruler.

4. **Time difference.**

A. **Lack of continuity.** Half of century in between.

B. **Young age.** The author claims that Badr, in his late 80's at his death in 1094, was born 1005–1008, thus 14–17 when Fātik died.¹²⁷

* Badr was commander of the citadel, leader of Fātik's affairs and men,¹²⁸ mastermind of a plot, emir, governor, and an old friend and comrade of Fātik, who also served Manġūtakīn. When Fātik became ruler (1016), Al-Ġamālī was 8–11. When Manġūtakīn last appeared in 997, he was -8 to -11.

* Badr was a *ġulām*, which could mean a boy, but rather a slave/freedman bodyguard of any age. *Ġulām* soldiers were young, but fighting as an unborn would put 1212 to shame.

* If Badr was one of Fātik's slave boys (*ṣibyān*), he would not need the Indian. He was blamed for the crime anyway. In general, his high position makes it unlikely he needed anyone.

¹²² S. Zakkar, *op. cit.*, p. 60. N. 34 is missing, so the basis is unknown.

¹²³ S.B. Dadoyan, *The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, v. 2, p. 80.

¹²⁴ *Loc. cit.*, n. 78; Kamāl al-Dīn (...) Ibn al-'Adīm, *Zubda* (...), ed. S. Dāhhān, p. 220, n. 5, not 3 (no edition nor page); Sibṭ Ibn al-'Aġamī, *Kunūz al-Dahab fī Tārīḥ Ḥalab*, Aleppo 1417 AH (1996–1997) at page <https://www.quranicthought.com/ar/books/الكنوز-الذهب-في-تاريخ-حلب/>, *passim*, accessed on December 19, 2020. Perhaps Dadoyan armenised Badr because of this Armeno-Turkish rivalry that he sees even then: S.B. Dadoyan, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 81–83.

¹²⁵ Other Badrs: KAD, *op. cit.*, p. 54, 58, 59–60, 86 etc.; Abū ʿl-Naġm: *Ibidem*, p. 236, 241; Abū ʿl-Naġm Badrs: Al-Rūdrāwarī & H. al-Ṣābī, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

¹²⁶ S.B. Dadoyan, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 80.

¹²⁷ *Loc. cit.*

¹²⁸ MAQ, *op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 129.

* He was Badr al-Kabīr, The Old. But this may be a conflation.

5. Al-Ġamālī's shrewdness, unlike what Dadoyan claims, is missing in Badr.



Il. 4. Bāb al-Futūḥ (Conquests' Gate) in Cairo (photo: M. Czyż, 2013)

Review

For Zakkar, the event remains an enigma.¹²⁹ We have Tizūn, his possible inspirator Badr, and his possible inspirator Sitt al-Mulk. We have a version of a reliable source that does not mention the guilt of Badr nor Sitt al-Mulk, but, on another hand, it is cordial to the latter (ANT, also QAL); we have another strong source that mentions Badr's guilt just as a rumour (KAD), and we have several sources blaming them, but they originate in Al-Ṣābi', who lived afar and was of a milieu actively smearing Fatimids. Thus while the Armenian-Indian-Turkish story of love and betrayal is luring, it may be partly or fully false, especially since it is doubtful the source knew the talks between the suspects, even though their psychology is convincing. Yet note that false evidence is not a definite proof of falsity of accusation. I presented the relations of the sources, and my comments on them, going in all directions of interpretation. If I was to point the most likely version, it would be that the possibly unsubstantiated rumour that Badr was involved in Fātik's murder was developed by anti-Fatimid propaganda to blame Sitt al-Mulk for it. But I leave the reader to decide which of the pool of arguments he finds convincing.

Source	QAL	Al-Antākī	<i>Zubda</i>		Al-Ṣābi'	
			1	2	ITB	MAQ
Killer's name						
Indian						
Close relations						
Sleep						
Second boy						
Own sword						
	Poem		Poem			
Alcohol						
Badr's guilt						
Seduction						
Sitt al-Mulk's guilt						
Attitude towards her					Al-Ṣābi'	
						MAQ
Syrian source						
Aleppo knowledge			But often conflation			

¹²⁹ S. Zakkar, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

This chart summarises occurrence of chosen motifs in different accounts of Fātik's murder, as well as their relative reliability. Green means presence, unlike red. The pale colours denote uncertainty, e.g. of assumption that the second account of *Zubda* repeats the claims of the first, longer, one in the matters that are not mentioned directly.