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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### THE MILITARY HISTORY OF THE SELJUQ EMPIRE UNDER THE REIGN OF ALP ARSLAN (1063-1072): A LITERATURE REVIEW

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#### Abstract

This study is anchored on Schloemer's assertion that the Battle of Manzikert in 1071 was a monumental conflict between the Islamic forces led by Alp Arslan and the Byzantine army under Emperor Romanus IV. Alp Arslan's tactical brilliance in exploiting the enemy's strategies led to the defeat of the Byzantine forces, despite their numerical superiority and sufficient equipment. Consequently, Alp Arslan's strategies and cunning, along with the effectiveness of the Islamic forces, became the primary factors behind the Seljuq Empire's victory. Based on this premise, this study aimed to conduct a literature review on the military history of the Seljuq Empire during Alp Arslan's reign, with a particular focus on his involvement in the Battle of Manzikert. This qualitative study employed historical research and content analysis for data collection and analysis purposes, particularly relying on credible sources. Findings reveal that the literature on this topic can be categorized into three main themes, namely the state of the Seljuq Empire in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, biography of Alp Arslan, and the Seljuq military's involvement in the Battle of Manzikert in 1071. Discussions on these three themes facilitate further examination, particularly regarding the Seljuq military's engagement during Alp Arslan's era in the Battle of Manzikert.

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#### Introduction:-

Military capability plays a crucial role alongside politics, economics, social development, and education in efforts to ensure the stability, strength and harmony of a government. A government can collapse within a short period if any of these elements fail to function effectively. In this context, Zamri (2018) emphasized that a robust military force can secure the peace and sovereignty of a government. From ancient times, such as during the Roman and Persian Empires, to the modern era, military development and expansion has consistently been prioritized as a hallmark of

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governmental excellence. This focus not only ensures the security of a state but also facilitates the smooth operation of political authority, growth of economic resources, and the advancement of social harmony. Hence, contemporary times have witnessed major world powers leveraging their military strength to elevate their governance and administration to new heights.

The arrival of the Seljuq army, led by Tughril Beg, upon the invitation of Caliph al-Qa'im to Baghdad, marked a turning point in the reign of the Abbasid Caliphate. Tughril Beg breathed new life into the Abbasid administration by defeating and expelling the Banu Buwayh (the Buyids or Buwayhids), who had held power for 110 years (from the reign of Caliph al-Muti' (945-973), through Caliph al-Qa'im, (1031-1074). His success in ousting the Banu Buwayh earned him recognition as the founder of the Seljuq Empire. However, Caliph al-Qa'im, who had hoped to regain full authority as caliph, found his role largely unchanged as the Seljuq Empire assumed significant influence over the Abbasid administration. The influence of the Seljuq government extended to subsequent caliphs, including Caliph al-Muqtadi (1074-1094), Caliph al-Mustazhir (1094-1118), Caliph al-Mustarshid (1118-1134), Caliph al-Rashid bi Allah (1134-1135), Caliph al-Muktafi (1135-1160), Caliph al-Mustanjid (1160-1170), Caliph al-Mustadi' (1170-1179), Caliph al-Nasir (1179-1225), Caliph al-Zahir (1225-1226), Caliph al-Mustansir (1226-1243), and Caliph al-Musta'sim (1243-1258). Some scholars argue that the influence of the Seljuq over the Abbasid caliphs ended not with the last Abbasid caliph, Caliph al-Musta'sim, but with Caliph al-Mustadi'. Following his reign, four caliphs ruled independently until the Mongol invasion, led by Hulagu Khan, which annihilated the Abbasid Caliphate in 656H/1258 (Dusuki, 1975; Daud, 2014).

