

RĀVENDĀN

A Castle of the Crusader Era

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Rāvendān, the castle in south-east Anatolia where many event took place during the 11th-13th century wars between Islam and the Crusaders, is now not only deserted, but left to its fate. One goes to Rāvendān castle by the road from Gaziantep to Kilis, through the town of Burc. The road is asphalted from Gaziantep to Burc, the rest being stabilized. The castle is 40 km. from Gaziantep and situated 24 km. north-west of the Kilis township.

The name Rāvendān is now known as Belenözü and is within the borders of Kilis. Only the castle is still called Ravanda. According to the 1990 census the population is 458¹. The information received from the Regional Agriculture Board and the Pistachio Nuts Research Institute shows us that in the lower regions of the Belenözü village, which has water, vegetables and fruit are grown. Pomegranate is the main fruit of the region. Barley and wheat are grown in the rocky and dry parts of the village while in the arid north there are pistachio nut trees and vineyards. The climate, like Gaziantep, is dry, the summers are hot, the winters cold with very little precipitation.

Rāvendān castle is built on a conical hill, east of the Afrin stream, near the Belenözü village. One can see the region, far and wide, from the hill. The slopes are steep and do not allow easy access. The castle is on a flat site on the peak and is surrounded by walls. The walls are divided by angled or half-circle towers at various distances from each other. A great part of the walls have collapsed and are covered with soil. The main gate of the castle looks south and from the differences in construction and construction materials, it is clear that it was being repaired from time to time. Inside the castle, in the east, there are two

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¹ Census 21.10.1990, *Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü*, II:27-Gaziantep, p. 7.

large cisterns with stairs in front. It is thought that one can go down to the Afrin stream by a secret passage from the cisterns. In the north there is the ruin of a building which probably was a palace. According to official records² no archaeological excavations connected to the Rävendân castle have taken place so far. Therefore, it is impossible to say how far back in history the castle and its surroundings dates.

The earliest sources giving information on the castle belong to the eleventh century. Both the Islamic and the Latin sources first mention this castle during the period of the Crusades. In these sources name of the castle is given in various ways. In Islamic texts al-Rävendân (الرؤندان)³, in the chronicles of the Crusades Ravandel⁴, Ravandel⁵, Ravenel⁶, in Armenian texts Aréventan⁷; yet no definite construction date can be gleaned from these sources. However, when we take into consideration the geographical site of the castle and its vantage point of the Afrin valley, we can assume that it was used by people who had control of the region in very ancient times, although there is no likely name given in any of the sources. In the most ancient time known, the Hittites were ruling over the region. However, as no excavations have taken place connected to the castle and the region no definite claims can be put forward about whether

the castle was there during this period or not. In the book *The Lands of the Hittites*, J. Garstang writes in the chapter on the Afrin valley, that the Rävendân (Rowanduz) built on a hill, surrounded by mulberry orchards and vineyards, was a castle built in the middle ages⁸. In the middle ages, till the conquest of İslam, the Byzantine Empire ruled in the region. In spite of this one does not come across the name of the castle in Byzantine sources. The name Rävendân should have been included in the *De Aedificiis*⁹ written by the historian of the period Procopius, while citing the castles built or repaired on the borders, as Procopius was recording the great construction activities during the reign of Justinian the Great (527-565) in the 6th century. Yet, no mention is made either by Procopius or later Byzantine historians.

The Islamic conquest which started towards the mid 7th century and spread swiftly, reached as far as the Toros (Taurus) mountains in Anatolia, after the conquest of Syria and Jezîreh and these mountains became the borders between Byzantium and the İslamic territories. The area in the south and east of this border developed as military zones called (awâsım) and (sugür) and many fortresses were built for attacks and defence against Byzantium. However, again no records can be found of the name Rävendân or any other name which can be taken for Rävendân¹⁰.

Also, during the second half of the 10th century, when Byzantium started a great military campaign on the Eastern front against the Muslim world -- the campaigns of emperor Nicephorus Phocas (963-69) and emperor John Tzimisce (969-76) -- all the frontier fortresses and military zones are mentioned in the chronicles, but yet again there is no name such as Rävendân or any name which might be taken for the castle. It is not even mentioned in the frontier wars between the two sides which continued all through the 11th century. It can be assumed, however, that this castle which has come down to our age is a Byzantine structure built at the end of 11th century at the latest¹¹. What is definite is that we have to accept the fact that the castle was there

² F. Yurtseven and H. Yaşar, *Gaziantep'in Tarihi, Arkeolojisi ve Müzesi*, Gaziantep 1977, p. 65.

³ Yâkût al-Rûmî al-Hamavî, *Mu'cam al-Buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, 6 vols., Leipzig 1866-73, II, p. 741; Bahâ al-Dîn İbn Shaddâd, *al-Navâdir al-Sultâniyya va'l-Mahâsin al-Yusufiyya*, ed. C. Shayyâl, Cairo 1317 (1903), p. 57; İbn al-Asîr, *al-Kâmil fi al-Târîh*, ed. C.J. Tornberg, (new edition) Beirut 1966, XI, p. 155; İbn al-Asîr, *al-Târîh el-Bâhir fi-Davlat al-Atabakiyya bi al-Mavsil*, ed. A.A. Tulaymât, Cairo 1382 (1963), p. 103; Kamâl al-Dîn, *Bugyât al-Talâh fi-Târîh Halab*, Süleymaniye Kitaplığı Ayasofya Müzesi Kitapları, No: 3036, ed. F. Sezgin, Frankfurt 1986, p. 69 ff; İbid, *Zubdât al-Halab min Târîh Halab*, ed. S. Dahhân, Dumaşk 1951-68, II, p. 194, 303, III, p. 138-152 ff, 201; Abû Shâma, *Kitab ar-Ravzatayn fi Ahbâr al-Davlatayn al-Nûriyya va'l-Salâhiyya*, ed. M. Hilmi M. Ahmad, Cairo 1287-88, II, p. 23, 74; Abû Shâma, *Zayl al-Ravzatayn*, ed. Cairo 1947, pp. 20, 145; İzz al-Dîn İbn Shaddâd, *al-'ak al-Hatira fi zikr umarâ al-Shâm va'l-Jazira*, Revan Köşkü, No:1564, 137^b-139^a; İbid, *Sirat al-Malik al-Zâhir Baybars*, Edirne Selimiye Kütüphanesi, No:1507, 232^b-266^b, ed. A. Hutait, *Die Geschichte des Sultans Baibars*, Wiesbaden 1983, p. 326, 358; İbn Wâsil, *Mufarrıj al-Kurûb*, ed. C. Şayyâl, Cairo 1953-72, III, p. 131, IV, p. 207; Abû al-Fedâ, *al-Muhtasar fi Târîh al-Bashar*, Cairo 1325, III, p. 23, 101, 137; İbid, *Takvim al-Buldân (Geographie d'Aboulfedâ)*, ed. M. Reinaud, Paris 1840, p. 50, 266, 267; İbn al-Furât, *Târîh (The History of İbn al-Furat)*, ed. H. Al-Shamma, Basra, 1969, IV/2, p. 225; al-Kalkashandî, *Kitâb Subh al-ashâ*, Cairo 1913, IV, p. 81, 121, 227.

