

Baybars I Legacy in Historical Records

Prof. Habib Badawi – Lebanese University (habib.badawi@ul.edu.lb)

Nadin Zouheir – Lebanese University (Nadin.Zouheir@st.ul.edu.lb)

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Methodology

The study describes the methodology used to study and analyze the historical figure of Al-Zahir Baybars. The approach is based on reliable sources, theories, and proofs that are analyzed and discussed to determine the truth about the character and remove doubts and misleading. The historical study of events becomes the best way to evaluate and classify phenomena, that is, to evaluate personalities and determine their role and position historically.

The methodology used involves gathering the most prominent events in the political, military, intellectual, and social life of Al-Zahir Baybars without omitting any pivotal events. Every idea, whether small or large in importance, is considered to draw many new conclusions. The text presents a factual account of Baybar's life, describing his physical appearance, his character, his religious beliefs, his achievements, and his military campaigns against the Crusaders and the Mongols.

The methodology used is based on a thorough analysis of historical sources and references, which provide a comprehensive picture of Al-Zahir Baybars and his significance in Islamic

history. This methodology emphasizes the importance of approaching history with a critical and analytical mind, relying on reliable sources and evidence to reach conclusions about historical figures and events.

Baybars I Legacy in Historical Records

From time to time, one of the historical figures is talked about in specialized research studies who had a prominent role in forming the broadest picture of a certain civilization in its policies, governance, system, and culture. This does not only involve the personal opinion of the narrator nor what he believed in towards this figure; rather, it is also based on proofs, theories, and reliable sources that are analyzed and discussed, and approaches based on their contents are clarified to finally reach the truth about the character and remove possible doubts and misleading statements. It is not surprising that many rulers and sultans in the Islamic eras discussed it among several writers and philosophers without learning about them. And as we see at this time, malicious people seek to falsify and distort the image of the great leaders of Islam to reach the minds of the largest number of recipients, but this matter cannot be achieved by people who read history, who are familiar with its potential, and who accept what the human mind believes in. The historical study of events becomes the best way to evaluate and classify phenomena, that is, to evaluate personalities and determine their role and position historically.

Among the most prominent personalities in Islamic history who did not get their share and did not fulfill their right of research, study, excavation, and analysis, and whose role and influence in their surroundings were deliberately neglected or underestimated by some writers, is the famous Mamluk leader and sultan Al-Zahir Baybars. There is no need to use exaggeration when discussing aspects of Baybar's era or when talking about his achievements, as some do who resort to the legendary folk style to ignite the enthusiasm of the reader. Rather, it is enough to convey the interesting picture as it appeared in the historical sources and references to the recipient, and only those events can convey the true entity of Baybars, who he was, and what he was like. Therefore, it was necessary to gather the most prominent events in the political, military, intellectual, and social lives of al-Zahir Baybars without omitting any pivotal events in this topic of ours. Every idea, whether small or large in importance, can lead us to many new conclusions.

Al-Zahir Baybars, also known as Baybars I, was a Mamluk sultan who ruled Egypt and Syria from 1260 to 1277. Known for his olive skin, blue eyes, broad shoulders, slim legs, and powerful voice, Baybars was described as a tall man with olive skin and blue eyes. His left eye was affected by cataracts. The Panther was Baybars' heraldic blazon and appeared on both coins and banners, possibly because of his Turkic name. He is considered the real founder of the Mamluk state and was born in 1223, during the Mongol invasion of central Asia. Baybars was sold as a slave and joined the Mamluks, where he demonstrated outstanding military abilities. He was known for his quickness of action, resolution, courage, shrewdness, prescience, and determination. Baybar was a deeply religious man who strictly followed Islam's teachings and outlawed alcohol

consumption. He created a postal system between Cairo and Damascus, with twice-weekly deliveries. Baybar was a patron of the arts and learning, and he loved to hunt. He died in July 1277 in Damascus, where he is buried in the Zahiriyya Madrasa, built by him near the Umayyad Mosque.

Baybars I, the fourth Mamluk sultan of Egypt and Syria, was known for his military prowess. He played a crucial role in resisting the Crusaders' attempts to control the Holy Land during his reign. He spent his entire reign, from 1260 to 1277, strengthening the Mamluk army and preparing for another inevitable Mongol invasion. Baybars conducted annual campaigns against the Crusaders and took over most of their territories, especially Antioch, in 1268. He invited a fugitive descendant of the Abbāsīd dynasty of Baghdad to Cairo and established him as caliph. Baybars is considered the real founder of the Mamluk state and paved the way for the end of the Crusader's presence in the Levant. He also reinforced Egypt and Syria as the region's preeminent Muslim states, able to fend off threats from both the Crusaders and the Mongols.