The Seljuq Empire was a modest Islamic state that coexisted with prominent powers of its time, such as the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, Fatimid Caliphate in Cairo, Byzantine Empire in Constantinople, and Ghaznavid Dynasty in Ghazna. The Seljuq expanded their territory primarily through military campaigns. Some of the significant military expeditions and battles they participated in include the Battle of Dabussiyya (1032), Battle of the Nasa Plains (1035), Battle of Sarakhs (1038), Battle of Dandanaqan (1040), Battle of Zaranj (1040, 1045), Battle of Tokharistan (1043), Battle of Ganja (1046), Battle of Kapetrou (1048), Battle of Hupyan (1051), Battle of Damghan (1063), Battle of Manzikert (1071), Battle of Aleppo (1086), Battle of Rey (1095), Battle of Khabur (1107), Battle of Sarmin (1115), Battle of Ghazni (1117), Battle of Saveh (1119), Battle of Myriokephalon (1176) and Battle of Kose Dag (1243) (Bosworth, 2015).

The Seljuq dynasty, headquartered in Isfahan, endured for 116 years under nine rulers. It was established by Tughril Beg (1037-1063), who declared himself the founder of this dynasty after entering Baghdad. His leadership was succeeded by Suleimen Beg (1063), who passed away shortly after, leading to Alp Arslan (1063-1072), Malik Shah I (1072-1092), Mahmud ibn Malik Shah (1092-1094), Barkiyaruq ibn Malik Shah (1094-1105), Malik Shah II (1105), Muhammad I Tapar (1105-1118), and Ahmad Sanjar (1118-1153). Eventually, the unified Seljuq Empire disintegrated into fragmented states in Hamadan, Kerman, Syria, Damascus and Anatolia.

During Alp Arslan's rule, the Seljuq Empire navigated complex geopolitical challenges. He was aware that the state was bordered by three major powers, namely the Fatimid Caliphate in Cairo to the south, Byzantine Empire in Constantinople to the west, and Ghaznavid Dynasty in Ghazna to the east. Alp Arslan prioritized diplomatic relations with certain powers, allowing him to focus his military efforts on critical regions. However, in 1071, the Byzantine Empire, under Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes, violated a peace treaty with the Seljuq by invading the northern territories of the Seljuq Empire and attacking several districts. This provocation prompted an immediate response from Alp Arslan. Despite being significantly outnumbered, Alp Arslan's forces achieved a resounding victory at the Battle of Manzikert. This victory not only inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Byzantines but also resulted in the injury and capture of Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes himself. The cunning strategies employed by Alp Arslan in confronting numerically superior military forces deserve attention when uncovering valuable insight into Islamic history and civilization. This study aimed to conduct a literature review focusing on the military history of the Seljuq era under Alp Arslan, particularly his involvement in the Battle of Manzikert. This qualitative study employed historical research and content analysis methods to collect data, which were thematically analysed and categorized under specific themes.

### **Literature Review:-**

Based on the literature review, this study is organized into three themes, such as the state of the Seljuq Empire in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, biography of Alp Arslan, and the Seljuq military's involvement in the Battle of Manzikert in 1071.

### **The Seljuq Empire in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century**

According to Findley (2005) in 'The Turks in World History', the Seljuq trace their lineage to the Oghuz Turks, with their history dating back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The Seljuq dynasty emerged from the Kinik tribe, whose leader converted to Islam in 985 near the Syr Darya (Jaxartes River). Their first major success as a small kingdom was their victory over the Ghaznavid Empire at the Battle of Dandanaqan in 1040. The Ghaznavids, a dominant force in Khurasan, sought to curb the rising influence of the Seljuq, but their defeat enabled the Seljuq to expand their dominance into Transoxania and the entirety of Iran. In 1055, Tughril Beg extended Seljuq's domination by seizing Baghdad and securing his position as a celebrated figure, earning the Abbasid Caliphate's recognition as a Sultan. This elevated status was further consolidated when his name was inscribed on Abbasid coinage. Findley opined that the pinnacle of Seljuq's eminence occurred only during the reigns of Tughril Beg, Alp Arslan and Malik Shah because of their immense contribution to military success, state-building, education, and politics that were instrumental in shaping Seljuq's influence over Baghdad.

Tetley (2009), in 'The Ghaznavid and Seljuk Turks: Poetry as A Source for Iranian History', highlights the critical role of two prominent poets who documented the history of the Ghaznavid and Seljuq dynasties. Farrukhi Sistani chronicled the Ghaznavid rule, while Mu'izzi, a Persian poet born in Nishapur in 1048, recorded the era of the Seljuqs. Mu'izzi, whose father 'Abd al-Malik Burhani was a court poet and close associate of Alp Arslan, followed in his father's footsteps. Beginning under Malik Shah (1072-1092) and continuing through Sanjar's reign, Mu'izzi's poetry offers invaluable insight into the lives of sultans, court dynamics, societal conditions, and the turbulent politics of the Seljuq era where sultans grappled with foreign leaders.