⁴ Albertus Aquensis, *Liber Christianae Expeditionis pro Ereptione, Emundatione et Restitutione Sanctae Hierosolymitanae Ecclesiae*, *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, Occidentaux (RHC occ)*, vol. IV, III, 17-18, p. 351, trans. H. Hefele, *Albert von Aachen. Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, 2 vols, Jena 1923, I, p. 108.

⁵ Albertus Aquensis, *RHC occ.*, IV, III, 31, p. 361, trans. Hefele, I, p. 124.

⁶ Willermus Tyrensis, *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*, *RHC occ.*, I, VII, 5, p. 283, trans. E. and R. Kausler, *Geschichte des Kreuzzüge und Königreichs Jerusalem*, Stuttgart 1844, p. 158.

⁷ Matthew of Edessa, *RHC Documents armeniennes*, I, p. 87.

⁸ J. Garstang, *The Lands of the Hittites*, London 1910, p. 9.

⁹ Procopius, *De Aedificiis*, ed. Cl. Maltreto, *Procopii Caesariensis, Opera*, Venedig 1729

¹⁰ In Islamic works the name al-Rävendân is first mentioned in the context of evens of the 12 the century. Even though the name of castle is recorded as Revanât in Wâkidi's *Futûh al-Shâm* (II, p. 5,11), we know that these books were written in the 13 the century and are not original.

¹¹ In the book *Gaziantep'in Tarihi, Arkeolojisi ve Müzesi* (p.65) it is written that the castle is a Byzantine structure. Cl. Cahen (*La Syrie du Nord a l'Epoque des Croisades et la Principauté Franque d'Antioche*, Paris 1940, p. 117 ff.) thinks that although the castle was first built in the 11 the century, it was completed by the Crusaders and Saladin.

before the Crusades started; because in late 1097 the castle was taken from the Turks by the Crusaders.

When the First Crusading army arrived before the ramparts of Antioch in the autumn of 1097 and laid siege to the city, Rāvendān was still in the hands of the Turks and according to the records of Kamāl al-Dīn belonged to Ridwān, melik of Aleppo¹². Yet we could find no clue in the sources as to when exactly the castle was taken by the Turks. What is definite and important is that the Rāvendān castle was already standing and in the hands of the Turks in late 1097.

The initial information we find on Rāvendān were given in Latin sources writing about the Crusades. In the *Liber Christianae Expeditionis pro Ereptione, Emundatione et Restitutione Sanctae Hierosolymitanae Ecclesiae* which is one of the most important sources of the First Crusade, Albertus Aquensis writes that Ravendel castle was taken from the Turks by Baldwin of Boulogne¹³. Baldwin¹⁴ had participated in the First Crusade together with his brother Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine. Being the youngest son of the family he had no property or land in his own country. He had joined the campaign more in order to obtain wealth for himself than because of religious feelings. Therefore, as soon as he came to Anatolia he started looking round for people who would be able to help him and while the Crusading army was still before the walls of Nicaea he met the Armenian Bagrat¹⁵ and with whose encouragement and influence he became convinced that he might be able to succeed in his plans in south-east Anatolia, in Edessa. With this in mind Baldwin with a force of 700 took leave of the main Crusading army in Germaniceia (Marash) and set out for Edessa, on the way, taking the fortresses belonging to the Turks on the west bank of the Euphrates river. We see that he had to toil for three months to take these insignificant castles¹⁶. The Turks, in

¹² See *Bugvat*, I, p. 329 ff.

¹³ Albertus Aquensis, *RHC occ.*, IV, iv, 6, p. 393, trans. H. Hefele, I, p. 172.

¹⁴ For detailed information on the activities of Baldwin of Boulogne in Anatolia, his coming to Edessa and the first Crusader state, see I. Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi (1098-1118)*, I, Ankara 1990, p. 1-74.

¹⁵ The name of this Armenian chief is given differently in different sources: Albertus Aquensis (II, 17, pp.351, v, 14, pp.441, trans.H.Hefele, I, pp.108, 243) has written it as Pancracius, Pancratius, Pancras. Willermus Tyrensis (same place) says that Bagrat is the brother of Gogh Vasil, the ruler of Rabān and Kaysun.

¹⁶ It is clear from the sources that Baldwin did not only easily take this small area as it is claimed by contemporary Crusader historians. On the contrary we see that he had to struggle for at least months. We see from the information in the sources that Baldwin of Boulogne left the main Crusading army in Maraş

spite of their small numbers and the treachery of the Christian population, were not willing to let go easily these lands where they were trying to settle and make a home. Finally Baldwin, with the help of Bagrat and other Armenian chiefs whose names are given as Fer and Nicusus¹⁷ in Latin sources, first managed to take Turbessel (Tell-Bāshir) and then Rāvendān. Giving Turbessel to Fer and the command of Rāvendān castle to Bagrat, he rewarded them for their help.