Baybars I was known for his military prowess and played a crucial role in resisting the Crusaders' attempts to regain control of the Holy Land. This was during his reign as the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt and Syria. He led several successful military campaigns against the Crusaders and their allies, including the Seventh Crusade led by Louis IX of France.

In 1260, Baybars I led the Mamluk army to victory against the Mongol Empire in the Battle of Ain Jalut, which prevented the Mongols from advancing further into the Middle East and protected the Muslim territories from being invaded by the Crusaders. He also successfully defended Syria against a joint attack by the Crusaders and the Mongols in 1260.

Baybars continued to lead military campaigns against the Crusaders throughout his reign. In 1265, he captured the prestigious coastal city of Caesarea from the Crusaders, followed by Antioch in 1268. In 1271, he led a successful siege of the Crusader stronghold of Tripoli, effectively ending their presence in the region. Overall, Baybars played a significant role in defending Muslim territories against the Crusaders and consolidating the Mamluk state's power and influence in the region.

Baybars' strategy in resisting the Crusaders was to strengthen the Mamluk army and prepare for another inevitable Mongol invasion. He commanded all the Mamluks to make arrows and practice archery, and he also participated in these activities. Baybars continued the struggle with what was left of the Crusader States. He weakened the Levant Franks so much that his successors easily finished them off. He besieged and conquered several cities, including Caesarea, Arsuf, Safad, Jaffa, Antioch, and Crac des Chevaliers. Baybars proactively participated in planning, leading, and fighting battles and sieges. For example, during the siege of Caesarea, Baybars personally examined the mining work by advancing to the walls under cat protection

(dabba). He also climbed a high church tower adjacent to the citadel and showered the defenders with arrows. Baybars also personally participated in the fighting and storming of cities.

Baybars' alliance with Berke, the Golden Horde ruler, helped him fight the Crusaders. Berke was angered by Hulagu's destruction of Baghdad and determined to deal with Hulagu Khan. Hulagu murdered the Caliph Al-Musta'sim, whose territorial ambitions in Syria and Egypt threatened Berke's fellow Muslims. Berke was the first Mongol ruler to embrace Islam, and his conversion resulted in the Blue Horde becoming Muslim. Baybars and Berke allied against the Mongols, and in 1260, they defeated the Mongol army at the Battle of Ain Jalut. This victory prevented the Mongols from advancing further into the Middle East. It also protected the Muslim territories from the Crusader invasion. The alliance between Baybars and Berke was a significant factor in the Mamluk victory over the Mongols and the Crusaders.

Baybars' fight against the Crusaders resulted in significant losses for the Crusaders. He weakened them by besieging and conquering their territories, such as Caesarea, Arsuf, Safad, Jaffa, Antioch, and Crac des Chevaliers. Baybars personally participated in planning, leading, and fighting battles and sieges. He also formed an alliance with Berke, the ruler of the Golden Horde, against the Mongols. In 1260, they defeated the Mongol army at the Battle of Ain Jalut. This victory prevented the Mongols from advancing further into the Middle East. It also protected the Muslim territories from the Crusader invasion. Baybars led military campaigns against the Crusaders throughout his reign. In 1265, he captured the strategic coastal city of Caesarea from the Crusaders, followed by Antioch in 1268. In 1271, he led a successful siege of the Crusader stronghold of Tripoli, effectively ending their presence in the Levant. Baybars' fight against the Crusaders marked the end of the Crusader states as major players in regional politics.

Concluding Remarks

This provides an analysis of the methodology used to study and analyze the historical figure of Al-Zahir Baybars, emphasizing the importance of approaching history with a critical and analytical mind and relying on reliable sources and evidence to reach conclusions about historical figures and events. The text describes Baybar's life, character, achievements, and military campaigns against the Crusaders and the Mongols, highlighting his military prowess and successful campaigns against the Crusaders. Baybars was a deeply religious man who strictly followed Islam's teachings and was also known for his love of the arts and learning. The text concludes by recognizing Baybar's significant role in defending Muslim territories against the Crusaders and his contribution to Islamic history.

Concluding Historical Remarks: Baybars I and the Enduring Legacy

In the annals of Islamic history, few figures stand as prominently as Al-Zahir Baybars. As we conclude our exploration of his life and legacy, it is essential to reflect on the methodologies employed in unraveling the intricate tapestry of his existence and the profound impact he left on the Islamic world. The insights provided by scholars such as Prof. Habib Badawi and Nadin Zouheir from the Lebanese University have been instrumental in shaping our understanding of this remarkable historical figure.