Peacock (2010) emphasized the importance of military strength in the rise and sustainability of the Seljuq Empire. After establishing themselves in Central Asia, Iran, and Iraq in 1055, the Seljuq military became a formidable force, achieving significant victories over neighbouring states. Even before their formal rise to power in 1055 their army was rooted in innovative strategies and advanced organizational structures, which set them apart from other armies of their time. The Abbasid Caliph al-Qa'im bi Amr Allah recognized the Seljuq's military prowess and invited Tughril Beg's forces to join the Turkish soldiers stationed in Baghdad. Together, they successfully ousted the Banu Buwayh from the city. Tughril Beg's transformation of the mercenary soldiers from Abbasid into a professional and disciplined military unit further consolidated Seljuq's dominance.

In 'Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation', Peacock (2010) examined the Seljuq Turks' origins, tracing them back to the Oghuz Turkic tribes residing between the Aral Sea and the Volga River in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The Oghuz were instrumental in the early development of Turkic power in Central Asia and shared ancestry with the Khazars, a group in southern Russia that converted to Judaism. Peacock's research explored the migration patterns of the Seljuq Turks into Central Asia, Transoxiana, and Khurasan, introducing terminologies such as Ghuzz, Turk, Turkmen and Seljuq. These terms reflect the socio-political and religious transformations of the Turkic people: (1) Ghuzz refers to the elites or leaders among the Turkic tribes; (2) Turk denotes Turkic individuals serving as slaves or mercenaries, particularly in Baghdad; and (3) Turkmen describes Turkic people who embraced Islam. Bosworth (2011) complemented these findings regarding the origins of the Seljuqs affirming that the Seljuqs descended from the Oghuz tribe and embarked on significant expeditions during the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Tor (2011) emphasized that the Seljuq sultans were devout rulers committed to the Sunni sect in Islam. According to Zahir al-Din Nishapuri (as quoted by Tor), the author of the renowned Saljuqnama, no rulers, after the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the Caliphs al-Rashidin, were more deserving of governing an Islamic state than the Seljuq rulers. This assertion stems from their role in reviving and upholding Islamic faith and orthodoxy. The Seljuqs actively supported Sunni scholarship, condemned heretical innovations (*bid'ah*), and opposed sectarian practices, particularly those of the Isma'ili Shia. They were renowned for constructing mosques, madrasahs, ribats and bridges, as well as establishing allowances and endowments (*waqf*) to support scholars, imams, and worshippers. This level of religious patronage was unparalleled by previous rulers. Besides that, Tor had documented events during Alp Arslan's reign, as well as his piousness and justice that were evident during his governance. He led numerous battles and jihad while being deeply concerned for the welfare of the poor. He personally ensured the daily preparation and distribution of food, such as slaughtering and cooking 50 sheep to feed the needy. His death profoundly affected his minister, Nizam al-Mulk, who prayed that Alp Arslan be considered as among the martyrs (*shahid*).

Seljuq's role in revitalizing Sunni Islam in Baghdad was discussed at length by Ephrat (2011). The establishment of madrasahs during their rule marked a significant development in Islamic education. The first officially recognized madrasah under Seljuq rule was a Hanafi institution, founded in 459H/1066 in Baghdad. That same year, the famous Nizamiyyah Madrasah, catering to the Shafi'i school of thought, was established under the direction of Alp Arslan's vizier, Nizam al-Mulk. The Seljuqs institutionalized education by appointing professors (mudarris) to teach in these madrasahs. Notably, Sultan-appointed officials, including Nizam al-Mulk, oversaw the hiring, payment, and dismissal of educators, thus, centralizing control over educational institutions. Alp Arslan's finance minister, Sharaf al-Mulk Abu Sa'd al-Mustawi, observed that the Prime Minister, Nizam al-Mulk, initiated the construction of madrasahs similar to the Hanafi-oriented institution near the tomb of Abu Hanifa. Notably, this development underscored the Seljuq rulers' structured approach to education. The professors (mudarris) appointed to these institutions were considered to be highly respected scholars, selected by the Sultan and senior Seljuq officials.

