CHAPTER 3

The formulation of anti-Īlkhānid policy

This country was very far from that land which those infidels had conquered, but [then] it became their neighbor. And thus, the people [of this country] had to fight [the infidels] and resist them. In order to do so, they had to obtain two things: a large army and a brave sultan [to lead them]. Without this, it is impossible to fight these infidels with all their conquests over the many lands, and their numerous men and armies.

Ibn al-Nafīs[1]

Syria at the commencement of Baybars's rule

Upon his accession to the Sultanate, Baybars was confronted with a deteriorating situation in Syria. Qutuz's governor in Damascus, Sanjar al-Ḥalabī, refused to accept the new order, rebelled and declared himself sultan of Syria. To the north, the senior amirs of Aleppo had quickly become disenchanted with Qutuz's appointee as governor, overthrown him and elected as ruler one of their own, whose loyalty to the sultan in Cairo was uncertain. As for the Mongols, just a few months after their defeat at ʿAyn Jālūt, they dispatched a large raiding party into northern Syria to reconnoiter and generally cause trouble. The Franks on the coast did not sit still, but also took advantage of the general disarray and launched an attack in early 1261. In addition, there existed several independent, and not necessarily friendly, political entities in Syria: the Ismāʿīlīs, the "emirate" of Ṣahyūn, and al-Mughīth ʿUmar's principality at Karak. Finally, the situation along the frontier between "Mamluk" Syria and "Mongol" Iraq was in a state of flux, and without an aggressive policy on Baybars's part large areas might be lost to the Mongols by default. Baybars emerged from this inauspicious situation as the undisputed ruler of Muslim Syria, which he united firmly with Egypt. In this, he was served both by his own talents, and by the willingness of the majority of the Syrian military factions to rally behind a strong Egyptian regime in the face of the incessant Mongol danger.[2]

[1] M. Meyerhof and J. Schacht (ed. and tr.), *The Theologus Autodidactus of Ibn al-Nafīs* (Oxford, 1968), 43 of Arabic.

[2] Parts of the first two sections of this chapter appeared in Amitai-Preiss, "Aftermath," *passim*.

The most immediate threat to Baybars's rule in Syria was the rebellion of Sanjar al-Ḥalabī in Damascus, who gave himself the royal title of al-Malik al-Mujāhid. Sanjar's ultimate intentions are not clear and it is possible that he saw himself playing a subservient role to the Egyptian sultan, similar to the earlier Ayyūbid model. Baybars, however, was not in the mood for power sharing, and was able to establish his authority in central Syria. Sanjar was soon forced to flee, but after a short imprisonment he was rehabilitated and given a succession of responsible posts.[3] It is important to note that during the short period of his rebellion, Sanjar wrote to al-Manṣūr Muḥammad, the Ayyūbid prince of Hama, and Lachin al-Jūkandār, the new strongman in Aleppo, to join him. Both answered that they would follow the ruler of Egypt, whoever he might be.[4] It would seem that after their experiences of the previous few months, neither ruler thought that an independent Syrian regime could guarantee the country against the Mongols in the event of another offensive.

Soon after Sanjar al-Ḥalabī had declared his independence, Qutuz's governor in Aleppo, al-Saʿīd ʿAlā' al-Dīn b. Lu'lu', was overthrown by the local Nāṣirī and ʿAzīzī amirs. Their probable initial displeasure at having an outsider placed over them was intensified by al-Saʿīd's avarice and heavy-handed policy towards the local population. The amirs were also extremely dissatisfied by what they felt was al-Saʿīd's unprofessional response to calls for aid against Mongol raids at al-Bīra and Manbij: against their advice, small forces were dispatched and were subsequently defeated. When news reached them of Sanjar's rebellion in Damascus, the amirs met, decided to arrest al-Saʿīd and to pick one of themselves to rule, in imitation of Sanjar. Their choice fell on Ḥusām al-Dīn Lachin al-Jūkandār al-ʿAzīzī.[5] Perhaps, they had intended to carve out for themselves a separate or semi-independent "mamluk" state in northern Syria, although their above-mentioned answer to Sanjar al-Ḥalabī suggests that they were realistic enough to seek a strong guardian to the south; Sanjar perhaps did not seem to them powerful enough.

Whatever were the exact plans of the Aleppan amirs, they were cut short by the arrival of a large Mongol force a few days later (26 Dhū 'l-ḥijja 658/2 December 1260).[6] Unwilling to meet the Mongols alone, Lachin and the rest of the Aleppan army left the city and moved south to Hama. There they joined forces with al-Manṣūr. The combined forces then moved down to Homs, where al-Ashraf Mūsā came out with his army to join them. The decision was reached to stay put and meet the oncoming Mongols.[7]

It is reported in Mamluk sources that this Mongol force was under the

[3] Holt, *Crusades*, 91–2; Irwin, *Middle East*, 45; Khowaiter, *Baibars*, 28–9; Thorau, *Baybars*, 94–5. [4] Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fol. 164a; Yūnīnī, 1:375; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:65.

[5] Yūnīnī, 1:374–5, 2:3–6; Kutubī, 20:231; Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 164b–166a; Abū 'l-Fidā', 3:217–18; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 257b–258a; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:64–5; Thorau, *Baybars*, 95–6; Patton, *Lu'lu'*, 73.

[6] Yūnīnī, 1:375; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:65, writes that the Mongols arrived on 16 Dhū 'l-ḥijja.

[7] Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fol. 166a–b; Yūnīnī, 1:375; 2:115 (citing Ibn Wāṣil by name).

leadership of Baydarā (i.e. Baydar), who had been one of Ketbugha's officers in Syria several months earlier and had escaped to the Jazīra after ʿAyn Jālūt.[8] It is implied that this raid was the initiative of the Mongols on the other side of the Euphrates, and not undertaken at the express orders of Hülegü.[9] The Mongols found Aleppo abandoned by its army. Leaving behind *shaḥnas*, they continued on south, bypassing Hama. On Friday, 5 Muḥarram 659/11 December 1260, they arrived at Homs and met the combined forces of Aleppo, Hama and Homs near the grave of Khālid b. al-Walīd. It is unclear how far the actual battle was from this tomb, located about 1500 meters to the north of the citadel. The land to the northeast of the grave is a gentle slope that rises from west to east, and from the map at least seems suitable for cavalry warfare (see map 8). The Mongols numbered some 6000 horsemen, while the Muslim force was significantly smaller, about 1400 men. The Mongols organized themselves into eight squadrons (*aṭlāb*, plural of *ṭulb*), the first one containing 1000 men, and the others, whose numbers are not given, arranged behind it. Al-Ashraf seems to have had overall command over the Muslim troops. He kept them in one *ṭulb*; he himself was in the center, al-Manṣūr was in the Right, and the Aleppan amirs were in the Left. Al-Yūnīnī writes that birds were seen flapping in the faces of the Mongols, who were also discomforted by the fog and the sun. The Muslims launched a concerted attack and in the end were victorious. Baydarā and the rest of the Mongols fled the battlefield, pursued by the Muslims. Of undoubtable importance to the Muslim victory was the timely appearance of Zāmil b. ʿAlī, an important bedouin leader in north Syria, in the rear of the Mongols with a large group of his men. In this battle, large numbers of Mongols were killed and taken captive.[10] Among the captives was a Mongol youth named Ketbugha who was enrolled in the mamluks of the amir Qalawun, and was later to become sultan in his own right (694–6/1294–6).[11]

The pro-Mongol sources tell the story of this expedition completely differently. Rashīd al-Dīn and Ibn al-Fuwaṭī name the commander of the force as Ilge (written Ilkā) Noyan,[12] while Bar Hebraeus calls him Köke-Ilge

[8] Yūnīnī, 1:375; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 262a.

[9] For the reasons behind this raid, see Abū Shāma, 211; Yūnīnī, 2:89; Dhahabī, MS. Laud 305, fol. 255b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 262a; Amitai-Preiss, "Aftermath," 2.

[10] Yūnīnī, 1:434–5, 2:89–90, 115. Similar, but less detailed accounts are found in Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 166b–167b; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:68; Dhahabī, MS. Laud 305, fol. 255b; Mufaḍḍal, 71–5; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 262a; Maqrīzī, 1:442; Ibn Kathīr, 13:230 (cf. *ibid.*, 240, where he reports that Baydarā was killed in the battle); see also Abū Shāma, 211. For a more detailed discussion, see Amitai-Preiss, "Aftermath," 3–4.

[11] Ibn Kathīr, 13:338–9; Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān al-ʿaṣr*, MS. Aya Sofya 2967, fol. 47a; Ibn Taghrī Birdī, 8:55. But cf. Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 132a; Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, 131, who say he was captured at ʿAyn Jālūt.

[12] Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. ʿAlīzādah, 3:76 (cf. ed. Quatremère, 358); Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, 344–50. Ilge Noyan is mentioned at Abagha's accession to the throne, ca. 1265; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. ʿAlīzādah, 3:100. On this figure, the ancestor of the future Jalayir rulers of Azerbaijan, see the introduction to Ahrī, *Ta'rīkh-i shaykh uways*, ed. and tr. J.B. van Loon (The Hague, 1954), 6–7.

(written Kukālakay).[13] According to the first two writers, Hülegü himself ordered the expedition. These sources report little more than the arrival of the Mongol troops in northern Syria, the advance to Homs (in Bar Hebraeus; Ibn al-Fuwaṭī writes that they reached Damascus!), the subsequent mishandling of the local population at Aleppo (Bar Hebraeus), and the withdrawal to Rūm of the Mongols upon hearing of Baybars's arrival (Rashīd al-Dīn). These accounts are not very credible, not least because they fail to mention the Mongol defeat at Homs. Rashīd al-Dīn, it would seem, conflated the text about the reinforcements sent by Hülegü ca. September 1260, which were defeated by Baybars,[14] with that on the raid into northern Syria at the end of the year.

In spite of the relatively small size of the forces involved in this battle, the Muslim victory was a significant one. It strengthened the feeling generated by the victory at ʿAyn Jālūt that the Mongols were not invincible. In fact, Mamluk writers of a later generation claimed that the first battle of Homs was an even greater victory than the one at ʿAyn Jālūt, because whereas at the latter battle the Muslims had a numerical advantage, at Homs the Muslims were in a clear minority.[15] While this victory was achieved by the Ayyūbids of northern Syria, and not by the Mamluks of Egypt, it should be remembered that most probably a large portion of these Syrian forces was composed of mamluk units of the Ayyūbid princes and amirs. Thus, the first battle of Homs represents yet another vindication of the mamluk system in the face of the Mongol danger.

Al-Ashraf and al-Manṣūr returned to their respective cities. In Hama, when news of the Muslim victory reached the inhabitants, a number of Mongol sympathizers were attacked and one was killed. It is reported that these sympathizers wanted to dig a tunnel to let the Mongols into the city. Baybars was so impressed by al-Ashraf's role in the battle that he returned Tall Bāshir to his appanage.[16] The amirs from the ʿAzīziyya and Nāṣiriyya, not wanting to take their chances alone against the surviving Mongols who had fled north, made their way to Egypt where they were well received by Baybars and integrated into the Mamluk army in Syria.[17] As for the Mongols, they first made their way to nearby Salamiyya, where they regrouped. Moving north, they passed by Hama, seeing that it could not be taken. Evidently, al-Manṣūr

[13] Bar Hebraeus, 439–40 (= Ibn al-ʿIbrī, 492). Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 262b, reports that Kukalaqā Noyan was one of the Mongol commanders at this battle. Köke-Ilge is earlier recorded as one of the two commanders of the Right Wing of Hülegü's army early in the campaign against the Ismāʿīlīs; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. ʿAlīzādah, 3:32.

[14] See above, ch. 2, p. 44.