However, after a short time Baldwin and Bagrat fell out. Bagrat who was responsible for the military command of Rāvendān castle left his son as deputy and ordered him not to let the Crusaders enter. The reason being that, as the castle was on a very difficult to climb up the castle due to its height, and Bagrat was hoping to become an independent ruler here. Certainly Bagrat must have known that Baldwin had no intention of giving land taken from the Turks to the Armenians but that he himself was intending to be ruler. Perhaps he thought that Rāvendān was a convenient sanctuary and would be of assistance in getting rid of Baldwin. According to Albertus Aquensis, when Baldwin learned of Bagrat's intentions he immediately had him arrested and ordered him to take in a Crusading force. At first Bagrat stubbornly refused and even put up with torture. Finally, under threat of death he gave in and sent a letter to his son which was taken by the Armenian chieftain Fer, telling him to give over the castle to the Crusaders. Baldwin settled a Crusading garrison in Rāvendān, became the ruler, and Bagrat was sent away from the Crusaders' headquarters.

Baldwin who stayed in this region for three months in order to conquer the fortresses on the west bank of the Euphrates river, finally went to Edessa on the 6th of February of the year 1098 and soon the Armenian ruler Thoros¹⁸ became the victim of an assassination and Baldwin established the first Crusader county (10 March 1098). Naturally the castles on the west of Euphrates that he had taken were annexed to the county. In this way, Rāvendān castle became the furthest and most important defence point on the west of the Edessa county.

on 20 October 1097, came to the west of the Euphrates and only managed to go to Edessa on 6 February 1098.

¹⁷ Albertus Aquensis (II, 18, pp.351, trans.Hefele, I, pp.109) tell us that Fer was the ruler (praepositus) of Turbessel and that Nicusus owned castles and fortified places near the city. In Turbessel, before the arrival of Baldwin - we see again from this source - that there was a Turkish garrison, so this means that Fer was only the chief of the Christians in the area.

¹⁸ For the communication between Thoros, the ruler of Edessa and Baldwin and how Baldwin came to be ruler of Edessa, see Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi (1098-1118)*, I, pp.17-22, 25-28, 30-36.

At this time, the castle, on the road connecting Edessa and Antioch, was an important pass in the Afrin valley. The road from Edessa to Antioch stretched from the Sâcür stream (contemporary Sacir) west of the Euphrates river, over Turbessel till Sinâb (today Sinnep), the western tributary of Kuvayk (today Balık), through a high, flat region. Here, travelling was easy. In contrast, the area west of the Sinâb stream, till the Afrin river valley, being divided by the high peaks of the Cabrî (now called Hayberi) mountain from north to south, access was only possible through two passes, one north, one south. The Burc al-Rassâs (Turrus Plumbea) fortress kept watch on the northern pass. The southern pass was protected by the Byzantine fortress Hisn Sinâb, but in time, when Râvendân castle was constructed in the west, this castle lost its eminence and Râvendân took over the defence of the pass. The road wended south through the Afrin valley and reached Antioch over the north of Harenc (Hârim)¹⁹.

During the two years of the rule of Baldwin of Boulogne (1098-1100) in Edessa, the name Râvendân first appears in the records of events because of the epidemic in Antioch. After the conquest of Antioch by the Crusaders (3 June 1098), in July a typhus epidemic caused very many deaths. When the epidemic spread through the city, all the Crusader leaders left Antioch to save their skins and took refuge in neighbouring regions. In the records by Albertus²⁰ for the same reason, Godfrey of Bouillon, escaped to the Turbessel and Râvendân cities that his brother Baldwin, the count of Edessa, had temporarily given to him. Here he stayed for some time.

After this, the mention of Râvendân is in 1101-1102. Baldwin de Boulogne, after the death of his brother Godfrey de Bouillon (18 July 1100), when setting out for Jerusalem in the fall of 1100, to take his place as king, left the rule of the Edessa county to his cousin Baldwin of Le Bourg²¹. In this way, like the other castles of the county, Râvendân also came under the rule of Baldwin of Le Bourg. However, Baldwin of Le Bourg took into his service his

¹⁹ For route and geographical site, see Cahen, *op. cit.*, pp.117 ff.; N.Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din, un grand Prince Musulman de Syrie au Temps des Croisades (511-569 H./1118-1174)*, Damas 1967, I, pp.183.

²⁰ Albertus Aquensis, v, 4, pp.435, 13, pp.440 ff., trans. Hefele, I, pp.234. Also see Raimundus Aquilers, *RHC occ.*, xiii, pp.262. R.Röhrich, *Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, Innsbruck 1901, pp.157; St.Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, I, London 1965, pp.254 ff., trans. F.İşitan, *Haçlı Seferleri Tarihi*, I, Ankara 1986, pp.196.

²¹ Albertus Aquensis, VII, 31, pp.527, trans. Hefele, II, pp.31 ff. R.Grousset, *Histoire des croisades et du royaume franc de Jérusalem*, Paris 1934-36, I, pp.207; Runciman *op. cit.*, I, pp.322, trans. İşitan, I, pp.250; Demirkent, *op. cit.*, pp.70 ff.

cousin Joscelin of Courtenay²² who had come to the east in 1101 and was renowned for his courage, and gave him the region west of the Euphrates, as fief, therefore the important castles in this region such as Turbessel, 'Aintâb ('Ayntâb), Râvendân (Râvendân), Cyrrhus (Kûrus), Duluk (Dülük), all fell under Joscelins' rule²³.

Naturally each of these castles was given to the command of different leaders. From the information given by Albertus Aquensis²⁴ and Matthew of Edessa²⁵ for later years, we see that the command of Râvendân was once more in the hands of Bagrat. However, there is no definite information as to what date exactly Bagrat took over Râvendân. It might have been given to him by Baldwin of Le Bourg, after 1100. Perhaps Joscelin, who had closer relations with the Armenians, left Râvendân castle which was under his rule in his region, to Bagrat. We see that Bagrat's rule continued until 1117.

Until 1104, Râvendân, like the other castles in the area was under the rule of Joscelin who owned the region, but the same year, when the Crusading armies of Edessa and Antioch, hoping push their frontiers further east, set out on a campaign against the Muslim world and in the battle of Harran which took place on 7 May 1104 the Crusaders were beaten by the Turkish forces under the command of Soqman, Artuqid emîr, and Jekermish, atabeg of Mosul. In this battle the Edessa army was destroyed, Baldwin and Joscelin were taken prisoner by the Turks. In such a situation Bohemund, the prince of Antioch, took over the temporary rule of Edessa county and left his nephew Tancred in Edessa to see to matter²⁶. However when Bohemund, seeing danger for Antioch because of Turkish attack left in the autumn of the same year, hoping to recruit forces in Europe, Tancred gave over the management of Edessa to his cousin Richard de Salerno and returned to Antioch. In this way, till Joscelin and Baldwin were freed from the Turks in 1108, we can assume that Râvendân, like all the other fortresses of the Edessa county, were ruled by Richard de Salerno between 1104-1108²⁷.