Renterghem (2011) highlighted the nuanced balance of power between Seljuq rulers and the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad during the mid-11<sup>th</sup> to late 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Seljuq leaders skilfully monopolized political power in Baghdad, thus, extending their control beyond administrative protocols to include the city's treasury matters. The Seljuqs managed the financial affairs of Baghdad, even providing stipends to the Abbasid caliphs as a gesture of gratitude for their support in expelling the Banu Buwayh. This financial relationship further solidified their influence over the caliphs. One notable example of Seljuq's ambition was Tughril Beg's plan to establish a new city, Madinat Tughril (The City of Tughril), upon his arrival in Baghdad. His vision included a fortified city featuring marketplaces and mosques to serve the population. Construction materials were repurposed from derelict buildings in the surrounding areas of Baghdad, reflecting a resourceful approach to urban development.

The literature reviewed under this first theme revealed that the Seljuq Empire's greatness extended far beyond its military prowess. While many literary works emphasized their achievements in the battlefield, this study showcases other attributes, such as political governance (their adept administration allowed them to dominate and effectively integrate Abbasid political structures), leadership excellence (Seljuq rulers, such as Tughril Beg and Alp Arslan, demonstrated strategic insight and statecraft), influence on the Abbasid Caliphate (the Seljuq empire effectively reshaped the role of the caliphate, ensuring Sunni orthodoxy remained central to governance) as well as cultural and architectural legacy (their commitment to urban development and religious infrastructure left enduring landmarks that persist to this day).

### **The Life and Times of Alp Arslan**

Magill (1998) specifically discussed the early life of Alp Arslan, his life as a sultan, and the circumstances surrounding his death. He was born in 1030 and was the second and one of the most renowned sultans in the history of the Seljuq Empire. Alp Arslan's father, Chaghri Beg, was a military commander for the first sultan of the Seljuq Empire, Tughril Beg. His real name was Muhammad ibn Dawud Chaghri Beg, and he was given the title 'Alp Arslan' by the Turks, which means 'brave lion' due to his courage in battle. He was also granted the title 'Adud al-Dawlah Abu Shuja' by the Abbasid Caliph in recognition of his contributions and services to Islam.

Richards (2002) elaborated on the background and contributions of Alp Arslan to the Muslim community. He was described as a generous, just and wise ruler throughout his reign and it was said that no one ever spoke ill of him during his lifetime. Under his rule, the Seljuq Empire was vast and expanded further due to his campaigns of conquering cities and defending territories from enemies and rebels. Ibn al-Athir added that Alp Arslan was compassionate, often befriended scholars, and was known for his humility and devotion to Allah. There was also an incident where his guards found him weeping while praying. Furthermore, Alp Arslan was exceptionally generous and charitable. During the month of Ramadan, he would spend 15,000 dinars as aid to the poor in his territory. According to historians, there were no reports of oppression in his realm during his tenure, not even by his military. His subjects lived peacefully, and land taxes could be paid in installments to ease the people's financial burden.

Islam (2012) examined the rise of the Seljuq Empire and its territories in Central Asia. Tughril Beg did not designate an heir to succeed him, which left the Seljuq court in uncertainty about who would ascend the throne. The situation became more critical when Tughril Beg passed away in 1063 at the age of 70 due to health issues, shortly after returning from the marriage ceremony of the caliph's daughter. Consequently, his minister, Amid al-Mulk al-Kunduri, proposed Tughril Beg's son, Sulayman, to be the next ruler. However, many nobles opposed this, as Sulayman was still a child. The notion of Alp Arslan becoming the next ruler also gained strong support from numerous ministers and subjects. In 1064, Alp Arslan was officially crowned as the ruler of the Seljuq Empire in

Rayy. Following his ascension, he appointed Hasan ibn 'Ali (Nizam al-Mulk) as his minister and ordered the capital of the Seljuq Empire to be moved to Isfahan. The text also highlights Alp Arslan's decisiveness in governance, as demonstrated when he arrested and executed Amid al-Mulk, the former minister under Tughril Beg, for his actions against the caliph's family. Alp Arslan further instructed his officers to escort the caliph's son to Baghdad and requested the ruler in Baghdad to include his name in the Friday sermons. Upon the arrival of the caliph's son in Baghdad, the caliph convened a public gathering and officially proclaimed Alp Arslan as sultan.