[15] Mufaḍḍal, 75; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:68; ʿAynī, fol. 79a. According to Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 166b–167a (hence, Yūnīnī, 2:115), citing Mubāriz al-Dīn, the *ustādār* ("major-domo") of al-Manṣūr, there were more Mongol heroes or elite troops (*bahāduriyya al-mughul*) at this battle than at ʿAyn Jālūt; see Amitai-Preiss, "ʿAyn Jālūt," 128–9, for a full discussion of this evidence. For the translation of *bahādur*, see ch. 5, p. 108.

[16] Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fol. 167b; Yūnīnī, 2:115–17, 313.

[17] Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 167b–168a; Kutubī, 20:249; Yūnīnī, 2:91. In his obituary (he died later in AH 659), Lachin al-Jūkandār is lauded for his bravery in the battle; Yūnīnī, 2:300.

was already inside with his troops. They then returned to Aleppo, drove out all the inhabitants, massacred some of them and permitted the rest to return to the city. Thereupon they kept the city blockaded, causing great hardship, and withdrew after four months, when word of the advance of a Mamluk force reached them.[18]

If there were any doubts in Baybars's mind about Mongol intentions towards Syria they would have been dispelled by this Mongol raid. It must have been clear to him that at some point the Mongols would return to Syria en masse, to avenge their loss at ʿAyn Jālūt and reclaim the country for themselves. Subsequent Mongol raids and belligerent letters from the Īlkhāns would only strengthen this initial perception of Mongol intents. Rather than waiting quietly for the Mongols to return, and thus inviting them to raid and invade by his passivity, Baybars turned to meet this challenge: he strengthened his regime internally, giving it an ideological linchpin; Syria was firmly integrated into his kingdom; he devoted himself to preparing a war machine that could meet anything the Mongols or their allies could throw at him; he developed an active defense, carrying the war into the enemy camp; and he embarked on an active foreign policy designed to weaken and even immobilize his Mongol enemy.

The Franks at Acre perhaps hoped to take advantage of the general confusion by launching an attack of their own. In Rabīʿ I 659/February 1261, some 900 knights and sergeants, 1500 Turcopolos (light cavalry) and 3000 infantrymen set out to attack a group of Türkmen on the Golan. Their would-be victims were warned, however, and the Frankish force was severely beaten. This was essentially the end of the Frankish hopes to exploit the unsettled situation in Syria, and for the time being the Franks were to adopt a defensive posture.[19] But this did not prevent them from meddling in Mamluk–Mongol affairs. Already the next month, when Baybars sent off a force under Fakhr al-Dīn Altunba al-Ḥimṣī and Ḥusām al-Dīn Lachin al-Jūkandār (the above-mentioned leader of the Aleppan amirs) to deal with the Mongols still encamped at Aleppo, the Franks of Acre reportedly wrote to the Mongols to notify them of the approaching Mamluk army. Forewarned, the Mongols withdrew to the east at the beginning of Jumādā I 659/April 1261.[20] It is unclear whether this notification was the policy of the leaders of Acre, or the private initiative of one or more individuals.

In order to be free to consolidate his hold over Muslim Syria and pursue the war with the Mongols, Baybars had to come to some type of understanding

[18] Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 167a, 168a; Abū 'l-Fidā', 3:219; Yūnīnī, 1:435–6, 2:117–18; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:68–9; Mufaḍḍal, 76–7.

[19] Abū Shāma, 212; Dhahabī, MS. Laud 305, fol. 256b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 285b–286a (= ed. Lyons, 1:59); Jackson, "Crisis," 509 and n. 4; Riley-Smith's comments in Ibn al-Furāt, ed. Lyons, 2:195–6.

[20] Yūnīnī, 1:439–40, 2:93; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:71–2; Mufaḍḍal, 79–80.

with the Franks of Acre. At this early date it appears that he had little interest in confronting them. On the other hand, the attack against the Türkmen could not go unpunished, and he had to show that he was a force to be reckoned with. Thus, when the Sultan moved into Syria in Shawwāl 659/September 1261 together with the newly appointed ʿAbbāsid Caliph (see below), raids were launched against Frankish possessions. A treaty was soon concluded, although the Sultan was unable to achieve the terms that he would have liked, and had to settle for what was essentially a renewal of the agreement between al-Nāṣir Yūsuf and the Franks. The need for a secure rear and unhindered communications, along with the problems caused by a famine in Syria (and the necessity to ship food through the Syrian ports), made Baybars adopt a more conciliatory stance at this time than he would usually later take.[21]

Towards the Franks of Antioch, however, Baybars chose a different tack. Under Bohemond VI the northern Franks maintained their unequivocal pro-Mongol alliance after ʿAyn Jālūt. In the city there was found a Mongol *shaḥna*, who had held a census and collected a tax of one dinar per person.[22] In late 659/1261, a force under Balaban al-Rashīdī and Sunqur al-Rūmī, raided the country on its way to the Euphrates to provide support for the new Caliph's offensive into Iraq. This was followed in mid-660/1262 by another raid, again led by Sunqur, together with the princes of Homs and Hama, which looted Antioch's port at al-Suwaydiyya (Port Saint-Simeon).[23] During the second raid, the attackers withdrew upon the advance of a Mongol force which had been called in by the Armenians to the north.[24] The purpose of these raids, which continued with regularity until the city was taken in 666/1268, would have been to weaken Antioch's military capability, to punish it for having cooperated with the Mongols in the recent past and to dissuade its ruler from such cooperation in the future. This last goal, however, was not immediately achieved. Apparently later in 660/1262, foot soldiers from Antioch joined an Armenian expedition to al-Fūʿa in north Syria. This combined force was subsequently defeated by an army sent from Aleppo. Many captives were taken and sent to Egypt.[25] Bohemond VI had yet to learn that it was not worth provoking Baybars.

Along the Euphrates the situation was less clear-cut than in the north, where Baybars faced the hostile states of Antioch and Lesser Armenia. In the

[21] *Rawḍ*, 117–19; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 276b–277b (= ed. Lyons, 1:52–4); Maqrīzī, 1:463–4; Thorau, *Baybars*, 142–4.

[22] Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:127; Mufaḍḍal, 171; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 140a–b (= ed. Lyons, 1:154); Cahen, *Syrie*, 706.

[23] Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 276a; MS. Vienna, fol. 5a (= ed. Lyons, 1:60), citing Ibn Duqmaq; Maqrīzī, 1:463, 472; Runciman, *Crusades*, 3:316; Prawer, *Histoire*, 2:440; Thorau, *Baybars*, 142; Canard, "Arménie," 222–3.

[24] *Gestes des Chiprois*, in *RHC, Ar*, 2:755; Canard, "Arménie," 222–3; Thorau, *Baybars*, 142; Riley-Smith, in Ibn al-Furāt, ed. Lyons, 2:196.

[25] Yūnīnī, 1:496; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:90; Ibn Kathīr, 13:234; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 7b. This raid must have been the source of the Armenian prisoners mentioned by Canard, "Arménie," 223, citing Maqrīzī, 1:476, who imprecisely renders Ibn al-Furāt's account.

aftermath of Hülegü's withdrawal with most of his army to Azerbaijan and the subsequent expulsion of the Mongols from Syria, various Mongol possessions on the east bank of the Euphrates were all but abandoned. The extremely strategic fortress of al-Bīra, captured by Hülegü on his way into Syria in 658, was repossessed by a governor of al-Saʿīd, during the latter's short tenure in Aleppo, and soon subjected to a Mongol attack.[26] Ḥarrān was also bereft of any effective Mongol control, as attested to by the ease with which the Syrian freebooter Aqqush al-Barlī al-ʿAzīzī gained control of it later in 659/1261.[27] Other towns in the western Jazīra – al-Raqqa, al-Ruhā (Edessa) and Qalʿat Jaʿbar – were left by the Mongols in an all-but-destroyed state.[28] The existence of this no man's land on his eastern marches represented a clear challenge to Baybars and helps explain his subsequent policy towards this area.

Mention should be made of Baybars's relations with the small independent "principalities" in Muslim Syria: Karak and Shawbak ruled by the Ayyūbid al-Mughīth ʿUmar; Ṣahyūn (Saone) and Balāṭunus (Mansio Platanus), controlled since the Mongol invasion of 658/1260 by the amir Muẓaffar (or ʿIzz) al-Dīn ʿUthmān; and, the Ismāʿīlī "state" centered in several forts in north Syria – Maṣyāf, al-Kahf and others. In the decade after his accession, Baybars brought all these entities under his control, in fact, if not in name. Karak was taken in 661/1263, when its prince was tricked into leaving the safety of the fort and meeting Baybars at Mt. Tabor.[29] The Sultan's influence over Ṣahyūn and Balāṭunus had been felt as early as 660/1261–2. His suzerainty over the castles was recognized in 667/1269, and in 671/1272 he took direct control over them.[30] The subjugation of the Syrian Ismāʿīlīs was a more complicated process. Baybars began exerting influence on them in 664/1266. By 668/1270, he had them under his control, although final subjugation was not achieved until 671/1273 with the occupation of al-Kahf.[31] Over time, then, Baybars had succeeded in uniting all of Muslim Syria, thereby enabling him to better face both his Mongol and Frankish enemies. Conversely, this preoccupation with these external enemies probably slowed down the speed with which Baybars could consolidate Muslim Syria.

Baybars's domestic situation was also far from secure. Soon after he gained the throne, he faced a riot in Cairo of black slaves, stable boys and squires, who revolted in the name of the Shiʿa. This unrest was put down without difficulty.[32] More dangerous was an attempt to organize a conspiracy in 659/1260–2 among the Muʿizziya, Qutuz's *khushdāshiyya* (mamluks of the same

[26] Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq*, 3:122. [27] *Ibid.*, 3:60–2; Yūnīnī, 2:104–5, 108.
[28] Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq*, 3:82, 98–9, 119.
[29] See ch. 6, p. 153; Amitai-Preiss, "Karak," forthcoming.
[30] Yūnīnī, 2:407; 3:25–6; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fols. 3b, 102a (= ed. Lyons, 1:115), 158a–b; 213b–214a; Maqrīzī, 1:470, 546, 579, 605–6; Ibn Taghrī Birdī, 7:139; Thorau, *Baybars*, 197–8 and n. 61.
[31] Thorau, *Baybars*, 164–5, 169, 176, 201–3; 208; *idem*, "Die Burgen der Assassinen in Syrien und ihre Einnahme durch Sultan Baibars," *Die Welt des Orients* 18 (1987):152–8.
[32] Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 258a; Maqrīzī, 1:440; Irwin, *Middle East*, 44.

patron). This too was quickly resolved,[33] but it shows that the military society in Egypt was not of one mind over Baybars's sultanate, and the danger from without was not always enough to stifle dissatisfaction from within. In spite of the efforts which Baybars made to unite the disparate elements of the military society against their Crusader and Mongol enemies and his attempts to portray himself as the leader of the holy war, throughout his reign he would have to keep a watchful eye on possible enemies at home.[34]

The reestablishment of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate in Cairo

To put his rule on a sounder footing, Baybars exploited the arrival of scions of the ʿAbbāsid family to revive the Caliphate, which had been in abeyance since the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in early 656/1258. While Baybars's position was far from unstable, it is clear why he would adopt any means to strengthen it: since its inception in 1250, the Mamluk regime had suffered from a problem of legitimacy *vis-à-vis* the Ayyūbids, and Baybars himself may have felt that, since he was a regicide, his position needed some bolstering. The quickness with which the first pretender was sworn into office indicates the importance which Baybars attributed to restoring the Caliphal institution.[35] The Caliph's subsequent bestowal of governmental powers on Baybars, a point which surely must have been understood by all parties involved beforehand, greatly enhanced the Sultan's claims to rule. The significance attributed to this legitimization is seen in Baybars's widespread use of the formula *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn* ("associate of the commander of the faithful") on his coins and inscriptions.[36]

On 9 Rajab 659/9 June 1261, Aḥmad b. al-Imām al-Ẓāhir arrived in Cairo accompanied by a group of bedouins. When Hülegü had taken Baghdad, he freed this Aḥmad from the Caliph's prison. Aḥmad fled to the Arabs of Iraq, and eventually made his way to Syria and was sent on to Egypt. Four days after his arrival, the Sultan held a public council to ascertain his genealogy, with all the senior amirs, officials and religious dignitaries of the capital present. The correctness of his claim accepted, the new Caliph took the title of al-Mustanṣir, and all those present, led by the chief qadi and Baybars, proceeded to swear the oath of loyalty (*bayʿa*) to him. Several weeks later, the Caliph's investiture diploma (*taqlīd*) to Baybars as sultan was read out in public, calling on him to wage *jihād*, and granting him rights as ruler not only of the territories then controlled by the Mamluk Sultanate, but also of those

[33] Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 266b–267a; Maqrīzī, I:447.

