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## The Activities of the Abbasid Caliphs in Egypt

By Zukhra Aripova

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## I. INTRODUCTION

It is well known that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was aware during his lifetime that certain changes would take place in the governance of this state in the future, and that completely new principles and scientific substantiation of the hadiths would be formed in the relationship between religion and secularism: the caliphate for thirty years, and then there will be an emirate "- one of the most pressing issues. If we look at the date of "thirty years" in this hadith, then "al-hulafa ar-Rashidun" (those who followed the correct path) ruled for 30 years Abu Bakr Siddiq (632-634), 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (634- 644), Uthman ibn Affan (644-656) and Ali ibn Abu Talib (656-661). The hadiths show that our Prophet Muhammad even mentioned the name of his country. The system of government understudy has lost its religious character and acquired a secular character. It is important for our historians to objectively study the activities of the Abbasid caliphs in Cairo, as well as refute some trends promoting the "idea" of the caliphate.

### a) *Material and Methods*

The article uses generally accepted historical methods based on the principles of historicity, structurality and objectivity.

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The prestige of the Egyptian sultans increased as a result of this great victory, which no Muslim head of state could achieve. They were recognized as heads of state until 1517, even by Mecca and Medina. [11:364]

The research of G. Gibb and W. W. Barthold shows that the political direction of the caliphate has changed over the centuries. [6:15-78, 8:148] G. Gibb states: "As a result of studying the Khilafah, I realized that he had only been in politics for thirty years. Then he became an imam, leaving only the name of the caliphate". [8:148] Imamship was the supreme authority in Islam. In this regard, the Prophet said, "The Khilafah is thirty years after me." [1:299]

خلافة عمر عشرا، خلافة عثمان اثنتي عشرة و خلافة علي ست  
الخلافة ثلاثون سنة، ثم يكون ملكاً. أمسك خلافة أبي بكر سنتين،  
سنين]20

(The Khilafah is for thirty years, then there will be a kingdom. Caliph Abu Bakr ruled for 2 years, Caliph Umar for 10 years, Caliph Uthman for 12 years, and Caliph Ali for 6 years.) It should be noted that the hadith has once again been proven.

Founded by our Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), religion was predominant in the first and last, Islamic state and in the state where the first Arab caliphs in history ruled. According to the requirements of historical conditions, the process of the emergence of elements of a secular nature and the scientific substantiation of the hadith of the Prophet "The Khilafah is thirty years after me" are of special importance.

### b) *Results*

Mamlukis have rightly relegated the status of the Abbasids of Cairo, a line of caliphs largely trotted out from seclusion only to lend religious sanction to official events, to the sidelines of Mamluk history. Despite having lost political and religious significance by the mid-fourteenth century, the Abbasid caliphs of Cairo retained a measure of religious authority and enjoyed the reverence of noteworthy sectors of the Cairene population. Few studies of the period have attempted to consider the residual religious authority of the caliphal institution. Most scholars have focused on how the caliphs served to legitimize the Mamluk position both domestically and beyond its sphere of direct control. By describing infrequently discussed ceremonial functions of the caliphs, the present article hopes to approach an understanding of the revived Abbasid caliphate's significance to the society in which it existed.

c) *Discussion*

The rule of the Abbasids had two important periods, the first being the period from 750 BC to 1258 BC. During this period, the rule of the Abbasids had a very strong influence. They established their dominance over much of the Middle East, a period is known as the "golden age of Islam," but soon after the conquest of the capital, Baghdad, the Abbasid caliphs fled to Egypt. [5:395] The second period of the Abbasid caliphate rule was from 1261 to 1517 when Cairo was the capital of the Abbasid caliphate and the Abbasids were religious leaders in the Islamic world, but the Mamluk sultans were with them at the time and they had political and military power in the region. [4:201]

## II. VICTORY OVER THE MONGOLS

On September 3, 1260 the Mamluk army led by Sultan Qutuz defeated the Mongols in "Ain Jalut", forcing the Mongols to stop their march to other states in Asia Minor. [2:256]

One of the outcomes of this glorious victory is that Sultan Qutuz is not only the hero of the Battle of Ayn Jalut but also the leader of the army who had the opportunity to restore the caliphate, which ended in Baghdad, in Egypt.