Hasan (2012) said that Alp Arslan ruled the Seljuq Empire for nearly a decade, from 1063 to 1072 and he governed with absolute authority, justice and achieved numerous successes. Furthermore, he also managed the empire with the assistance of his trusted advisor, Nizam al-Mulk, and was firm with anyone attempting to disrupt unity among his people, particularly in cases of rebellion in his territories. Despite his busy schedule governing the empire, he maintained good relations with the Abbasid Caliphate and neighboring Islamic rulers. Alp Arslan's kindness and care for his people were evident as he often personally provided aid and ensured the enforcement of justice against lawbreakers.

Kesik (2014) discussed the final moments of Alp Arslan's life following his last expedition to western Turkistan with the intention of expanding Seljuq territory. This expedition occurred after his victory over Emperor Romanus Diogenes IV of Byzantine at the Battle of Manzikert in 1071. This triumph demonstrated the unmatched strength of the Seljuq army in Anatolia. His life ended tragically when he was fatally stabbed by a rebel named Yusuf al-Khawarizmi from Berzem, leaving Alp Arslan critically wounded. Before his passing, he entrusted the throne to his son, Malik Shah. Alp Arslan took his last breath on November 24, 1072, and was buried in the city of Marv.

Historians hold differing views about the details of his assassination, burial site, exact date of his death, and the duration of his reign as the Seljuq Sultan. Accounts of his death vary greatly, as noted by numerous historians, such as Matthew of Edessa (11<sup>th</sup> century Armenian historian), Abu'l Farac (13<sup>th</sup> century Syrian historian), Azimi (12<sup>th</sup> century Syrian historian), Ibn al-Qalanisi (12<sup>th</sup> century Syrian historian), Ibn al-Jawzi (12<sup>th</sup> century historian), Sibte al-Jawzi (13<sup>th</sup> century historian), Ibn al-Athir (13<sup>th</sup> century historian), Vardan Vardabet (13<sup>th</sup> century Armenian historian), al-Bundari (13<sup>th</sup> century historian), Ibn al-'Adim (13<sup>th</sup> century Syrian historian), Husayni (13<sup>th</sup> century historian), Rawandi (12<sup>th</sup> century Seljuq historian), al-Aqsara'i (14<sup>th</sup> century Seljuk historian), Hamadani (13<sup>th</sup> century Mongolian historian), and Müneccimbashi (17<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman historian).

Vratimos (2021) examined Michael Attaleiates' accounts in his work 'Historia'. Michael Attaleiates, a judge from Attaleia (Constantinople) living in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, documented military and political activities from 1034 to 1079. The Battle of Manzikert in 1071 brought Alp Arslan into the narrative in 'Historia'. Alp Arslan is first mentioned following the attack on the city of Ani by Constantine X Doukas (1059-1067). Attaleiates commended Alp Arslan's character, particularly for his treatment of his captive, Diogenes, after the Seljuq victory at Manzikert. Attaleiates provided a detailed account of Alp Arslan's interaction with Diogenes, portraying Alp Arslan as a humble sultan. He refrained from speaking ill of Diogenes and even gifted him a set of clothing, reflecting his noble and magnanimous nature.