[34] See the comments in Thorau, *Baybars*, 93–4, who also mentions the previous two incidents, and *ibid.*, 229–32, when later conspiracies are discussed.

[35] P.M. Holt, "Some Observations on the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate of Cairo," *BSOAS* 47 (1984):501–2. In general, see *ibid.*, 501–3; *idem*, *Crusades*, 92–3; Ayalon, "Transfer," *Arabica* 7 (1960):41–59; Thorau, *Baybars*, 110–19.

[36] P. Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamlūk Sultans of Egypt and Syria* (New York, 1964), 87–106; numerous inscriptions in *RCEA*, 12:128–226.

lands then under the yoke of the infidel (the Franks, and especially the Mongols), which would be liberated.[37] Baybars was to make much use of this *jihādī* motif throughout his reign, and it frequently appears in inscriptions and his many letters.[38]

Preparations were soon begun to dispatch al-Mustanṣir with a small army to recapture Baghdad. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir tells of how Baybars assigned several amirs along with 2700 horsemen and assorted bedouin irregulars to go with the Caliph, although it is questionable whether even a force of this size was actually contemplated. The Sultan also gave him a personal entourage of 100 mamluks. In early Shawwāl 659/September 1261, the Sultan and the Caliph left Cairo for Syria. After marching at a leisurely pace, they reached Damascus. Al-Mustanṣir set off with his small force, numbering only 300 horsemen according to Ibn al-Furāt (and whence al-Maqrīzī) on 13 Dhū 'l-qaʿda/11 October. The amirs Balaban al-Rashīdī and Aqqush al-Rūmī were sent to the Euphrates via northern Syria, with orders to be ready to advance into Iraq in case the Caliph were to need their help.[39]

Al-Mustanṣir rode into Iraq accompanied by the three sons of the recently deceased Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu'. One of them, al-Saʿīd ʿAlā' al-Dīn, has already been mentioned above, as the short-term governor of Aleppo. He had been languishing in captivity in a castle in northern Syria when his two brothers made their way to the Sultanate from Mongol-occupied Jazīra. The more important of the brothers was al-Ṣāliḥ Rukn al-Dīn Ismāʿīl, who had inherited his father's lordship over Mosul, and who hitherto had shown himself to be a loyal vassal to the Mongols.[40] By Rajab/June 659, however, al-Ṣāliḥ's fear of the Mongols overcame him and he left Mosul for the Mamluk Sultanate. He was soon joined in Egypt by al-Mujāhid Sayf al-Dīn Isḥāq, lord of Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar. Baybars received them well, and granted their request to release their brother, al-Saʿīd, from prison. They also asked that they would return to their countries along with an army to help them. The latter request was denied, but Baybars gave permission for them to go, and so they joined the Caliph on the first stage of his journey.[41]

The first stop of the Caliph al-Mustanṣir was al-Raḥba, where he was joined

[37] *Rawḍ*, 99–101; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 267b–269a; Maqrīzī, 1:448–50, 453–7; Yūnīnī, 1:441–500; 2:94–104. Cf. Holt, *Crusades*, 93; Khowaiter, *Baibars*, 35–6; Thorau, *Baybars*, 112.

[38] See, e.g., the use of the expression *mubīd al-faranj wa'l-tatār* in inscriptions: *RCEA*, 12:128–9 (no. 4593), 142–3 (no. 4613), 193 (no. 4690), etc. The *jihādī* motif appears in many of Baybars's letters: e.g. to Berke Khan (661/1262; *Rawḍ*, 139–40); the amirs in Egypt (670/1271; *Rawḍ*, 395), the ruler of Yemen (667/1269; *Rawḍ*, 356); and to the Īlkhān himself (667/1269; Yūnīnī, 2:407).

[39] *Rawḍ*, 110–12; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 273b–274b; Maqrīzī, 1:459–62; Yūnīnī 1:449–50, 454, 2:104, 109; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:79–80.

[40] See above, ch. 2, p. 46. For al-Ṣāliḥ's earlier serving of Hülegü, see Ibn al-ʿIbrī, 488 (cf. Bar Hebraeus, 437); Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fol. 128a.

[41] Ibn Shaddād, *Taʾrīkh*, 231–2; *idem*, *Aʿlāq*, 3:208; Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, 3–4; Yūnīnī, 1:452–3, 2:106–8; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:81; *Rawḍ*, 114–16; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 274a–b; Maqrīzī, 1:460–1; cf. Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. ʿAlīzādah, 3:83.

by 400 horsemen from the Āl Faḍl bedouins. At this point, al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl and his brothers left him to head for their own countries. With his small army, al-Mustanṣir made his way south to ʿĀna, where he met another claimant to the Caliphate, al-Ḥākim Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan, who had been recognized as Caliph by the Syrian freebooter, Aqqush al-Barlī. Al-Ḥākim commanded some 600 Türkmen horsemen, but these were enticed to cross over to al-Mustanṣir, so al-Ḥākim had little choice but to give up his claim and join his cousin's campaign. Al-Mustanṣir then received the submission of the city of ʿĀna itself, followed by that of al-Ḥadītha, further south along the Euphrates.[42]

Word of the Caliph's advance soon reached the Mongol authorities in Baghdad: Qara Bugha, the Mongol army commander in Iraq, and ʿAlī Bahādur al-Khwārazmī, the *shaḥna* of Baghdad. Qara Bugha set out with 5000 Mongols, entered Anbār on the Euphrates unexpectedly and massacred its population. The remainder of the Mongol army was brought up by ʿAlī Bahādur. At this time, the Caliph advanced to Hīt, on the west bank of the Euphrates, which he took by force (29 Dhū 'l-ḥijja 659/25 November 1261). Continuing south, the Caliph spent the night of 3 Muḥarram 660/28 November 1261 across from al-Anbār, on the west bank of the Euphrates. That same night Qara Bugha crossed the river with his troops. In the morning, the two armies faced each other. The Mongol commander set aside the Muslims in the army of Baghdad, evidently troops from pre-Mongol days, fearing that their loyalty to the Caliph would prevail in the battle.

The Caliph arranged his modest army into twelve squadrons (*aṭlāb*), putting the bedouins and Türkmen on the right and left respectively. He placed himself with the rest of his forces in the center. The Muslims attacked, driving the Mongols under ʿAlī Bahādur back. Thereupon, the Mongols sprung an ambush, and the bedouins and Türkmen promptly fled. The center was cut to pieces, and most of its soldiers were killed. As for al-Mustanṣir, his fate is unknown, but most sources claim that he escaped from the battle, and thereupon disappeared. His kinsman, the future Caliph al-Ḥākim, escaped and made his way back to Syria, as did a small group of Muslim amirs and troops. One of the soldiers reported that the Caliph had a mere 400 soldiers, compared to 6000 for the Mongols.[43]

These were fairly uneven odds, and this fact has troubled writers, medieval and modern alike. How was it that Baybars could send the recently recognized Caliph to an almost certain death in Mongol-occupied Iraq? Ibn ʿAbd al-

[42] Yūnīnī, 1:454–5; 2:109–10; *Rawḍ*, 112; Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, 3; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 275b–276a (whence Maqrīzī, 1:462); Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:82. The last three sources have a slightly different account.

[43] Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:83–4; Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, 2–3; Maqrīzī, 1:467; Yūnīnī, 1:455–7; 2:110–12; Ibn Duqmaq, 184–5; Abū Shāma, 215. Baybars al-Manṣūrī (*Zubda*, fol. 49a [whence ʿAynī, fol. 85a]; *Tuḥfa*, 48) gives different names for the Mongol commanders. See also Bar Hebraeus, 442–3 (= Ibn al-ʿIbrī, 496). In spite of his *nisba* (adjective derived from place, name, etc.), ʿAlī Bahādur may be identified with a Mongol known as Asatu Bahādur; Boyle, "Death," 160 n. 5.

Ẓāhir, Baybars's secretary and official biographer, thought it politic to dodge the question, dwelling instead on Baybars's generosity to al-Mustanṣir, and mentioning laconically the latter's carelessness in not guarding himself, as well as his irresponsibility in not calling for the amirs who were waiting for his summons at the Euphrates.[44] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir's nephew, Shāfiʿ b. ʿAlī, unfettered by the subject of his biography no longer being alive and writing at a time when it perhaps was fashionable to be a little iconoclastic about Baybars, is more critical. He is amazed that since Iraq had been conquered by such a powerful and numerous enemy as the Mongols, Baybars would have sent such a pitiful force. Even the entire Egyptian and Syrian armies, with their infantry and bedouin auxiliaries, would not have been enough to deal with such an enemy![45]

Ibn al-Furāt, and in his wake al-Maqrīzī, offer another explanation for Baybars's action: originally, Baybars had planned to send 10,000 horsemen with al-Mustanṣir, a sizeable force by any standard. But one of the Mosuli princes (who is unnamed in the source) came to him and convinced him to change his mind, saying that once the Caliph regained Baghdad, he would remove Baybars from the Sultanate. Baybars was convinced and sent only 300 horsemen instead.[46] The latter number is convincing and tallies with the figure found above. It is difficult to accept the rest of this story. Ibn al-Furāt, although a late writer, is usually accurate and often cites his source. In this case, however, there is no indication from where he derived this story, and its veracity is suspect for several reasons. First, it seems unlikely that Baybars would have contemplated at this early stage dispatching such a large force, which would have represented a sizeable chunk of the troops at his disposal, especially as he was still in the first stages of organizing his army. Second, it is difficult to see what exactly worried Baybars about al-Mustanṣir, who had given the Sultan complete power to rule in his name. Third, Baybars subsequently showed himself capable of keeping a Caliph (al-Ḥākim) in the background. Fourth, even taking Baybars's known cynicism and sense of *Realpolitik* into account, it is still hard to believe that he would deliberately send the Caliph on a suicide mission. Finally, one wonders how al-Mustanṣir would agree to embark on such an ill-fated campaign.[47]

The reason must be sought elsewhere. Professor Holt has suggested that given the political realites of the Jazīra and Iraq, as they were perceived by the leadership of the Mamluk kingdom, there was a certain logic to sending off the Caliph.[48] As we have seen above, the situation on the eastern bank of the

[44] *Rawḍ*, 112. On the tendentiousness of this author as a biographer of Baybars, and the relative impartiality of his nephew Shāfiʿ b. ʿAlī, see Holt, "Three Biographies," *passim*; *idem*, "Observations," 502. [45] *Ḥusn*, 46; see Holt, as cited in previous note.

[46] Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 275b; Maqrīzī, 1:462.

[47] Cf. Thorau, *Baybars*, 114–16, who also rejects this information in Maqrīzī (he does not mention Ibn al-Furāt), and suggests that Baybars cynically sent the Caliph to a sure death in Iraq, in order to get rid of a potentially troublesome figure who might be unwilling to accept his role as Baybars's puppet. [48] Holt, "Observations," 502. See also Patton, *Lu'lu'*, 76.