²² Demirkent, *op. cit.*, pp.82; also see for Joscelin, R.L.Nicholson, *Joselyn I. Prince of Edessa*, Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences (XXXIV, No.4), Urbana 1954.

²³ Willermus Tyrensis, x, 24, pp.437, trans. Kausler, pp.249; Demirkent, *op. cit.*, same place.

²⁴ Albertus Aquensis, xi, 40, pp.682, trans. Hefele, II, pp.241.

²⁵ Matthew of Edessa, Turkish trans. H.Andreasyan, *Urfalı Mateos Vekavînamesi (952-1136) ve papaz Grigor'un Zeyli (1136-1162)*, Ankara 1962, pp.260. CCXXIV.

²⁶ Detailed information on the Harran battle see, Demirkent, *op. cit.*, pp.87-99.

²⁷ Demirkent, *op. cit.*, pp.99-119.

The next record we come across concerning Rävendân, belongs to the year 1108. The information recorded by Matthew of Edessa²⁸, Fulcherius Carnotensis²⁹ and Willermus Tyrensis³⁰ is detailed and consistent. These sources record that after being released from the Turks, the count of Edessa Baldwin of Le Bourg went to Antioch, but Tancred refused him entrance to Edessa; also that Baldwin, together with Joscelin went to the Armenian chief of Raban, Kogh Vasil³¹ and obtained help and support; that the quarrel with Tancred resulted in battle and that Baldwin who was beaten in the battle near Turbessel, escaped to Rävendân and took refuge. This course of action, we believe, indicates that there were good relations between Baldwin and Bagrat whom we claim had once more become the ruler.

The next bit of information on Rävendân is found in the records of the year 1111. By orders of the Great Seldjuk sultan Muhammad Tapar (1105-1118) the governor of Mosul Mawdûd³² started out on a second campaign against the Crusaders. The campaign of 1111 is recorded in detail both in Islamic and Crusader sources as well as local sources³³. If we summarize the records, we can say that the campaign took place on the lands of the Edessa county, like the year before, Turbessel was besieged for 26 days between 28 July - 22 August³⁴, then the target directly was Syria. Here Toghtekin, atabeg of Damascus, leader of the own forces, joined Mawdûd's army. Tancred, the prince of Antioch, being threatened by the Muslim Jezireh and Syrian forces in the Shaizar region, appealed to the king of Jerusalem and the counts of Tripoli and Edessa for help. The Latin historian Albertus Aquensis gives a long list of those

²⁸ Matthew of Edessa, CXCIX, pp.234 ff.

²⁹ Fulcherius Carnotensis, *Gesta Francorum Iherusalem Peregrinantium*, RHC. occ., vol.III, n. 28, pp.410, trans.R.Ryan, *Fulcher of Chartres. A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095-1127*, Knoxville 1969, pp.180.

³⁰ Willermus Tyrensis, xi, 8, pp.464 ff., trans.Kaustler, pp.263 ff.

³¹ Gogh Vasil was the ruler of Rabân and Kaysun. According to Willermus Tyrensis (see above n.15) Gogh Vasil and the owner of Rävendân, Bagrat were brothers. See, Chalandon, F., *Les Comnènes*, Paris 1912, II, pp.98-102; Demirkent, *op. cit.*, Index.

³² The son of Altuntekin. For Mawdûd, the atabeg of Mawsil see, H.S.Fink, Mawdûd I. of Mosul, Precursor of Saladin, *Muslim World*, XLIII (1953), pp.18-27; Demirkent, *op. cit.*, pp.123-163; C.Alptekin, *Dimashk Atabegliği (Tog-Teginliği)*, İstanbul 198 Index.

³³ Ibn al-Kâlânîsî, *Zavî Târîh Dimashk*, ed.H.F.Amedroz, Bairut 1908, pp.174; Ibn al-Astrî, *al-Kâmil*, X, pp.340; Kamâl al-Dîn, *Zubda*, I, pp.158; Matthew of Edessa, CCVI, pp. 242 ff.; Bar Hebraeus, Turkish trans. Ö.R.Dogrul, Ankara 1945, II, pp.351; Albertus Aquensis, xi, 36-37, pp.680 ff., trans.Hefe, II, pp.238 ff.; Fulcherius Carnotensis, Book II, 45, pp.423, trans.Ryan, pp.201.

³⁴ Demirkent, *op. cit.*, pp.144.

who came to Tancred's help³⁵. In the list where the name of almost all the commanders of fortresses in the Antioch region is included, one can also see the names of count Baldwin of Le Bourg from Edessa, Joscelin de Courtenay from Turbessel, Paganus the commander of Sarûj and the owner of Rävendân Bagrat, all those who hurried in answer to the appeal. What is of importance to us about this recon and incident, is that it shows that Bagrat was still owner of Rävendân and had maintained friendly relations with Baldwin of Le Bourg, count of Edessa and Tancred, prince of Antioch.

According to Matthew of Edessa³⁶ Rävendân remained in the hands of Bagrat until 1117. However, in 1117, as a result of the campaigns of Mawdûd, the area of the county in the east fell into great poverty. Therefore, to make up for the loss, Baldwin of Le Bourg tried to take by force all the places held by the Armenians in the west of the Euphrates river and annex these places to the county³⁷. So, many castles like Ra'bân, Birejik, Rävendân in the region west of the Euphrates were annexed to the Edessa county and the regional rule of the Armenians ended.

In the year 1118, when, on the death of Baldwin I, Baldwin of Le Bourg was elected king of Jerusalem, he appointed the ruler of Birejik Waleran of Le Puiset to manage the Edessa County on his behalf³⁸. However, with the increasing pressure of Turkish attacks- especially the campaigns of Ilghâzî, Artuqid emîr of Mardin, against Edessa and Antioch - the management of the Edessa County was once again given to Joscelin de Courtenay (1119) who knew

³⁵ Albertus Aquensis, xi, 40, pp.682 ff., trans. Hefe, II, pp.241 ff.; R.Röhrich, *Die Geschichte des Königreichs Jerusalem*, Innsbruck 1898, pp. 91 n.9.