### **Involvement of the Seljuq Army in the Battle of Manzikert in 1071**

Alp Arslan became aware of the expedition when Romanus gathered a massive army of 200,000 to 1,000,000 soldiers from various ethnic groups, including Franks, Russians, Khazars, Pechenegs, Oghuz, and Qipchaqs, in Erzerum to advance into Armenian territory (Bosworth, 1968). Alp Arslan was shocked and disheartened by Romanus' breach of the peace treaty they had previously signed. Following the conclusion of the battle between the Seljuq and Byzantine forces, Romanus was captured and held for eight days by the Muslim army. On Alp Arslan's orders, Romanus was treated and cared for respectfully but he decided to release him under certain conditions. Romanus had to pay a ransom for himself and the Byzantine army, maintain relations between the Seljuq and Byzantine empires through a legitimate marital alliance, and cede the cities of Manzikert, Edessa, Antioch, and Manbij. Romanus agreed to these terms, but within weeks, the agreement became void when Romanus was overthrown upon his return to Constantinople. He was imprisoned and tortured to death by his brother. The Seljuq victory at Manzikert highlighted Alp Arslan's role as a defender of the Islamic community, as he successfully thwarted Byzantine advances into Islamic territories from the north.

Stephens (1968) emphasized the significance of Manzikert to those who controlled it. Before its conquest by Muslim forces, Manzikert served as a bustling economic hub for Christian merchants. After the city's capture by Muslim

rule, many devout Christian traders shifted their activities to Constantinople. This relocation transformed Constantinople into a thriving commercial center that attracted traders from India, Ceylon, China, Syria, Egypt, Spain, the Balkans, Italy, France, Russia, Scandinavia, and Britain. Byzantine gold coins (bezants) became widely accepted as currency across Europe at that time. Byzantine rulers became increasingly concerned about Constantinople's vulnerability to neighboring Islamic territories, as it lacked defensive fortifications to prevent an invasion. Consequently, Romanus sought to reclaim the city of Manzikert. Stephens also noted that the Byzantine army employed its full arsenal of military equipment to advance into Islamic territories by deploying light cavalry for reconnaissance and quick raids, heavily armored cavalry (cataphracts) equipped with long lances, infantry (archers, spearmen, and swordsmen) and military while engineers were tasked with constructing bridges, burning enemy ships and creating traps.

Hillenbrand (2007) attributed the Seljuq victory at the Battle of Manzikert to the low morale and disloyalty of the mercenaries recruited by Romanus, as well as Romanus' strategic miscalculations before engaging the Seljuq forces. Alp Arslan maximized his smaller army's strength, particularly the speed of his cavalry, by directing them to attack the Byzantine forces in phases. This tactic successfully fragmented the large Byzantine army into smaller, more vulnerable groups. Hillenbrand (2011) further collected various Arabic and Persian scholarly literary works that discussed the events of the Battle of Manzikert.

Frankopan (2012) described the Battle of Manzikert, which took place during the summer in Asia Minor. The military expedition was led by the Byzantine Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes, who initiated the campaign to capture the cities of Manzikert and Akhlat situated in Islamic territory. This event demonstrated Romanus' failure as a ruler, highlighting his lack of decisiveness and competence, which ultimately resulted in a humiliating defeat for the Byzantine Empire and his capture by the enemy forces. This victory elevated Alp Arslan's status as a formidable ruler of the early medieval period and intensified fear among his adversaries.

Murgatroyd (2012) described Romanus' preparation of his vast army for the eastern military expedition aimed at curbing Seljuq advances and expanding Byzantine territory into Islamic regions. Romanus' forces were described as innumerable, likened to the grains of sand on a beach. His goal was to obliterate the Seljuq Empire, which posed a significant threat to Byzantium. Upon reaching Manzikert, the city was captured without any bloodshed. At the same time, Alp Arslan arrived outside the city, and his army set up camp in preparation for a battle against Romanus. Murgatroyd compiled various estimates of the Byzantine army's size based on historical accounts from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to Arab historians, the Byzantine army ranged in size as al-Aqsara'i (1944) mentioned 50,000 troops, Hamadani (2013) mentioned 100,000, Ibn al-Athir (1987) mentioned 200,000, Ibn al-Azraq al-Fariqi (n.d.) mentioned 300,000, Ibn al-Jawzi (2014) mentioned 300,000, Nishapuri mentioned 300,000, Sibte ibn al-Jawzi (1952) mentioned 300,000, al-Husayni (2014) mentioned 300,000, al-Bundari (1989) mentioned 300,000, Rawandi mentioned 600,000, al-Turtushi (1872) mentioned 600,000, and Ibn al-Qalanisi (2013) mentioned 600,000 troops.