Euphrates was not completely clear, and what was known indicated a definite lack of a substantial Mongol presence. One author, Baybars al-Manṣūrī, writing some sixty years later, reports that when the Caliph crossed the Euphrates he believed the Mongols had vacated Iraq.[49] Aqqush al-Barlī's relatively unhindered wanderings on the Mongol side of the border may show that there might have been something to this belief. In addition, the Mamluks and their clients had bested Mongol forces, albeit of modest size, twice in the past year. Perhaps, then, a certain amount of post-victory exuberance might have clouded the judgement of Baybars or the Caliph. It is not impossible that Baybars saw the dispatch of the Caliph, along with the three Mosuli princes, as a way of expanding Mamluk influence to the east, at little cost to himself. Perhaps, there was hope that the Caliph would serve as a rallying point to the disparate Muslim military elements which were floating around Iraq (some of whom in the coming months would begin to seek refuge in the Sultanate), along with local bedouin tribes. The Mongols were aware of that possibility, and thus did not include now local elements in their service to take part in the battle against the Caliph. Conceivably al-Mustanṣir himself initiated the campaign into Iraq, that is, he was not sent by Baybars, but went of his own volition, with Baybars's blessing and modest support, because he thought he had a reasonable chance of success.

Further north, the sons of Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu' were on their way into the Jazīra. After separating from the Caliph at al-Raḥba, al-Ṣāliḥ and his brothers made their way unopposed to Sinjār. Al-Saʿīd and al-Mujāhid remained there, while al-Ṣāliḥ continued on to Mosul. The former two only stayed for a short time in Sinjār. When news reached them of the Caliph's defeat, they returned to Syria; Baybars received them well and gave them large *iqṭāʿāt*. Al-Ṣāliḥ himself entered Mosul without encountering any Mongol forces, which had withdrawn upon the approach of al-Ṣāliḥ's small army (600–700 horsemen). But at the beginning of 660 (which started on 26 November 1261), Mosul was put under siege by a Mongol force commanded by Samdaghu (Ṣandaghūn in the Arabic sources). The siege continued until Shaʿbān of the same year (July-August 1262), and the garrison and local population suffered greatly. The city was taken after al-Ṣāliḥ himself surrendered, subsequently suffering a cruel death.[50]

During the siege, al-Ṣāliḥ had sent for assistance to Aqqush al-Barlī, then based at the fortress of al-Bīra and Ḥarrān. Aqqush had originally been a mamluk of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf's father; after fighting on the Muslim side at ʿAyn Jālūt, Qutuz rewarded him with a governorship over part of Palestine. In the

[49] *Zubda*, fol. 49a (whence ʿAynī, fol. 85a); *Tuḥfa*, 48.

[50] Bar Hebraeus 442 (= Ibn al-ʿIbrī, 495–6); Ibn al-Ṣuqāʿī, 4–5; Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq*, 3:208–11; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. ʿAlīzādah, 3:84–6; Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, 345–7; Abū Shāma, 219; Ibn Kathīr, 13:234; Yūnīnī, 1:492–5; 2:156–9; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 7a–b; Maqrīzī, 1:475; a different version is found in *Zubda*, fol. 49b (cf. shorter version in *Tuḥfa*, 48–9); Patton, *Lu'lu'*, 77–81.

aftermath of Sanjar al-Ḥalabī's revolt and the repulsion of the second Mongol invasion of Syria, Aqqush fell foul of Baybars. He fled north with some of his supporters and gained control of Aleppo for a short while, but was dislodged from the city in Shaʿbān 659/July 1261 by a Mamluk force. Al-Barlī, however, recaptured the city soon after, when the Mamluk army withdrew to the south. Again Baybars sent an army to gain control of Aleppo, which was accomplished in Dhū 'l-qaʿda 659/October 1261. Al-Barlī and his troops moved to the northeast and captured al-Bīra.[51]

From al-Bīra, al-Barlī moved to Ḥarrān, and took nearby Qalʿat al-Qarādī from its Mongol governors. He also reached as far as Āmid in his meanderings through the Jazīra. It was in Ḥarrān, probably some time in spring 660/1262, that he received the call for assistance from Mosul. Al-Barlī did not hesitate in responding, in spite of the relatively small army under his command (the Arabic sources give him 1200 or 1400 troops compared to the 10,000 the Mongols had). The Mamluk writers tell of how the Mongols under Samdaghu thought of withdrawing upon learning of al-Barlī's approach. However, al-Zayn al-Ḥāfiẓī, the former official of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf now openly serving the Mongols, was found in the Mongol camp at Mosul, having been sent to check up on the siege. He convinced the Mongols to go forth to meet the Syrians on the way, citing their small numbers. The Mongols, thus emboldened, set out, and met al-Barlī's force near Sinjār on 14 Jumādā II 660/7 May 1262. The Muslims were completely defeated; al-Barlī himself was wounded but escaped with a small part of his army. He then returned to al-Bīra, whereupon Hülegü wrote to him inviting him to submit and offering al-Bīra to him as an *iqṭāʿ*. But al-Barlī spurned the offer, and instead wrote to Baybars asking to submit. He set out for Cairo, and was well received in Dhū 'l-ḥijja 660/October 1262, although he was arrested less than a year later. It is from the time of al-Barlī's submission that al-Bīra came under the Sultan's control.[52]

During these events in northern Syria and the Jazīra, the other pretender to the Caliphate, al-Ḥākim Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan, made his way to Egypt, arriving in Rabīʿ II 660/March 1262. Aḥmad, the great great grandson of the Caliph al-Mustarshid (512–29/1118–35), had escaped Baghdad following the Mongol conquest in 656/1258. After hiding out with the Khafāja bedouins, he came to

[51] Holt, *Crusades*, 92; Thorau, *Baybars*, 97–8; Khowaiter, *Baibars*, 30–1. On al-Barlī's early history, see: Abū 'l-Fidā', 3:216; ʿAynī, fol. 77a. For details of his adventures in north Syria, see: Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 168a–170a; Yūnīnī, 1:440; 2:104–8, 119–22, 152; Maqrīzī, 1:463–6. The *nisba* al-Barlī would seem to be derived from the name of the Qipchaq tribe Ölberli. It appears that the first syllable of the tribal name was assimilated in the Arabic: al-Ölberli > al-Barlī. On the correct vocalization of this tribal name, see P. Golden, "Cumanica II: The Ölberli (Ölperli): The Fortunes and Misfortunes of an Inner Asian Nomadic Clan," *AEMA* 6 (1986 [1988]):13–14; cf. Weil, *Geschichte*, 1:17, n. 17; Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fols. 168a–170a: al-Burlī. I am grateful to Prof. Golden for elucidating this matter in a letter of 13 October 1992.

[52] Holt, Thorau and Khowaiter, as cited in the previous note; Patton, *Lu'lu'*, 79; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fols. 4a, 7b; Maqrīzī, 1:471; Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq*, 3:62, 209–11; *Rawḍ*, 133–5; Yūnīnī, 1:492–5, 2:152–3, 157–8; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. ʿAlīzādah, 3:85.

Syria, coming under the protection of ᶜĪsā b. Muhannā, a leader of the Āl Faḍl bedouin. Al-Nāṣir Yūsuf heard of Aḥmad and invited him to join him. Hülegü's arrival in Syria in early 658/1260 prevented Aḥmad from taking up this invitation. Qutuz subsequently found out about him, promised to raise him to the Caliphate, and even performed the *bayᶜa* to him via a surrogate. However, Qutuz's assassination put an end to these plans.[53] Qutuz, like Baybars, had perceived the advantages to be had from re-establishing the ᶜAbbāsid Caliphate under his protection.

Probably before news had reached him of this event, Aḥmad, who had taken the Caliphal title of al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh, together with some of the Āl Faḍl, launched a raid into Iraq, "conquering" (in reality, they probably just passed by, and no opposition was offered) ᶜĀna, al-Ḥadītha, Hīt and al-Anbār. At the end of Dhū 'l-ḥijja 658/mid-December 1260, a battle was fought with a Mongol road patrol (*qaraghul*) at al-Fallūja in the environs of Baghdad, and the Mongols were severely beaten; al-Yūnīnī says that 1500 Mongol horsemen were killed (!) while only six Muslims were lost, figures which are difficult to accept. In any event, some kind of Muslim victory seems to have taken place, and news of this may have contributed to the decision of Baybars and al-Mustanṣir to send the latter on his ill-fated campaign the next year. After this initial success, however, the local Mongol commander, Qara Bugha, who later defeated al-Mustanṣir, came up with a large force, and al-Ḥākim withdrew to Syria.[54]

Al-Ḥākim was in contact with Taybars al-Wazīrī, governor of Damascus, who sent him on to Cairo. But al-Ḥākim's hopes to have the new Sultan recognize his claim were dashed when Baybars raised al-Mustanṣir, who beat him to Cairo and Caliphate by only three days. Fearing he would be arrested, al-Ḥākim turned around and made his way to Aleppo, where he was recognized as Caliph by Aqqush al-Barlī, as part of the latter's attempt to establish himself as an independent ruler in northern Syria. Al-Barlī gave him a force of several hundred Türkmen horsemen and sent him off across the Euphrates. At Ḥārran, al-Ḥākim was recognized as Caliph by its inhabitants, including the Banū Taymiyya clan. In ᶜĀna, as mentioned above, al-Ḥākim ran into al-Mustanṣir, and joined up with him, temporarily giving up his claim to the Caliphal title.[55]

As previously described, that campaign ended in the complete defeat of the ᶜAbbāsid "army." Al-Ḥākim made his way to Syria, from where he was sent for by Baybars. He arrived in Cairo on 27 Rabīᶜ II 660/22 March 1262, and was met by the Sultan, who had him comfortably installed in the Cairo citadel and then essentially ignored him for over half a year. Baybars was in no hurry now

[53] Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 6:317–18; Holt, "Observations," 502. See also: Yūnīnī, 1:484–5; Mufaḍḍal, 92–4; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:87.

[54] Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 6:318; Yūnīnī, 1:485–6; Dhahabī, MS. Laud 305, fol. 257b. Cf. Holt, "Observations," 502.

[55] Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 6:318; Yūnīnī, 1:454, 486; Dhahabī, MS. Laud 305, fol. 257b.

to raise a candidate to the Caliphate, for he already had Caliphal recognition from al-Mustanṣir. Only on 2 Muḥarram 661/16 November 1262 was a public council held to verify his genealogy and swear the *bayʿa* to him. Baybars did not even bother to have a Caliphal *taqlīd* drawn up for him this time, although the next day in the *khuṭba* (Friday sermon), al-Ḥākim praised the Sultan and called for *jihād*.[56] Thereupon, the Caliph was kept in semi-seclusion, although he did play a ceremonial role on occasion, as in the early negotiations between Baybars and the rulers of the Mongol Golden Horde in south Russia (see chapter 4).

The expeditions of Al-Mustanṣir and the sons of Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu' were not the only ones to be sent over the Euphrates at this time. There was also Sayf al-Dīn Mankalān b. ʿAlī al-Hakkārī, the ruler of Jūlamark (Chölemerik),[57] who arrived in the Sultanate in 660/1261–2, with his son and many Kurdish amirs. Sayf al-Dīn was well received and given the option of remaining in the Sultanate or accepting the lordship of Irbil. This town was, of course, in Mongol-controlled territory. Its lord, however, had also come around this time as a *wāfidī* (refugee) to Baybars, so, in a sense, the position was open. Sayf al-Dīn took the offer of Irbil, and set off with his son and a number of (presumably Kurdish) amirs. After scoring some initial success against the Mongols, Sayf al-Dīn was killed. His son, however, continued fighting the Mongols, and eventually they were compelled to come to terms with him; he remained probably up in the mountains of Kurdistan.[58] That the Mongols eventually had to acquiesce to his presence, shows the difficulty they had controlling those areas.

A similar instance concerned Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. al-Shāyib, a *wāfidī* of unknown provenance. After treating him well, Baybars sent him to "the East." Word arrived from him in Shaʿbān 660 (29 September-28 October 1262) claiming that he had gained control over "the Jazīra" and had sworn its inhabitants to the Sultan.[59] Nothing else was ever heard of him, so he was probably soon disposed of by the Mongols. Yet even when they failed, Baybars had much to gain from these expeditions. At no great cost and risk to himself, the Sultan could cause trouble to the Mongols. Given the numerous instances from AH 660 of these expeditions, it seems that for a time Baybars adopted a strategy of dispatching small expeditions over the Euphrates, led by figures from that region who had fled the Mongols. This strategy may have had its origins in a perceived weakness of the Mongols in the area east of the Euphrates River.