³⁶ Matthew of Edessa, CCXXIV, pp.260.

³⁷ Matthew of Edessa, CCXXI, CCXXII, pp.258, CCXXIII, pp.259, CCXXIV, pp.259 ff. Matthew of Edessa who was witness to the events tells sorrowfully of the torture Baldwin of Le Bourg and the Crusaders applied to the Armenians "... These very eminent princes died under torture and in prison. Many of them were blinded, the hands, noses and sexual organs of them were cut off, some were crucified. They punished innocent children in revenge for the hate they felt for their fathers. They tortured those Armenians to get their hands on their treasures.... Although I wished to write of the countless evil deeds being under rule, I did not dare."

³⁸ Waleran of Le Puiset was the cousin of Baldwin of Le Bourg (his aunt's son on his mother's side). After 1108 he came to the East and entered the service of the count of Edessa, Baldwin of Le Bourg. We come across his name first in 1117 when Birejik was taken from the Armenian Abu'l Gharib by Baldwin. In 1122 he was captured, together with Joscelin by the Artuqid prince Balak ibn Bahram and thrown into prison in Kharput. Though not definite it is thought he was killed in prison by the Artuqid prince, Timurtash, see I.Demirkent, *Urfa Haçlı Kontluğu Tarihi (1118-1146)*, Ankara 1987, I, pp.58 n.245. For Waleran and his family see also, J.L. La Monte, *The Lords Le Puis on the Crusades, Speculum*, XVII (1942), pp. 100-118.

the region very well³⁹. And so, like all the cities and fortresses of the County, Rāvendān came under the rule of Joscelin once more. From 1119 till his death in 1131, Joscelin managed to defend the lands of the Edessa County against the Turks without much loss. During these years the name Rāvendān was only once recorded, by the Muslim historian Kamāl al-Dīn. In his records, this historian says that⁴⁰, after coming to Edessa, Joscelin immediately started attacks against the Turks and plundering far and wide also took many prisoners. Kamāl al-Dīn also goes on to say that Joscelin followed a group of Turcomans who had crossed the Euphrates until Rāvendān but was beaten by them and some of the Franks were killed by the Turks⁴¹.

After the death of Joscelin de Courtenay in the fall of 1131 his son, Joscelin II (1131-1150), took his place and during his time Atabeg Imād al-Dīn Zengī, governor of Mosul, made frequent attacks and many castles in the eastern region of the County fell into the hands of the Turks. After a siege lasting a month, with the conquest of Edessa by Zengī on the 24th of December in the year 1144, the Edessa County was formally ended. For a time Joscelin II managed to keep a few castles in the west of Euphrates, inclusive of Turbessel and Rāvendān. However his rule in this region did not last long.

In 1146 Atabeg Imād al-Dīn Zengī had died and his land was divided between his two sons, Sayf al-Dīn Ghāzī to rule over Mosul and Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd over Aleppo. Like his father Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd continued the struggle against the Crusaders, fighting to take the lands and fortresses still in the hands Joscelin II. In the spring of 1150, when Joscelin II set out for Antioch, to discuss the situation which was getting worse and to appeal for help, he was captured on the way by a group of Turcomans and Nūr al-Dīn, hearing this, sent a company to take him to Aleppo where he was thrown into a dungeon⁴². With this incident the lands which previously belonged to the Edessa County were

³⁹ Joscelin de Courtenay fell out with the count of Edessa Baldwin of Le Bourg and was deprived of the seniorship of Turbessel. He went to king Baldwin I of Jerusalem and entered his service as the princeps of Galilaea. For the quarrel between the two relatives and the return of Joscelin to the Edessa region, see Demirkent, *op. cit.*, I, pp.152 ff. and II, pp.14 ff.

⁴⁰ Kamāl al-Dīn, *Zuhda*, II, pp.194.

⁴¹ This claim by Kamāl al-Dīn is not quite reasonable. It is not reasonable that the Turcomans retreated towards Rāvendān because this place, together with the whole area was in the hands of the Crusaders since 1098. Although Cahen (*op. cit.*, pp.290 ff.) has tried to base his claims on Ibn al-Furāt's work, the story is quite confused.

⁴² Joscelin II, count of Edessa lived in captivity for 9 years and died in 1159 in prison in Aleppo, see R.L.Nicholson, *Joscelyn III and the Fall of Crusader States (1134-1199)*, Leiden 1973, pp.21.

left to their fate. The Crusaders, finding it impossible to defend the area against the attacks of the ruler of Aleppo Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd and Mas'ūd I (1116-1155), Seldjuk Sultan of Anatolia, had no choice but to sell the region to the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) who had made an offer of purchase. Finally, Turbessel, Samosata, Birejik, 'Aintāb, Duluk and Rāvendān castles were given over by Beatrice, the wife of Joscelin II, to Thomas, the Byzantine governor of Cilicia, in return for sacks of gold, the exact amount unknown⁴³. However, Turkish incursions did not stop after the region was sold to Byzantium.

In the spring of 1151 while the ruler of Aleppo Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd, the Anatolian Seldjuk Sultan Mas'ūd and the Artuqid Timurtash of Mardin were attacking the Byzantine garrisons, taking the castles one by one and sharing them, they also took the other less significant fortresses of the area⁴⁴. Sultan Mas'ūd became owner of 'Aintāb and Duluk, Timurtash took Samosata and Birejik, Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd became the ruler of Rāvendān, Kūrus, Burc al-Rassās and Turbessel. And so, Rāvendān which had been under the rule of the Crusaders for 54 years, from 1097 to 1151, was again part of the Turkish world.

From this date onwards, Islamic sources mention Rāvendān as a castle of the province of Aleppo. The most detailed information on the location and characteristics of Rāvendān is given by Kamāl al-Dīn. In his work *Bugyat al-Talab fī Tārīh Halab* Kamāl al-Dīn describes the castle of Rāvendān, saying "a well fortified castle on a single high mountain where catapult and arrows can not penetrate. There is a small outer wall at the foot of the mountain. This (Rāvendān) is one of the strongest and well situated of castles. On the north and west a valley like a moat surrounds the castle and a river flows."⁴⁵. After this description he goes on to say that he went there in person, climbed to the castle on horseback, but that because the path was narrow and steep the climb was very difficult. Then Kamāl al-Dīn gives information connected to the period of the melik of Aleppo Ridwan, which he heard from 'Abū Abdallāh Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Kurtubī who got the information from Usāma ibn Munkiz.