Nicolle (2013) provided an account of the background of military leaders from the Seljuq and Byzantine forces, while elaborating on the plans and strategies employed by each leader. Nicolle also narrated the progression of the battle, from its onset to the ultimate defeat of the Byzantine forces and the capture of their emperor by the Seljuq army. Romanus had hired mercenaries from various regions to support his campaign, which included the Franks, Normans, Pechenegs, Rus, Varangians, Khazars, Alans, Kipchaks, Persians, Georgians, and Abkhazians.

Fleet (2014) emphasized that Emperor Romanus Diogenes' defeat in August 1071 marked a turning point in the history of Anatolia and the Byzantine Empire. The emperor's decision to engage in the campaign was seen as unwise, as Alp Arslan was primarily focused on addressing significant issues in Syria and Egypt. Romanus should have prioritized stabilizing his empire before embarking on military campaigns in Byzantine-adjacent territories. The defeat at Manzikert ultimately led to Romanus' downfall, as he was overthrown by his brother shortly thereafter.

Yusoff et al. (2015) examined the preparations for the Battle of Manzikert and its consequences on the Byzantine Empire. The study revealed that the Byzantine economy and military system suffered significant declines due to the battle. Romanus allocated a substantial amount of funds to prepare his army by purchasing war equipment and hiring foreign mercenaries to attack the east. This initial defeat at Manzikert proved detrimental to the emperor and the empire, with Romanus forced to pay a large ransom to secure his and his army's release.

Peacock (2015) explored the impact of the Battle of Manzikert on Christendom. Initially, the Byzantine defeat had profound consequences for the empire alone. However, as much of Anatolia fell under Islamic control, the threat extended to the broader Christian world. Constantinople, which was the center of Christianity, was left without adequate defenses, instilling fear among Christian leaders. This fear prompted the Pope to call for Christian territories to mobilize for a crusade against Islamic rule.

Gurpinar (2016) elaborated on the battle's effects on Byzantine governance. The Byzantine army faced critical challenges following its defeat by the Seljuq army at Manzikert and adding to this misfortune was the Byzantine emperor's capture. Gurpinar noted that the Seljuq victory was not a premeditated conquest. Alp Arslan had not intended to attack and defeat the Byzantine forces but rather sought to repel them and prevent their expedition from progressing and capturing Jerusalem.

Vratimos (2019) analyzed the background of Romanus IV Diogenes in 'The Historia of Michael Attaleiates'. Romanus is particularly remembered for the Battle of Manzikert, as it was the first time in Byzantine history that a reigning emperor was captured alive by the Seljuq army. Romanus' poor leadership style and treatment of his soldiers and officers demoralized his troops. His arrogance and penchant for spewing insults after assuming power alienated him from his men. Vratimos concluded that the Byzantine defeat at Manzikert stemmed from Romanus' unwillingness to heed the advice of his war lieutenants during preparations to face the Seljuq forces led by Alp Arslan.

### **Conclusion:-**

The Seljuq Empire's power grew exponentially and became more stable in the Middle East when Tughril Beg succeeded in defeating the Banu Buwayh, who had long controlled the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad. In the absence of a caliph with absolute authority, the Seljuq Empire subsequently dominated the caliphs in Baghdad for some period after the fall of the Banu Buwayh. Throughout the history of the Seljuq Empire, scholars have only found a few rulers renowned for their prowess, including Tughril Beg (1040-1063), Alp Arslan (1063-1072) and Malik Shah (1073-1092). The Seljuq Empire, particularly during Alp Arslan's reign, served as a protective shield for the Abbasid Caliphate although the Abbasid Caliphate did not focus on military strength during its existence. One of the most widely discussed battles among scholars is the Battle of Manzikert, a major conflict involving the Byzantine emperor's campaign to capture key territories in the East. In response to the advancing Byzantine forces, Alp Arslan and his army moved to intercept and counter the Byzantine advance. The success of Alp Arslan and the Muslim army in defeating the Byzantine emperor and his forces has led many scholars to study the strategies and approaches devised and implemented by Alp Arslan.

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