[56] Holt, "Observations," 502–3; Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 6:318; *Rawḍ*, 141–4; Yūnīnī, 1:483–4, 530, 2:153, 186–7 (writes that *bayʿa* was taken on 9 Muḥarram); Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:86 (same date); Ibn Kathīr, 13:337–8; Abū Shāma, 221 (gives 8 Muḥarram).

[57] This is the former name of Hakkâri, the name of the capital of the vilayet of Hakkâri; T.A. Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey* (London, 1987–90), 1:252. My thanks to Prof. M.A. Cook who first suggested to me the identification of this location.

[58] Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'rīkh*, 332–3; *Rawḍ*, 87–8.

[59] *Rawḍ*, 88.

The nomads of Syria

Of crucial importance in both the war against the Īlkhānids and the integration of Syria into the Mamluk Sultanate was Baybars's finding a *modus vivendi* with the bedouin tribes of the Syrian desert. These tribes, known as *al-ʿarab* or *al-ʿurbān*, were important for several reasons: their control of the sensitive frontier with Īlkhānid Iraq, including "the roads leading abroad through the fords and bridges of the Euphrates";[60] their contribution to the communications network in Syria, particularly in the northeast; the raids they launched across the border into Mongol-controlled territory; the not insubstantial military power they possessed, which found use as auxiliaries to the regular Mamluk armies; their service as scouts and sources of intelligence; and finally, their ability to cause the Sultan trouble, not the least by deserting to the Mongols over the Euphrates when they felt pressured by the Sultan or dissatisfied with his policies towards them. In a sense, the patronage provided by the Sultan to the bedouins can be seen as a kind of protection payment, and thus the Sultan bought their cooperation and forestalled any troublemaking on their part.[61]

Most powerful of these bedouins were the Āl Faḍl, of the Rabīʿa branch of the Ṭayy tribe. The Āl Faḍl controlled the country between Hama and the Euphrates, and from Qalʿat Jaʿbar in the north to al-Raḥba in the south. During Baybars's time, they were led by Sharaf al-Dīn ʿĪsā b. Muhannā b. Mānīʿ b. Ḥadītha (sometimes written Ḥadhīfa; d. 684/1285–6); this particular branch was also known as the Āl Muhannā, after ʿĪsā's father. The Rabīʿa had already risen to prominence in the time of Zengi (521–41/1127–46), and they continued gaining in importance during the Ayyūbid period, through the patronage of various princes.[62] Throughout the last decade of the Ayyūbid rule in Syria, the *amīr al-ʿarab* (leader of the bedouins in Syria), was Abū Bakr b. ʿAlī b. Ḥadītha, a cousin of ʿĪsā b. Muhannā. Al-ʿUmarī tells the story that when Baybars had fled to Syria with the Baḥriyya early in the 1250s, he had sought refuge and protection from the father of this chief, but was refused, while ʿĪsā b. Muhannā helped him. Thus, when Baybars became sultan several years later, he removed Abū Bakr from the *imra* (the rank of *amīr*), and

[60] Ayalon, "Yāsa," pt. C1, 148–9.

[61] For general discussions of these tribes in the Mamluk period, see: D. Ayalon, "The Auxiliary Forces of the Mamluk Sultanate," *Der Islam* 65 (1988):23–31; *idem*, "Yasa," pt. C1, 148–9; M.A. Hiyari, "The Origins and Development of the Amīrate of the Arabs during the Seventh/Thirteenth and Eighth/Fourteenth Centuries," *BSOAS* 38 (1975):509–24; A.S. Tritton, "Tribes of Syria in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *BSOAS* 12 (1948):567–73; M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *La Syrie a l'époque des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1923), 183–201; A.N. Poliak, *Feudalism in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and the Lebanon, 1250–1900* (London, 1939), 9–11.

[62] Maqrīzī, 1:247 and n.; ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār . . . : qabāʾil al-ʿarab . . .*, ed. D. Krawulsky (Beirut, 1985), 116; Qalqashandī, 1:324–5, 4, 203, 7:184–5; Ibn Khaldūn, *ʿIbar*, 5:436–8; Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, MS. Aya Sofya 2963, fols. 144a–b; *idem*, *Wāfī*, MS. Br. Lib. Add. 23359, fols. 30b–31a; Hiyari, "Amīrate," 511–16; Tritton, "Tribes," 566.

replaced him with ʿĪsā.[63] The problem with this story, however, is that many other sources report that ʿĪsā had already received his appointment as *amīr al-ʿarab* from Qutuz in the aftermath of ʿAyn Jālūt, although it appears that ʿĪsā b. Muhannā and his bedouin followers did not actually participate in the battle.[64] It would seem, then, that ʿĪsā's rise to prominence and leadership within the Āl Faḍl preceded the sultanate of Baybars, who solely approved a previous appointment. Other sources only write that Baybars sent a *manshūr* (diploma) in 659/1260–1 confirming ʿĪsā in his position and his *iqṭāʿāt*. Possibly, at this time he might even have added to ʿĪsā's appanage.[65] This is not to say, however, that one of the major factors in Baybars's decision might not have been the hospitable treatment he had received from ʿĪsā several years earlier.

The title *amīr al-ʿarab/ʿurbān* was officially bestowed by the Sultan, and its holder played an important role in the Mamluk scheme of government in Syria. Even before the Mamluks gained control of Syria, there was an interaction between the rise of indigenous bedouin leadership and political patronage from the central government, a development which was refined under the early Mamluk sultans and reached its peak in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalawun (709–41/ 1309–40).[66] The Sultan would place his support behind a family or individual which had proven its power. The patronage they thereby enjoyed, which included official titles, gifts and – most important of all – *iqṭāʿāt*, would strengthen their hand among their nomadic followers. For example, Ibn Khaldūn writes that as a result of the Mamluk patronage of the Āl Faḍl, the latter gained predominance over the Āl Mirā, and overran their winter camping ground. The Āl Faḍl became so powerful that they lived near inhabited areas and only rarely had to seek pasturage in the desert (*barriyya*).[67] Similar patronage, albeit on a smaller scale, was spread among the *amīr al-ʿarab*'s family and other tribal leaders throughout Syria. The relationship of the *amīr* with other tribal leaders is not always clear. There is an indication that the term *amīr al-ʿarab* was also applied to the bedouin leaders in the southern Syrian desert.[68]

In the fall of 659/1261, the Sultan rode to Syria for the first time; with him was the Caliph al-Mustanṣir, soon to go off to Iraq. Once he was settled in Damascus, Baybars met with unspecified bedouin chiefs (*umarāʾ al-ʿurbān*), honored them and gave them some type of grants or allowances (*arzāq*;

[63] ʿUmarī, ed. Krawulsky, 117–18; whence, probably, Ṣafadī, as cited in previous note.

[64] See ch. 2, p. 47.

[65] *Rawḍ*, 98; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 147a; Baybars, *Zubda*, fol. 51a (whence, ʿAynī, fol. 81a). Maqrīzī, 1:541, has the Sultan appointing him in AH 663, but this must be a mistake. Ibn Shaddād, *Taʾrīkh*, 291, adds Sarmīn to ʿĪsā's *iqṭāʿ*.

[66] See D. Ayalon, "The System of Payment in Mamlūk Military Aristocracy," *JESHO* 1 (1958):264–8; Tritton, "Tribes," 569.

[67] Ibn Khaldūn, *ʿIbar*, 6:6, who uses the expression *al-tulūl waʾl-qurā*, which seems to be hilly grazing lands and agricultural lands, as opposed to the *barriyya*. For Ibn Khaldūn's use of *tulūl*, see *The Muqaddimah*, tr. F. Rosenthal, 2nd ed. (Princeton, 1967), 1:251 n. 9.

[68] Yūnīnī, 4:36; see ch. 8, pp. 182, 185.

possibly the intention is to *iqṭāʿāt*, as understood by al-Maqrīzī). In exchange, he entrusted them with the guarding of the country up to the borders of Iraq.[69] It is unclear whether or not ʿĪsā b. Muhannā was present in this group, although if this were the case we should have expected it to be mentioned. On the other hand, the demand that they guard the country up to Iraq indicates that the group was not just made up of the local bedouin, such as the Āl ʿAlī, who lived in the environs of Damascus,[70] and the Āl Mirā from the Golan and the Ḥawrān,[71] but also included chiefs from Āl Faḍl to the north. In any event, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir reports that in 660/1261–2, ʿĪsā came with his cousin Zāmil b. ʿAlī, evidently to Cairo, to show their loyalty to the Sultan, who received them well.[72]

Not all Syrian tribes accepted Baybars's authority without question. One such tribe was the Zubayd, which was concentrated around Damascus and to the south. In 659/1261, perhaps after the meeting with the bedouin chiefs, the Sultan heard that they had been causing trouble. Specifically they had made agreements with the Franks on the coast and shown them the weak spots (*ʿawrāt*) in the Muslim positions. Baybars secretly sent out a force to chastise them, and many of them were killed.[73] To the north of Syria, it is reported in 661/1262–3, 1000 horsemen of the Banū Kilāb joined the Armenian King in a raid against ʿAyn Tāb.[74] There is no record that the Mamluks reacted in any way to this cooperation with their enemy. The next time this tribe is mentioned in the sources is in 675/1277, when Baybars returned triumphantly from Rūm and the amirs of the Banū Kilāb came to him near Ḥārim to profess loyalty.[75] Evidently, this tribe, or at least part of it, sat beyond the effective reach of the Sultan, and only a massive Mamluk presence in their neighborhood could bring them to go openly through the motions of submission. On the other hand, the successive Mamluk raids against Lesser Armenia might have convinced them to desist from cooperating with the latter in raids against northern Syria, and hence we hear no more of such activities.

By the end of 661/1263, Baybars had succeeded in integrating the majority of the Syrian nomads into the Mamluk governing scheme. According to Ibn

[69] *Rawḍ*, 119; hence: Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 150a; *Zubda*, fol. 51a, who conflates this event with the sending of the *manshūr* to ʿĪsā b. Muhannā; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 277b; Maqrīzī, 1:465, who also ties this in with ʿĪsā's appointment.

[70] ʿUmarī, ed. Krawulsky, 136–7; Qalqashandī, 4:210; 7:187. This tribe was the southern neighbor of Āl Faḍl, of which they were originally a subgroup. Their former leader, Abū Bakr b. ʿAlī, had been *amīr al-ʿarab* before ʿĪsā b. Muhannā; see above.

[71] ʿUmarī, ed. Krawulsky, 137–9; Qalqashandī, 4:208–9; 7:187. For problems Baybars had with their leader, Aḥmad b. Ḥujjā (or Ḥijā), in AH 664 and 667, see: *Rawḍ*, 265–6; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fols. 107b–108a, 159a–b; Maqrīzī, 1:580.

[72] *Rawḍ*, 88. On Zāmil see below.

[73] *Rawḍ*, 120; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 151a; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 277a–b (= ed. Lyons, 1:54); Maqrīzī, 1:464–5; ʿUmarī, ed. Krawulsky, p. 139. According to Ibn Khaldūn, *ʿIbar*, 6:6, part of Zubayd was an ally of Āl Faḍl and lived in the Ḥawrān and to the south. Qalqashandī, 4:209, says they lived in the Ḥawrān and were subservient to Āl Mirā.

[74] *Zubda*, fol. 63b; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 225b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 42a. Qalqashandī, 4:205, mentions that some of Banū Kilāb followed Āl Faḍl.

[75] Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 263a.