⁴³ The emperor Manuel I Comnenus wished to buy these six castles does not mean that this state was sure it would be able to retain the region. It is most likely that Manuel Comnenus wished, if in the future he won the struggle against the Turks, to put a claim on the area together with Edessa and Antioch against the Crusaders. Until Manuel was beaten in the battle of Myrioccephalon by the armies of the Anatolia Seldjuk Sultan Kılıç Arslan II in 1176, he was always dreaming at chasing the Turks out of Anatolia.

⁴⁴ The names of these conquered castles are recorded one by one, by Ibn al-Athīr (*al-Kāmil*, XI, pp.155).

⁴⁵ See, pp.329 ff.

However this bit of information written on the margin of the text given above - concerning the Crusaders in Rāvendān - is unfortunately full of contradictory sentences and the meaning is not clear. 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād in his work *al-A'lāk al-Hatire fī zikr Umarā al-Shām va'l-Jazīra* has included this information on Rāvendān by Kamāl al-Dīn with no change whatsoever⁴⁶. In his geography book *Takvim al-Buldān*, Abu'l-Fedā writes about Rāvendān: "... Rāvendān is connected to Aleppo and within the borders of Kinnesrīn. It is a strong fortification on a high white hill. It has springs, gardens and orchards in the valley. The Afrin river flows below."⁴⁷

After the year 1151, Rāvendān remained as a castle of Aleppo under the rule of Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd. Here we have to digress to mention an interesting incident which took place during this time. The event concerns the imprisonment of Reynald of Châtillon who was a very prominent personage of the Crusades and whose actions were recorded both by Muslim and by Christian writers with great criticism⁴⁸. Although this incident which can be found in Muslim, Latin, local Syrian and Armenian sources is not specifically cited as taking place in Rāvendān⁴⁹, it is recorded as happening in the el-Cūma region⁵⁰ whose center was Rāvendān. Summarizing all the sources which have more or less the same information, we see that the prince of Antioch Reynald de Châtillon, in the autumn of the year 1161⁵¹ attacked in the Afrin valley the Muslims who as they did every year, were bringing down their flocks and herds from the Antitaurus mountains to the Euphrates plains taking many camels, horses and cows, Nūr al-Dīn's governor of Aleppo Macd al-Dīn al-Dāye who heard of this sudden attack and plunder⁵² in time set an ambush in the al-Cūma

⁴⁶ See, varak 137^a-138^a.

⁴⁷ Ed. M.Reinaud, pp.267. Also see, G.Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems*, Beirut 1965, pp.60, 520.

⁴⁸ A small reminder: this man, in cooperation with the Armenians plundered Cyprus, with a fleet he rounded up in Aila threatened Mecca and after a long term of captivity, became ruler of the Kerak castle and was a menace to the Arabia-Syria trade route. After falling prisoner in the Hittin battle, he was executed by Saladin who had sworn to kill him with his own hand.

⁴⁹ Kamāl al-Dīn, *Zubda*, II, pp.313 ff.; Willermus Tyrensis, xviii, 28, pp.868 ff., trans. Kausler, pp.493; Anonymous Chronicle, ed. and trans. A.S.Tritton, *The First and Second Crusades from an Anonymous Syrian Chronicle*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1933, pp.303; Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, ed. and trans. J.B.Chabot, Paris 1905, III, Book XVIII, viii, pp.319; Matthew of Edessa, CCLXXXI, pp.332 ff.

⁵⁰ Willermus (same place) gives the name of this place as *Cummi*.

⁵¹ Kamāl al-Dīn (same place) and Matthew of Edessa (same place) give the date as 1161. According to Willermus (same place), the date is 1160; see, Röhrich, *op.cit.*, pp.305; Elisséeff, *op.cit.*, II, pp.553. Syrian chronology is confusing.

⁵² Matthew of Edessa (same place) says that during this looting attack Reynald attacked Alex's lands and came to the fortified Dzov (!) region. Willermus (same place) says he went as far as Kaysun and Marash.

valley on Châtillon's return route and on the 23 November a battle took place, Reynald, with all his men fell prisoner⁵³ and was taken to Aleppo where he was to spend sixteen years of his life in prison. The connection of this event with our subject is that the conflict and the fall of Reynald took place in the vicinity⁵⁴ of Rāvendān. Rāvendān, due to being in a mountains region it was very convenient to set traps here and in its surrounding so that the enemy, even in great numbers could be ambushed and beaten. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that the incident happened in the al-Cūma region, in the upper Afrin valley and the vicinity of Rāvendān.

When Nūr al-Dīn Mahmūd died on 15 May 1174, his son al-Malik al-Sālih İsmā'il (1174-81) who was only eleven years old became the ruler of Aleppo. In a short time he quarreled with Saladin (Ayūb) who was the governor of Egypt appointed by his father, and a great part of his lands fell into the hands of Saladin. In 1176, after taking Bizā'a, Menbij and 'Azāz, Saladin laid siege to Aleppo. Finally a treaty was made and on condition that al-Malik es-Sālih İsmā'il still retained Aleppo, all the lands of Syria were given over to Saladin. We are interested in this incident because Rāvendān also fell under the rule of Saladin. We see this from a record by Abū Shāma. Abū Shāma says "When al-Malik al-Sālih İsmā'il ibn Nūr al-Dīn died, not only did the soldiers of Aleppo attack Rāvendān which belonged to Saladin but Bohemund also immediately attacked Harenc"⁵⁵. This shows that before the death of al-Malik al-Sālih İsmā'il in the year 1181, Rāvendān had become the property of Saladin. That the castle was repaired and fortified by Saladin and that an inscription was put on the entrance gate is verified by modern historians⁵⁶. When undertaking research on the ruins of the castle on 14 November 1987, we did not come across this inscription. Unfortunately it had been taken down from its place. However, there is a photograph of the inscription tablet on page 15 of the book *Kilis Tarihi* written by the lawyer Kadri (Timurtaş) of Kilis and published in 1933⁵⁷. The wording of the inscription is "المك النصر يوسف ابن ايوب خذ الله ملكة" (al-Malik al-

⁵³ Matthew of Edessa (same place) says that Reynald had 1000 men with him, that 400 people died in the fight, and that he fell captive with 30 mounted men. As for Michael the Syrian (same place) Reynald fell prisoner with 120 mounted men and 500 foot soldiers.