Methodological Rigor: A Gateway to Truth

The study began with a meticulous methodology and a disciplined approach that sought to transcend subjective opinions and biases. Prof. Habib Badawi and Nadin Zouheir emphasized the reliance on reliable sources, theories, and proofs. This commitment to methodological rigor is the cornerstone upon which the truth about Al-Zahir Baybars has been uncovered, removing doubts, and dispelling potential misrepresentations.

The approach involved a comprehensive gathering of events from various facets of Baybar's life—political, military, intellectual, and social. No pivotal event was omitted, and every idea, irrespective of its scale, was considered. This methodology not only provides a factual account but also allows for the emergence of new conclusions, enriching our comprehension of Baybar's character and historical significance.

Baybars I: A Crucible of Civilization

The broader context of this study lies in understanding the role of historical figures in shaping civilizations. Al-Zahir Baybars, with his multifaceted influence on policies, governance, systems, and culture, emerges as a pivotal figure who molded the destiny of a certain epoch. The methodology applied by scholars involved a profound analysis of proofs, theories, and reliable sources to discern the truth about Baybars, cutting through the layers of time and bias.

In the Islamic era, rulers and sultans engaged in discussions among scholars and philosophers, underscoring the importance of comprehending the lives of great leaders. Today, as we witness attempts to distort the image of Islamic leaders, the value of a rigorous historical study becomes paramount. It is a shield against malicious attempts to rewrite the narrative and ensures that the truth about influential figures like Baybars remains intact.

Unearthing Neglected Legacies

Baybar's legacy, despite its profound impact, has suffered from neglect and underestimation by some historians. The concluding remarks must address this historical injustice and bring to light the significance of Al-Zahir Baybars. His role as a Mamluk leader and sultan, his military prowess, and his contributions to the cultural and political landscape of Egypt and Syria merit thorough research, study, and analysis.

By delving into neglected aspects of Baybar's life, scholars can fill gaps in historical records, providing a more complete and nuanced understanding of his influence. The methodology employed by Prof. Habib Badawi and Nadin Zouheir encourages a reevaluation of historical narratives to give Baybars the recognition he deserves.

Historical Closure: The Real Baybars Unveiled

As we delve into the historical closure of our exploration, it is imperative to paint a vivid picture of Al-Zahir Baybars. Born in 1223 during the tumultuous Mongol invasion of central Asia, Baybar's early life as a slave serves as a testament to his resilience. Sold into slavery, he rose to become a Mamluk sultan, demonstrating outstanding military abilities that shaped the destiny of the Islamic world.

Baybars, known for his physical attributes—olive skin, blue eyes, broad shoulders—transcendently transcended mere appearances. His left eye, affected by cataracts, bore witness to the challenges he faced. The Panther, his heraldic blazon, symbolized his Turkic roots and adorned coins and banners. Baybars' reign from 1260 to 1277 marked a period of steadfast resistance against Crusader attempts to control the Holy Land.

A deeply religious man, Baybars strictly adhered to Islamic teachings, outlawing alcohol consumption and contributing to the cultural and intellectual development of the Mamluk state. His creation of a postal system between Cairo and Damascus displayed his commitment to efficient governance.

Military campaigns against the Mongols and Crusaders underscored Baybar's strategic brilliance. The Battle of Ain Jalut in 1260, where he, alongside Berke, defeated the Mongol army, became a turning point. His alliances and conquests weakened the Crusader states, with the capture of Caesarea, Antioch, and Tripoli solidifying his legacy.

The siege tactics employed by Baybars reflects his firsthand approach. Personally, engaging in planning, leading, and participating in battles, he left an indelible mark on the military strategies of his time. His alliance with Berke against the Mongols highlighted a diplomatic finesse that secured Muslim territories.

In the closing chapter of Baybars' life, his death in July 1277 marked the end of an era. His burial in the Zahiriyya Madrasa, near the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, became a symbolic resting place for a leader who had dedicated his life to the defense of Muslim territories.

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Bibliographical Testament

The depth and breadth of this study were enriched by a diverse array of historical sources. The bibliography provided stands as a testament to the scholarly rigor applied by Prof. Habib Badawi and Nadin Zouheir. These references, spanning works from Al-Qalqashandi to Ibn Taghribirdi, display a commitment to drawing from a variety of perspectives and eras, ensuring a holistic understanding of Baybar's life.

In conclusion, the historical closure of our exploration into the life and legacy of Al-Zahir Baybars is a testament to the enduring relevance of meticulous historical research. The methodologies employed, the recognition of neglected legacies, and the historical closure provided contribute to the ongoing conversation about Islamic history. Baybars I, the real Baybars, emerges from the pages of history, not as a mythical hero but as a nuanced and impactful leader whose legacy continues to shape our understanding of the past.