ᶜAbd al-Ẓāhir, early that year, on his way into Syria, he met with unspecified Türkmen chiefs in Gaza and arranged their affairs. He then met with the chiefs of the ᶜĀyid/ᶜĀyidh (or ᶜĀbid), Jarm and Thaᶜlaba tribes from Palestine.[76] The Sultan entrusted them with the country, and ordered the payment of a special nomad tax (*ᶜidād*), and they were also to help maintain the postal system based on horse relays (*barīd*) and provide horses at the Sultan's order.[77] Ibn ᶜAbd al-Raḥīm, the continuator to Ibn Wāṣil, provides an interesting version of this meeting, which contains both parallels and variants to the report in Ibn ᶜAbd al-Ẓāhir's *Rawḍ*, the ultimate source of other writers: "Baybars had the chiefs of the *ᶜurbān* brought to him and he entrusted them with the country. He appointed for them a *dīwān* (office) and *mushidd* (military inspector), and bestowed upon them much favor [so that] they would attack the accursed Hülegü, King of the Mongols, sometimes with the sword and sometimes with stratagems."[78] There seems to be some confusion here. The passage is in the parallel position to Ibn ᶜAbd al-Ẓāhir's text, which the continuator generally follows. The author, however, has conflated other information. It is unrealistic that Baybars would expect the nomads of southern Palestine to wage war against the Mongols: this is probably taken from another meeting with bedouin leaders to the north, perhaps the one to which reference has already been made. Still, the information about a special government department for "bedouin affairs," while perhaps out of place, is of great interest.

Baybars did have problems with certain bedouin leaders. Most troublesome was Nūr al-Dīn Zāmil b. ᶜAlī b. Ḥadītha, whose brother Abū Bakr had been replaced by ᶜĪsā b. Muhannā as *amīr al-ᶜarab*. Zāmil, with a bedouin following, had joined up with the Ayyūbid rulers of Hama and Homs to defeat the Mongols at Homs in Muḥarram 659/December 1260 (see above). Later that year, however, Zāmil fled to Aqqush al-Barlī, who was then at Aleppo, thus expressing his dissatisfaction with the emerging order, bedouin and perhaps otherwise, in Syria.[79] By 660/1261–2, he seems to have made his peace with Baybars, as he is reported to have gone to him with ᶜĪsā b.Muhannā to profess his loyalty.[80] He is next encountered s.a. 663/1264–5, where his adventures are told at length: because of the conflict (*fitna*) he had early in the decade with ᶜĪsā b. Muhannā, Zāmil had been arrested and imprisoned. Eventually, Zāmil was released and his *imra* and *iqṭāᶜ* were given back to him. Upon returning to his country, however, he began wreaking havoc. The sources single out that he captured the Sultan's agents (*quṣṣād*),[81] who were on their way to the ruler of

[76] Jarm was found from Gaza to Hebron; Qalqashandī, 7:189. Thaᶜlaba inhabited an area stretching from the borders of Egypt up to Kharrūba (near Acre); Qalqashandī, 4:212; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Syrie*, 197. The exact abode of the ᶜĀyid is not clearly indicated in the sources.

[77] *Rawḍ*, 149; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 162b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 13a; Maqrīzī, 1:481. On the *ᶜidād*, see E. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte* (Paris, 1837–45), 1/1:189 n. 69. [78] Ibn ᶜAbd al-Raḥīm, in Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1702, fols. 412b–413a.

[79] Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:72; Yūnīnī, 1:440. [80] See above, p. 66.

[81] On the *quṣṣād*, see ch. 6, pp. 140–1.

Shīrāz, with whom Baybars was in secret contact. Zāmil took the letters they were carrying and sent them to Hülegü. He himself then went to the Khan, encouraged him to attack the Mamluks, and was granted an *iqṭāᶜ* in Iraq. He wintered in the Ḥijāz, raiding and killing pilgrims on the way to the *ḥajj*. Eventually tiring of his exile, Zāmil wrote to the Sultan, asking for a pardon. The Sultan, who in the meanwhile had given Zāmil's *imra* and *iqṭāᶜ* to his brother Abū Bakr, agreed to this, but only on the condition that Zāmil came at an appointed time. Zāmil arrived but was thrown into prison, and remained in captivity until his death in 670/1271–2.[82]

Zāmil was not the only bedouin chief to conceive of the idea to flee across the Euphrates and seek refuge with the Mongols. At one point, ca. 670/1271–2, even ᶜĪsā b. Muhannā felt sufficiently alienated from the Sultan as to contemplate such a move. The ostensible reason was that the Sultan held a number of the bedouin chiefs' sons as hostages. This in itself indicates that for some unknown reason relations had already deteriorated. ᶜĪsā must also have been angered by Baybars's sequestering of one half of his *iqṭāᶜ* in 668/1269–70, including the town of Salamiyya and other places. Upon hearing of ᶜĪsā's plan to desert, Baybars knew he had to act carefully or else he would drive him into the hands of the enemy. He secretly rode to Hama with a small entourage and surprised a gathering of tribal chiefs, whose fears he allayed. Then the Sultan wrote to ᶜĪsā himself and called on him to come. When ᶜĪsā appeared, Baybars asked him if what the bedouins said about him was true (that he was planning to leave Syria). Upon being answered in the affirmative, Baybars honored him, returned his *iqṭāᶜ* to its original size and released the hostages.[83]

This time, a potential crisis, which would have threatened the stability of the Syrian frontier, was averted. The knowledge that the bedouin chiefs could always flee to the Mongol enemy was a definite bargaining card to the chief's advantage. The care with which Baybars reacted to ᶜĪsā's plans shows the prominent place he occupied in the Sultan's mind. From the point of view of the Mongols, what they had to gain from such desertion is clear: intelligence, weakening of the frontier defenses of the Mamluks, and elements which could be sent back across the border to disrupt and raid. In the following decades ᶜĪsā and his son Muhannā repeated their threat to desert to the Mongols, which was finally realized by the latter in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalawun. Only with the formal Mamluk–Īlkhānid peace of 1323 was the danger of desertions finally more or less neutralized, as the bedouins could no longer play both sides against each other.[84]

[82] Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 174a–b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 76a–b; Maqrīzī, 1:535–6; Abū 'l-Fidā', 4:3, who writes that the arrest might have taken place in 664/1265–6; Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'rīkh*, 334; Muqrī, *Nathr al-jumān*, MS. Chester Beatty Arabic 4113, fol. 232b, for his obituary. Cf. the similarities and differences in the story of ᶜAmr b. Makhlūl, another chief of the Āl Faḍl, who also fled to the Mongols (AH 671 or 672) and subsequently returned; *Rawḍ*, 433; *Zubda*, fol. 81a; Yūnīnī, 3:7; Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'rīkh*, 61, 334; Abū 'l-Fidā', 4:8.

[83] *Rawḍ*, 390–3, hence: Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fols. 200b–201a; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fols. 200b–201a [sic]; Maqrīzī, 1:597–9, with some divergence from the previous source.

[84] This is discussed in R. Amitai, "From Holy War to Reconciliation" [Hebrew] (MA thesis, Hebrew Univ. of Jerusalem, 1984), 67–8.

Beside the above-mentioned functions of guarding the border area and assisting with the postal system, the Syrian bedouins made an important contribution in the struggle with the Īlkhānids, as will be seen in chapter 5. Their military potential must have been fairly substantial, although there are no contemporary estimates of their total numbers. Had these estimates existed they would have to have been used with a great deal of caution, not the least because of the general problem of counting a nomadic population. Numbers are provided by the somewhat later writer Khalīl al-Ẓāhirī (d. 872/1468), who attributed to the Āl Faḍl 24,000 horsemen.[85] These figures should not be applied here, not even as a rough indication of the general size of the nomadic fighting population of Syria in the second half of the thirteenth century, because of the distance of this writer from the period with which we are dealing, the idealized picture he tries to paint of forces available to the Mamluk sultan, and the more general problem of statistics in medieval Muslim historiography.[86] On the other hand, the chronicles and other sources cite figures for the forces led by various chiefs in sundry battles and raids, and generally these forces numbered several thousand horsemen at the most.[87]

This discussion would not be complete without mention of the other nomads of Syria, the Türkmen tribes, who, although less prominent than the indigenous bedouin population, played an important role.[88] Since Seljuq times, Muslim Turkish tribes, known as Türkmen, had been present to some degree in Syria, and their population increased in the aftermath of the Mongol invasions.[89] In 659/1261, a group of Türkmen, who had fled there from the Mongols at some unknown date, were found on the Golan Heights. Mention has already been made of how this particular group successfully resisted an attack by the Franks of Acre, but having incurred the anger of Baybars, then moved on to Rūm.[90] Some time in the subsequent year (660/1261–2), another group of Türkmen fled Rūm for Syria, after suffering attacks and massacres from the Mongol commander there.[91] Much later, in 673/1274–5, Baybars, then raiding in Lesser Armenia, met with Türkmen and bedouins who came to profess loyalty, and brought them back with him to Syria.[92] In his biography of Baybars, Ibn Shaddād claims that a total of 40,000 Türkmen households (*bayt*) fled to Syria during Baybars's reign.[93] While this figure may be

[85] Al-Ẓāhirī, *Kitāb zubdat kashf al-mamālik*, ed. P. Ravaisse (Paris, 1894), 105.

[86] On the rather idealized figures that Ẓāhirī gives for the Mamluk army at his time, see D. Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamlūk Army," pt. 3, *BSOAS* 16 (1954):71–4. On the problem of medieval statistics, see: *idem*, "Regarding Population Estimates in the Countries of Medieval Islam," *JESHO* 28 (1985):1–19.

[87] See below, in chs. 5, 7 and 8.

[88] This subject is discussed in general by Ayalon, "Auxiliary Forces," 15–21.

[89] See R. Irwin, "The Supply of Money and the Direction of Trade in Thirteenth-Century Syria," in P.W. Edbury and D.M. Metcalf (eds.), *Coinage in the Latin East* (Oxford, 1980), 73–4.

[90] See above, n. 19.

[91] Yūnīnī, 1:512; 2:162; C. Cahen, "Quelques textes négligés concernant les turcomans du Rūm au moment de l'invasion mongole," *Byzantion* 14 (1939):135.

[92] *Rawḍ*, 434; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 253b; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rīkh [al-duwal wa'l-mulūk]*, vol. 7, ed. Q. Zurayk (Beirut, 1942):31.

[93] Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'rīkh*, 335.

exaggerated, it does give some idea of the magnitude of the Türkmen influx from Mongol-controlled territory in these early years.

The Türkmen were well received and many were settled along the Syrian coast, from Gaza up to the borders of Lesser Armenia. *Iqṭāᶜāt* were distributed among their chiefs, many of whom were made amirs.[94] Early in 661 (which began 15 November 1262), Baybars met with Türkmen chiefs at Gaza and arranged their affairs. The actual abode of these Türkmen is unspecified, but it would seem to have been somewhere in the vicinity, because immediately afterwards the Sultan met with bedouin chiefs from the Gaza area.[95] In any event, al-ᶜUmarī records Türkmen as being part of the army of Gaza in his time, and al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) reproduces a document listing them, along with bedouins and Kurds, as auxiliary troops to the army of that town.[96] Türkmen were settled in the neighborhood of Qārā in 664/1266, after Baybars took the fortress from the Franks.[97] That same year unspecified Türkmen raided Haifa.[98] The most notable mention of Türkmen in Baybars's reign is in 666/1268, when, after the conquest of Jaffa, the Sultan settled Türkmen along the coast to guard it, presumably against a Frankish attack. Since these troops were given the recently conquered lands, outside of an initial outlay of horses and equipment, Baybars was able to increase his army without any additional expense, a point emphasized in the source.[99] These may have been the Türkmen that Prince Edward of England ran into on his raid to Qāqūn in AD 1271.[100] Such settlement of Türkmen was not limited to Baybars's period. A later example is from 706/1306–7, when the governor of Damascus settled 300 Türkmen on the coast between Beirut and Antioch and gave them *iqṭāᶜāt*, so that they would patrol the shorelands and roads.[101]

It is difficult to gauge the exact contribution of the Türkmen to the Mamluk war effort against the Mongols. While they are mentioned several times in connection with the efforts of al-Mustanṣir and al-Ḥākim to reestablish the Caliphate in Iraq, in the subsequent years they are rarely found in the reports of the war with the Īlkhānids and their allies. The inescapable conclusion is that in comparison with the Syrian bedouins the Syrian Türkmen played only a minor role in the conflict with the Mongols. This may be more than a coincidence. Perhaps Baybars was not sure of their dependability and feared their connections with their kinsmen to the north. He might have thought it best to keep them away from the frontier and direct their military capabilities against the other enemy of the Sultanate, the Franks. The ongoing conquest of

[94] *Ibid.*; see also Ayalon, "Auxiliary Forces," 15. For the names of the Türkmen tribes of Syria, albeit of a later date, see Qalqashandī, 7:190, 282; Ẓāhirī, 105. [95] See above, nn. 76–7.
[96] ᶜUmarī, ed. Sayyid, 143; Qalqashandī, 12:218 (cited in Poliak, *Feudalism*, 9).
[97] Yūnīnī, 2:345; Mufaḍḍal, 155.
[98] *Rawḍ*, 267; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 108b (= ed. Lyons, 1:125).
[99] *Rawḍ*, 294; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 128b; Maqrīzī, 1:565; Thorau, *Baybars*, 188.
[100] *Eracles*, in *RHC, Occ*, 2:461.
[101] Ṣāliḥ b. Yaḥyā, *Ta'rīkh Bayrūt*, ed. L. Cheikho (Beirut, 1927), 33, 42; cited by Poliak, *Feudalism*, 9.

the coast, where the Türkmen could be settled and fulfill an important military role, would have facilitated such a policy.