⁵⁴ Röhrich (pp.305 n.2) says the event took north of Rāvendān, Elisséeff (same place) claims it took place south of Rāvendān.

⁵⁵ *Kitāb al-Ravzatayn*, II, pp.23; Röhrich, *op.cit.*, pp.394 ff.

⁵⁶ Cahen, *op.cit.*, pp.118; H.Hellenkemper, *Burgen der Kreuzritterzeit in der Grafschaft Edessa und im Königreich Kleinarmenien*, Bonn 1976, pp.45.

⁵⁷ Kilisli Kadri Bey, *Kilis Tarihi*, Istanbul 1933, pp.15

Nāsır Yūsuf b. Ayyūb. May Allah protect his wealth till eternity." There is no date on the inscription, but based on the rumour by Abū Shāma, it would be reasonable to date this inscription to 1176-1181.

Data on Rāvendān for the era of Saladin is given by Baha al-Dīn ibn Shaddād⁵⁸ and Abū Shāma⁵⁹. According to this news at the beginning of 582 of the Hegira calendar (24 March/23 April 1186) the owner of Rāvendān Mu'in al-Dīn Abd al-Rahman revolted against Sultan Saladin but was besieged in the castle by the Aleppo forces commanded by 'Alam al-Dīn Sulaymān. Finally 'Abd al-Rahman on 21 July (2 Cemaziyelevvel) surrendered Rāvendān to 'Alam al-Dīn Sulaymān and went to Sultan Saladin to go into his service. This bit of news gives us an opportunity to define the names of two people who had ruled Rāvendān at one time or another.

On the death of Sultan Saladin in 1193, his lands were divided among his sons and brothers. The rule of the Aleppo region fell to his son al-Malik al-Zāhir Ghāzī. For the period of his reign (1193-1216) we find in sources, two rumours connected to Rāvendān. The first was recorded by Kamāl al-Dīn⁶⁰. Kamāl al-Dīn writes that in the 592nd year of the Hegira (1196) when al-Malik al-Zāhir was returning south from Marc Dābik, he stopped over at Rāvendān, stayed there for three days, set out at night and went on to 'Azāz which at the time was in the hands of the regents of Sayf al-Dīn 'Alī ibn 'Alam al-Dīn Sulaymān ibn Jandār, and from there, on to Aleppo. For us, the significance of the rumour is this: Rāvendān was still an important pass, as it had been in the Crusades era, for now, the road to 'Aintāb and Marc Dābik from the north, passed through Rāvendān and reached 'Azāz and Aleppo in the south⁶¹.

The second rumour concerning Rāvendān is found in many Islamic sources. This rumour is recorded by Kamāl al-Dīn, Ibn Wāsil, Abu'l Fedā and Ibn al-Furāt in quite a detailed way and the information given by these various historians is more or less the same. The general data we make out from these sources is this: in the 598th year of the Hegira (October 1201/September 1202) Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Mukaddam's regent in Apamea, Karakush, sent a message to al-Malik al-Zāhir, saying, on condition that he give Shams al-Dīn a fief

⁵⁸ Baha al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād, *RHC. or.*, III/1, pp. 87 ff.

⁵⁹ *Kitāb al-Rayzatayn*, II, pp. 74.

⁶⁰ *Zubda*, III, pp. 138.

⁶¹ Kamāl al-Dīn, *Zubda*, III, pp. 152 ff.; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric*, III, pp. 131; Abu'l-Fedā III, pp. 101; Ibn al-Furāt, pp. 225 ff.

somewhere else, he was willing to surrender Apamea to him; al-Malik al-Zāhir accepted this offer and giving Rāvendān, Kafartab and Mufrad al-Ma'arra to Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Mukaddam he took Apamea. However, for some reason not stated clearly in the sources, the same year Shams al-Dīn went to Rāvendān and revolted. Only Kamāl al-Dīn says that al-Malik al-Zāhir gathered the Arabs in Dābik, bought weapons and provisions from them, and upon this, Ibn al-Mukaddam escaped to Rāvendān to revolt⁶², but even this record does not give enough information as to the reason of the revolt. According to the records, al-Malik al-Zāhir, not giving him a chance, immediately went to Rāvendān and took Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Mukaddam out of the castle where had stayed just one night, and confiscated all the weapons, goods and provisions. Although Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Mukaddam went to Badr al-Dīn Duldurum, the ruler of Tell-Bāshir (Turbessel) and begged him to intervene on his behalf and get back the goods confiscated, Badr al-Dīn's efforts were fruitless.

The next item of news on Rāvendān is for the year 624 of the Hegira (December 1226/ December 1227). The ruler of Aleppo al-Malik al-Zāhir died on 12 October 1216 and his three year old son al-Malik al-'Azīz Mohammad took his place and Shihāb al-Dīn Toghrul who was appointed regent for the little boy became responsible for the country⁶³. As far as we can see, the elder son of the Sultan al-Malik al-Sālih Ahmad had to be satisfied with Shugr, Bakas and a few other castles left to him. We see from the records of Kamāl al-Dīn, 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād, Ibn Wāsil and Abu'l Fedā that in the year 624 of the Hegira (December 1226/December 1227) these places were taken from him and 'Aintāb, Rāvendān and al-Zavb were given to him instead⁶⁴. Also 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād writes that, until the death of al-Malik al-Sālih Ahmad in the year 651 Sha'bān (September/October 1253) 'Aintāb and Rāvendān belonged to him⁶⁵.

The historian Kamāl al-Dīn who was a contemporary of al-Malik al-Sālih Ahmad, in his work *Bugyat al-Talab fī Tārīh Halāb*, tells an event concerning

⁶² Kamāl al-Dīn, same place.