The organization of the military machine

In the long run, Baybars's diplomatic maneuvers, discussed in the next chapter, would have had little effect were it not for the intense military preparations which he initiated. The victory at ʿAyn Jālūt and the subsequent pressure put on the Īlkhānids by the Golden Horde and other quarters granted the Mamluks the respite to prepare themselves for the next test of strength. Yet, although they were preoccupied elsewhere, the Īlkhānids sought to maintain the initiative at least on their border with the Mamluks. The success the Mamluks achieved there, along with the eventual victory at the second battle of Homs (680/1281), shows that Babyars had realized his aim of creating a military machine which could stand up to the Mongol danger.[102]

First and foremost, the army of Egypt was greatly enlarged during Baybars's reign. Al-Yūnīnī states that the Egyptian army reached 40,000 horsemen during this period, compared to 10,000 in the reigns of al-Kāmil Muḥammad (615–35/1218–38) and al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb (637–47/1240–9).[103] Elsewhere, the same author writes that the Egyptian army numbered 30,000 horsemen under Baybars.[104] While these numbers should be used with some caution, they do reflect the tremendous growth of the Mamluk army, at least in Egypt, in these years.

Besides the forces of the defunct Ayyūbid principalities and of his Mamluk predecessors, which Baybars inherited and which formed the initial bases of his armies, throughout his reign there was a more or less steady stream of horsemen from Mongol-controlled territory. These military refugees, called *wāfidiyya* and *musta'minūn/musta'mina*, may be divided into two groups: actual Mongol tribesmen; and indigenous Muslim military elements, including mamluks, who were escaping Mongol control. In both cases, they represented the influx of top-notch cavalrymen into the Sultanate, saving the Sultan the expense and time of training them, although they henceforth had to be provided for. In most cases, these horsemen were integrated into the personal units of the amirs and the non-mamluk *ḥalqa* formation; the latter was of clear secondary status compared to the royal mamluks, but due to the high quality of its troops then, still had a high military value.[105] Ibn Shaddād reports that both the Mongol *wāfidiyya* and the Muslim military refugees from

[102] See the comments in Ayalon, "Yāsa," pt. C1, 128–9.

[103] Yūnīnī, 3:261–2; also in Kutubī, MS. Köprülü 1121, fol. 71b; Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 10:342–3; Ibn Taghrī Birdī, 7:197. Cf. Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, 4, ed. Ḥ.M. Rabīʿ (Cairo, 1972), 209 (cited in Thorau, "ʿAyn Jālūt," 237), who writes that al-Kāmil had 12,000 cavalrymen in Egypt. [104] Yūnīnī, 3:255.

[105] On the *wāfidiyya*, see: Ayalon, "Wafidiya," 91–104. On the *ḥalqa*, see: *idem*, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamlūk Army," pt. 2, *BSOAS* 15 (1953):448–59. On the role of non-mamluks in the units of the amirs, see *ibid.*, 472–3.

Iraq who fled to the Sultanate during Baybars's reign each numbered 3000 horsemen, and this does not include Rūmī amirs (and their entourages), military elements from the Jazīra, Türkmen and Iraqi bedouins, who also sought refuge.[106]

Even more significant, both militarily and in terms of Mamluk society, was Baybars's policy on buying mamluks. Al-Yūnīnī credits him with purchasing 4000 personal mamluks.[107] However, al-Ẓāhirī attributes 16,000 mamluks to him.[108] The late date of al-Ẓāhirī's work and unique nature of this evidence, whose source is unclear, leads to the acceptance of the smaller figure. On the other hand, perhaps al-Ẓāhirī's figure represents not only the mamluks that Baybars himself purchased, but all those who may have been previously mamluks of earlier sultans and of defunct and dead amirs, and had been integrated into the royal mamluks.[109] Al-Yūnīnī's figure is substantially larger than the number of mamluks bought by Baybars's patron, al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb, who is said to have established mamluk units totaling about 1000.[110] The royal mamluks, the most important component being those mamluks bought and raised by Baybars himself, were the backbone of the Mamluk army and their large numbers embody the efforts he devoted to creating a military machine to repulse the enemies of his kingdom. Baybars was not alone in purchasing and raising mamluks: the various amirs all received *iqṭāʿāt* in order to finance the upkeep of personal units, which were to a large extent composed of mamluks whom they had to purchase and train. Although there is no explicit evidence to this effect, it seems clear that in the atmosphere of *jihād* and military preparations, and under the influence if not overt encouragement of the Sultan, the amirs were also busy buying young mamluks, and thus contributing to the general increase in size of the Mamluk army.

There is little information on the size of the Syrian armies in this period. It can only be assumed that here too there was some degree of expansion, influenced both by the growth of the Egyptian army and the extra revenues generated from recently conquered Frankish possessions. One sign that the Syrian army grew is that at some point Baybars ordered the army of Hama to be expanded from 600 to 800 horsemen.[111] Indications of how important Baybars considered the Syrian army are found in the following examples: in

[106] Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'rīkh*, 331, 337 (whence Yūnīnī, 3:256; Ibn Kathīr, 13:276). Both Mongol and non-Mongol *wāfidiyya* will be discussed in further detail in ch. 5.

[107] Yūnīnī, 3:250; also Kutubī, MS. Köprülü, fol. 71a. See Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure," pt. 1, 223; R.S. Humphreys, "Emergence of the Mamluk Army," 159–60; Smith, "ʿAyn Jālūt," 321 n. 42.

[108] Ẓāhirī, 116. Maqrīzī, 1:638, writes that Baybars had a personal army (*ʿaskar*) of 12,000, split equally between Cairo, Damascus and Aleppo, an assertion which may be rejected, given that we know that the royal mamluks were permanently stationed in Cairo; Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure," pt. 1, 205.

[109] On these components of the royal mamluks, see Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure," pt. 1, 204–22.

[110] The exact numbers vary in the sources and could possibly be somewhat higher. See Levanoni, "The Mamluks' Ascent to Power," 124–5.

[111] Mufaḍḍal, 202–3.

662/1264, the Sultan sent a senior amir to inspect the armies and fortresses of Syria.[112] The same year, the Sultan intervened in the military affairs of the semi-autonomous principality of Hama, whose lord – al-Manṣūr – was not running things to his satisfaction.[113] Baybars also conducted inspection tours of Syria to check its military readiness, as in 667/1269 and 670/1271.[114] In addition to the regular Syrian armies, mention has been made above of the bedouin and Türkmen auxiliaries. There is no evidence, at least in the period under discussion, of large-scale contingents of volunteers joining the Mamluks on their campaigns against the Mongols.[115]

Care was not only devoted to the size of the army, but also to its quality. Baybars placed great emphasis on *furūsiyya* (horsemanship) and other military training. He had built two hippodromes in Cairo: al-Maydān al-Ẓāhirī and Maydān al-Qabaq. The latter was especially important. Built in 666/1267, it was the main center for *furūsiyya* exercises of the Sultan's army. When the Sultan was in Egypt, he would visit this *maydān* every day, training until the evening prayer. Because of the enthusiasm he generated, almost all the amirs and mamluks devoted themselves to training with the lance and bow. Since the general zeal led to the overcrowding of the hippodrome, participation had to be regulated. "Such fervour and enthusiasm were, indeed, peculiar to Baybars' reign and were much weaker under his successors, even though Sultan Qalawun and his sons Khalīl and Muḥammad, sought to uphold Baybars' tradition."[116] Besides this general description of the Sultan's participation and encouragement of *furūsiyya* training, interspersed in the chronicles are specific examples of instances of his partaking in this activity, even while on campaign in Syria.[117]

Over the years Baybars held inspections (*ʿurūḍ*, pl. of *ʿarḍ*) of his troops, thus verifying their readiness.[118] The Sultan personally conducted these inspections, which would take place in one of the *maydāns* in Cairo. He would often attempt to complete them in one day, in order to make sure that no one was passing around equipment. Failure to show up for inspection could result in execution: in 674/1275–6 five *ḥalqa* soldiers were hanged in Cairo for being

[112] *Rawḍ*, 194; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 168a; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 42b; Maqrīzī, 1:510.

[113] Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 166b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 37a–b; Maqrīzī, 1:503.

[114] AH 667: *Rawḍ*, 342; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 154b; Maqrīzī, 1:574. AH 670: *Rawḍ*, 395; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 205b; Maqrīzī, 1:602.

[115] Cf. Irwin, *Middle East*, 50.

[116] D. Ayalon, "Notes on the Furūsiyya Exercises and Games in the Mamlūk Sultanate," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 9 (1961):38–39, 44, 47. See below, ch. 10, for a further discussion on the training which the mamluks underwent.

[117] AH 667: *Rawḍ*, 338; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 149b; Maqrīzī, 1:573. AH 669: Maqrīzī, 595–6. AH 670: Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fols. 204a, 205b; Maqrīzī, 1:601, 602. AH 671: Maqrīzī, 1:605. AH 672: Ibn al-Furāt, 7:6–7; Maqrīzī, 1:611–12. Qalawun, at the beginning of his reign, also went to the *maydān* to participate in these exercises: Maqrīzī, 1:669.

[118] AH 661: Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 35b; Maqrīzī, 1:501; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 169b; *ibid.*, fol. 166a, also reports that that year the Sultan reviewed his troops every Monday and Thursday. AH 662: Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fols. 45b, 50b, 53a–54b; Maqrīzī, 1:512, 517. AH 673: Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 253a; Ibn al-Furāt, 7:28. AH 675: Ibn al-Furāt, 7:68; Maqrīzī, 1:626.

absent from a review in Homs.[119] The *ʿarḍ* was an important institution in the military life of medieval Islam, and enabled the ruler or commander to keep up the pressure on his subordinates, be they officers or soldiers.[120] Baybars made effective use of this long established institution.