⁶³ Badr ad-Dīn Duldurum became owner of Turbessel and Tell Hālid in 579 (1183). After his death in 611 (1214) the rule of Turbessel passed to his son (Abū Shāma, *Zayl al-Rayzatayn*, pp. 87). Later in 618 (1221) Turbessel was given as fief to atabeg Shihāb al-Dīn Toghrul, see Kamāl al-Dīn, *Zubda*, III, pp. 183.

⁶⁴ Kamāl al-Dīn, *Zubda*, III, pp. 201; 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād, *al-'Ālīk al-Hatīre*, fol. 138^b; Ibn Wāsil, *Mufarric*, IV, pp. 207; Abu'l-Fedā, *Tārīh*, III, pp. 137.

⁶⁵ Same place.

Rāvendān which he personally witnessed⁶⁶; "... I was in Rāvendān with al-Malik al-Sālih Ahmad ibn al-Malik al-Zāhir ibn al-Malik al-Nāsir Salāh al-Dīn Yūsuf. Pointing to the village in the west from the castle, he said to me, the village I mentioned is there. On Friday nights a light shines from that village, sometimes on other nights also. Those outside the village see it, when one gets close nothing can be seen." The story shows that al-Malik al-Sālih Ahmad stayed in Rāvendān even if not always.

We know that Rāvendān remained under the rule of the Ayyubid dynasty until 659 of the year of the Hegira (December 1260/December 1261) when it was conquered, together with Aleppo by the forces of Hulagu and all the region of Aleppo and all the castles fell into the hands of the Mongols. From 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād we learn that Rāvendān was taken by the Mongols while it was in the hands of al-Malik en-Nāsir, the son of al-Malik al-Azīz. We understand from his writing that until the invasion of the Mongols al-Malik al-Nāsir kept Rāvendān independently, that when the Mongols first sieged Rāvendān the castle put up a strong defence, those inside did not surrender the castle and the enemy left and Rāvendān was conquered when the Mongols came to Aleppo once more in 659 (1260/ 1261)⁶⁷. However, the Mongols who lost the battle of Ain Jalūt against the Mamlūks had to leave Syria and Aleppo and its surrounding regions was once more in the hands of the Muslims. Yet, we see that Rāvendān was not freed from the Mongol yoke. Another contemporary historian Ibn 'Abd al-zāhir informs us that in the winter of 1264 when the Mongols were attacking Birejik, the Franks of Antioch, together with the Armenians were plundering al-Cūma, Jabal Lailūn and Jizr. The Franks were beaten by the Ayyūbid rulers in Hamā and the Mongol attacks were stopped. While telling these incidents Ibn 'Abduzzāhir mentions that in the counter attack against the Frankish-Armenian forces, a Muslim company attacked Rāvendān but due to heavy snow fall had to retreat⁶⁸. This attack was without doubt an effort to release Rāvendān from the Mongols but bad weather conditions made it impossible.

Based on these data we have to conclude that Rāvendān was taken from the Mongols at a later date, yet we do not know exactly when. It seems possible that in 1268, when the Mamlūk Sultan Baybars (1260-77) conquered Antioch,

⁶⁶ Kamāl al-Dīn, *Bugyat*, fol. 69^a

⁶⁷ Same place.

⁶⁸ Ibn Abd al-zāhir, fol. 78^{ab} ve 80^a. Cahen, *op.cit.*, pp.712.

Rāvendān together with all the other castles fell under Mamlūks rule. Izz al-Dīn ibn Shaddād in his work *Sirat al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars*, when listing the places under the rule of Baybars, mentions Ravendel among the castles he records within the Aleppo province⁶⁹. Also in the same text it is recorded, without giving a date, that Sultan Baybars had the Aintāb and Rāvendān castles which had been damaged by the Mongols, repaired and fortified⁷⁰. The same writer in his book *al-A'lāk al-Hatīre fī zikr umarā al-Shām va'l-Jazīra* says "... the castle is under the rule of al-Malik al-Zāhir (Baybars) in our time"⁷¹.

After this, Rāvendān remained under Mamlūk rule for a long time, as a castle of the province of Aleppo⁷² and in the year 1516 when the Ottoman Sultan Yavuz Selim was victorious in the battle of Marc Dābik against the Mamlūks the Rāvendān castle together with the whole surrounding region was annexed to the Ottoman Empire. The site which for hundreds of years had been a frontier castle and important pass, in later eras, being at a far corner of the Ottoman lands lost its significance and continued its existence as a township of Aleppo⁷³.

⁶⁹ Ed. Hutait, pp.326.

⁷⁰ Ed. Hutait, pp.358.

⁷¹ See fol. 139^a

⁷² The history of the era after the 13th century is not within scope of this article on Rāvendān; yet, during our research on the topic, two incidents in the 15th century caught our attention and we believed that it would be useful to mention them as they will throw more light on the subject. The first one is the record by Aynī (Y.Yücel, *Timur'un Ortadoğu-Anadolu Seferleri ve Sonuçları 1393-1402*, Ankara 1989, pp.116) on the invasion and plunder of Rāvendān by the armies of Timur, when Aintāb and Aleppo were taken during the Syria campaign of Timur in 1400. The information he gives is that the people of Rāvendān had evacuated the city even before the forces of Timur attacked. In this way most of the population must have saved their lives. After the forces of Timur left the Syria region, the Mamlūks took over again. The second incident is about the second half of the 15th century and shows that Rāvendān was still an important passage in the northern frontier of the Mamlūks state. During the military campaign of the Mamlūks against the Dulkadir state in 1471, as the struggle between the two sides was continuing in the Gaziantep region Dulkadir Shesuvār Beg wanted to move south in order to gather the Turkomans but the Mamlūks commander Yeşbek, sending Hamza Beg, the son of Inal Beg to Rāvendān which was a fortified place on the road to Aleppo, cut off Shesuvār Beg's way (see, R.Yinanç, *Dulkadir Beyliği*, Ankara 1989, pp.71). This shows that Rāvendān was an important point for the control of the road from 'Aintāb to Aleppo.

⁷³ In the Primenistry Archives No.93, on page 283 of the Aleppo Foundation Records of the Hegira year 926 (1519), Rāvendān is shown as a sub-division under Aleppo. 63 vilages and 87 farms connected to these villages all are shown as belonging to Rāvendān. The owners of the farms and the tax payers are recorded one by one.