Brief mention should be made of the ostensible adoption by Baybars of the *yasa* (< Mongolian *jasagh*), the Mongol legal code theoretically promulgated by Chinggis Khan.[121] Professor Ayalon has studied this question at length and has shown that Ibn Taghrī Birdī's evidence that Baybars adopted various Mongol customs and usages of Chinggis Khan, including his laws (*aḥkām*), is highly doubtful, not least because this information is not substantiated by any contemporary author, including the Sultan's biographers. If anything, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir cites a letter in which Baybars expressed explicit contempt for the *yasa*.[122]

Early on in his reign, Baybars organized his *barīd* ("pony express") system to expedite rapid communications between Egypt and Syria, and different points within the latter country. The need for such a system is clear. When not on campaign, the majority of the Mamluk army was concentrated in Cairo, while the Mongols could launch a raid or even an offensive at any time into Syria. In addition, the danger of a Frankish attack could not be discounted altogether. Finally, since the Sultan spent much of his time in Syria, he needed rapid communications with his capital, in case of either subversion against his rule, or a Frankish attack against the Egyptian coast. J. Sauvaget doubted that the inspiration for the postal service was the caliphal *barīd*, since this had been out of service since Seljuq times at the latest. Instead, he suggested that Baybars's source was the postal system of horse relays of the Mongols, the *yām* (< Mongolian *jam*).[123] This is not as far-fetched as might initially sound, because there was some limited Mongol influence on the Mamluk Sultanate.[124] Considering the significance of having a rapid form of communications, there is no reason why Baybars would not have adopted a successful Mongol administrative practice.

Whatever the ultimate inspiration for the *barīd*, Baybars established it in 659/1260–1. Under normal conditions messages could be sent from Egypt to Damascus in four days, and in times of particular urgency this was even

[119] Kutubī, MS. Köprülü, fol. 42a.

[120] See C.E. Bosworth, "Recruitment, Muster and Review in Medieval Islamic Armies," in V.J. Parry and M.E. Yapp (eds.), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London, 1975), 59–77, esp. 72ff.

[121] On the *yasa*, see Ratchnevsky, *Genghis Khan*, 187–96; the four sections of Ayalon, "Yāsa"; D.O. Morgan, "The 'Great *Yāsa* of Chingiz Khān' and Mongol Law in the Īlkhānate," *BSOAS* 49 (1986):163–76.

[122] Ayalon, "Yāsa," pt. C2, 127–31; see Ibn Taghrī Birdī, 6:268–9, 7:182–6. On this letter see ch. 5, p. 124.

[123] J. Sauvaget, *La poste aux chevaux dans l'empire des Mamelouks* (Paris, 1941), 10–13. See also: D. Ayalon, "On One of the Works of Jean Sauvaget," *IOS* 1 (1971):298–302; *idem*, "Yāsa," pt. C1, 131–2; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Syrie*, 239–48; Thorau, *Baybars*, 103–5. For the *yām*, see Morgan, *Mongols*, 103–7.

[124] See Ayalon, "Yāsa," pt. C1, 130–6.

shortened to three. Among the termini of the *barīd* were the frontier fortresses of al-Bīra and al-Raḥba, and routes connected all the major cities of Syria. The *barīd* should not be understood as a postal system in the modern sense, open to all citizens. Rather it was normally restricted for use by the Sultan, and although it was used for day-to-day matters of government, its main purpose was the conveying of military messages. The employment of members of the *khāṣṣakiyya*, the Sultan's select entourage, as postal couriers shows the great importance Baybars attached to this system.[125] The role of the Syrian bedouins in helping to maintain and man the *barīd* system has already been mentioned.

Even the *barīd*, however, was not fast enough for the Sultan. In order to relay the news from the Euphrates of an impending Mongol raid or invasion, a series of watchposts (*manāwir*) was established. Urgent news was passed from station to station via bonfires at night and smoke signals during the day. These posts, which were manned all the time, stretched in two lines from al-Bīra and al-Raḥba on the Euphrates to Damascus, and from there in a single line to Gaza, from where the alert was relayed on to Cairo via pigeon-post or *barīd*. Thus, if there was news at the northeastern border in the morning, by night it would have reached the Citadel in Cairo.[126] The pigeon-post service, again starting at al-Raḥba and al-Bīra, was also put on a firm footing in the early Mamluk period. This had existed in a precarious manner in Ayyūbid times, but under the Mamluks it was transformed into a regular institution.[127] Although the initiator of these two institutions is unspecified in the sources, they can probably be attributed to Baybars, whose efforts against the Mongols provide a logical background to these developments.[128]

In order to improve communications and facilitate the movement of troops, roads and bridges in Syria were improved and rebuilt. Outstanding examples include the bridge at Dāmiya over the Jordan (664/1266),[129] the bridge at Lydda (671/1273),[130] and guard towers on the roads to Tadmur and al-Raḥba.[131]

[125] *Rawḍ*, 95; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 266a; Maqrīzī, 1:446–7. Also Yūnīnī, 3:255; *Rawḍ*, 395–6. For the administration of this system, see: Sauvaget, *Poste*, 16–36, 42–77; Ayalon, "Sauvaget," 298–302.

[126] ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf fī al-muṣṭalaḥ al-sharīf* (Cairo, 1312/1894–5), 199–201; Qalqashandī, 1:127–8, who writes that fires were used as signals as far as Bilbīs in Egypt; Sauvaget, *Poste*, 39–41. The efficiency of smoke and fire signals, at least in the Byzantine Empire and Lesser Armenia, has been questioned; R.W. Edwards, *The Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia* (Washington, D.C., 1987), 42 n. 19. Bonfires were used in the Ayyūbid period to convey messages from Muslim spies in Acre to Damascus; Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'at al-zamān*, vol. 8 (Hyderabad, 1370/1951):646–7.

[127] Sauvaget, *Poste*, 36–9; Gaudefroy-Demombynes, *Syrie*, 250–4.

[128] Sauvaget, *Poste*, 41.

[129] Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 179a–b; Thorau, *Baybars*, 166.

[130] Ibn al-Furāt, 7:6; *RCEA*, 12:174–5 (s.a. 671). R. Ellenblum ("The Crusader Road from Lod to Jerusalem" [Hebrew], in Y. Ben-Arieh *et al.* (eds.), *Historical–Geographical Studies in the Settlement of Eretz Israel* [Jerusalem, 1988], 215–18) shows that Baybars only rebuilt an earlier Frankish bridge.

[131] Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 10:342.

Baybars's fortification policy is summed up in the following statement found in the proclamation released after the conquest of Caesarea in 663/1265:

> One part [of the Muslim armies] uproots Frankish fortresses, and destroys [their] castles, while [another] part rebuilds what the Mongols destroyed in the east and increases the height of their ramparts [compared with what they were].[132]

With his usual vigor, Baybars continued the Ayyūbid policy of destroying the fortifications and cities along the Syrian coast as they were conquered from the Franks. The rationale for this was the knowledge that the coastline could not be adequately garrisoned, and it was feared that if the Franks attacked from the sea, over which they had undisputed control, these cities could thus be easily recaptured and function as a bridgehead for a new Crusading effort.[133] Yet at the same time, the Sultan devoted much attention and resources to the fortresses further inland. These included Qāqūn, to the east of the coastal plain in Palestine, which was rebuilt in 664/1265–6 and served as a regional center in lieu of the destroyed cities of Caesaria and Arsūf, as well as a watchpost on the coastal plain.[134] Baybars also had Safad completely repaired after the heavy damage it had suffered in the siege to take it (664/1266).[135] Other important Frankish castles which were taken and then repaired were Shaqīf Tīrūn (Cave de Tyron), Ḥiṣn al-Akrād (Crac des Chevaliers) and Ḥiṣn ʿAkkār (Gibelacar).[136]

Baybars had also repaired early in his reign many of the fortifications which had been destroyed or damaged by the Mongols during their short occupation of Syria: the forts of al-Ṣalt, ʿAjlūn, Ṣarkhad, Bosra, Shayzar, al-Ṣubayba and Shumaymish (near Homs), along with the citadels of Damascus, Baalbek and Homs.[137] Interestingly enough, the citadel of Aleppo was not rebuilt until the 1290s.[138] When Karak was taken in 661/1263 from al-Mughīth ʿUmar, Baybars had it regarrisoned and maintained in a state of readiness.[139]

The purpose of these fortresses was manifold. All were to function as fortified regional centers, and symbols of Mamluk authority over the country. The splitting up of power in Syria among various fortified centers was also a preventative measure against would-be rebellious Mamluk officers or gover-

[132] Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 73b: Maqrīzī, 1:531; Ibn al-Dawādārī, 8:109; translation from D. Ayalon, "The Mamluks and Naval Power: A Phase of the Struggle between Islam and Christian Europe," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 1, no. 8 (1967):12. [133] Ayalon, "The Mamluks and Naval Power," 7–9.

[134] *Rawḍ*, 275; Ṣafadī, *Wāfī*, 10:341. Cf. Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 117a (= ed. Lyons, 1:127; see Riley-Smith's comments, 2:218); Maqrīzī, 1:557, who both put this event in AH 666.

[135] Holt, *Crusades*, 95–6. Baybars himself took part in these repairs; *Rawḍ*, 280–1, 285; Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq*, 2, pt. 2: 150–1; T. T. al-Ṭarāwina, *Mamlakat ṣafad fī ʿahd al-mamālīk* (Beirut, 1402/1982), 52–3. [136] Thorau, *Baybars*, 188–9, 205–6.

[137] *Rawḍ*, 93; Nuwayrī, MS. 2m, fol. 142b; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fol. 266a; Maqrīzī, 1:446.

[138] Ibn al-Shiḥna, *al-Durr al-muntakhab fī ta'rīkh mamlakat ḥalab* (Beirut, 1909), 54–5, 57–8; trans. in J. Sauvaget (tr.), *"Les Perles Choisies" d'Ibn ach-Chihna* (Beirut, 1933), 46, 48.

[139] Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 26a; Maqrīzī, 1:492. In 673/1274, Baybars inspected Karak and nearby Shawbak; Ibn al-Furāt, 7:22; Maqrīzī, 1:614.

nors.[140] Some, such as Qāqūn and Safad, were clearly intended to contain the Franks still on the coast and any that would come from over the sea. Many, while having an anti-Frankish purpose, could also act as centers of resistance if the Mongols were to reconquer all or part of the country. This actually seems to have happened in the Mongol occupation of 699/1299–1300.[141]

There were two forts whose main purpose was to act as bulwarks against Mongol aggression: al-Bīra and al-Raḥba. Guarding the fords over the Euphrates, these forts were both subjected to many attacks throughout the entire history of the Mongol–Mamluk war. In 658/1260, al-Bīra had been occupied by the Mongols, who destroyed its walls and towers to some degree. Al-Bīra was subsequently abandoned by the Mongols after ʿAyn Jālūt, when it was taken over by a representative of al-Saʿīd ʿAlā' al-Dīn, governor of Aleppo. Later that year, it was subjected to an unsuccessful Mongol attack, and the following year Aqqush al-Barlī took it over. In 660/1262, Baybars finally gained control over it when Aqqush submitted to him following his defeat by the Mongols at Sinjār, and it was subsequently repaired.[142] Al-Raḥba's fate in 658/1260 is unclear. The fact that it does not seem to be mentioned in this year by the sources may indicate that the Mongols never conquered it. It seems that it came under the authority of the Ayyūbid ruler of Homs, because at al-Ashraf Mūsā's death in 662/1264, it is reported that only then did it come under the Sultan's direct control.[143] The importance of these two forts cannot be exaggerated. Besides guarding the Mamluk frontier, they acted as watchposts and termini to the various systems of rapid communication discussed above, and thus could alert the Sultan of Mongol raids or impending invasions. In addition, they served as the staging posts for the many Mamluk raids into Mongol-controlled territory, thus facilitating the carrying of the border war over into the enemy camp.[144]

[140] D. Ayalon, "Egypt as a Dominant Factor in Syria and Palestine during the Islamic Period," in A. Cohen and G. Baer (eds.), *Egypt and Palestine* (Jerusalem and N.Y., 1984), 34–5.
[141] Amitai, "Mongol Raids," 244.
[142] Ibn Shaddād, *Aʿlāq*, 3:120–3; Ibn Wāṣil, MS. 1703, fol. 165a; Yūnīnī, 2:119; *Zubda*, fol. 36a; ʿAynī, fol. 81b; Ṣafadī, *Wāfī* 10:342. See also above, p. 61.
[143] *Rawḍ*, 280; Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vienna, fol. 39a; Maqrīzī, 1:505.
[144] See, e.g.: Yūnīnī, 3:132–3. These forts are discussed at greater length in ch. 9.