With the capture of Baghdad by Genghis Khan's grandson Hulagu Khan, the Abbasid caliphate in Iraq came to an end. When the Mongols entered Baghdad, Ahmad ibn Zahir from the Abbasid dynasty was in prison. That is why he survived a general massacre in the city. He was the uncle of the last thirty-seventh Abbasid Caliph of Iraq, Mustasim Billah. He fled Baghdad and hid in western Iraq. After this incident in 1258, the issue of sending kabah (kiswa) to Mecca also came to a standstill. The sending of kiswa to Mecca was also called "the owner of two temples." In 1261, after the fall of Baghdad, the ruler of Yemen sent a kabah to Mecca. The Yemeni rulers have repeatedly tried to reverse the incident. However, Sultan Zahir Beybars made the pilgrimage several times and took over this honorable work. [6:38].

## III. ARRIVAL OF THE ABBASID CALIPH IN CAIRO

When the two fugitives, Abbasid Abu Abbas Ahmad and Abu Qasim Ahmad ibn Zahir, were called by Sultan Beybars to Cairo, Abu Qasim arrived earlier, and Abu Abbas chose to go to Damascus. Beybars gathered the prominent men of his state and told them that Abu Qasim Ahmad Abbas was the son of Caliph Zahir (1225-1226), the uncle of the last Caliph Mustasim, and because of this testimony, the chief judges accepted the news. [17:177-179]

Sultan Zahir Beybars made serious preparations to meet the new caliph and went out to meet him. Great statesmen, eminent scholars,

dismounted their horses to greet Abu Qasim. Afterward, they reach the castle with the army. [21:449] In the castle, Sultan Beybars did not sit on the throne in the presence of the Abbasid Caliph. [22:301] Zahir Beybars convenes the council. In this council, Judge Hakim Taj-Din Ibn Bint Al-Azz ruled on the basis of his lineage. Egypt's greatest religious leaders affirmed his right to the caliphate. Then Sultan Zahir Beybars pledged allegiance to the caliph. This pledge and a publicly issued document stated that Beybars was obliged to remain loyal to the Abbasid caliph, wage holy war, build fortresses, form a fleet, and formally recognize the rights of the caliph and admit him as the political leader of the Islamic world. [9:273]

The Abbasid Caliph, in turn, accepted the status of Khilafah, promising to promote goodness by acting under the word of Allah, the Qur'an, and the Sunnah set out in the Book of His Messenger. Thus, Zahir Beybars transfers the caliphate that ended in Baghdad to Egypt and allegedly restores it. The Abbasid Caliph in Cairo was nicknamed as "Al Mustansir Billah" [3:244]. According to the custom of the Abbasid caliphs, the sultan of Egypt wore an ornate garment to confirm his rule as caliph. As caliph, al-Mustansir confirmed that Sultan Beybars was legitimate as the sultan of the lands of Egypt, Syria, Diyarbakir, Hijaz, Yemen, and the Euphrates.

It would be a mistake to say that the idea of moving the Abbasid caliphate to Egypt first came from Sultan Baybars. This project was first tried by Ahmad ibn Tolun and then by Muhammad ibn Tagh Ikhsid, but the plan failed. [14:179-198]

Caliph Al-Mustansir failed to win Beybars' trust. Based on this, the quarrels of the sultan and the caliph arose due to their characteristics, on the one hand, Beybars' aspiration for monopoly, on the other hand, the ambitions and political views of the caliph al-Mustansir. 3 months later, Beybars decided to get rid of the caliph.

He was able to persuade al-Mustansir to help the Mongols recapture Baghdad and reclaim the center of the caliphate. Caliph al-Mustansir believed in this promise and seriously gathered the most loyal and closest people and prepared for a military march. The sultan gave him 300 cavalries, and several thousand more Turks and Bedouins joined them. However, upon reaching Damascus, Sultan Beybars, with his excuses, left the caliph with a few guards and returned to Cairo with a large army. The subsequent fate of al-Mustansir is less clear. It is possible that he was killed at the hands of the Mongols in November 1261 during a failed attempt to liberate Baghdad. [25:135,14 :501]

## IV. THE ARRIVAL OF ANOTHER CALIPH IN CAIRO

About a year later, Zahir Beybars made a second attempt to turn Egypt into the home of the

Abbasid caliphs. To this end, he placed another representative of the Abbasid dynasty on the caliphate throne. Caliph Al-Hakim was flexible and cautious in any situation. He performed decorative functions and did not interfere in their affairs so as not to cause conflict with the Mamluk sultans. [6:39] The new caliph became the man needed for Beybars.

As Sultan Beybars moved the Abbasid caliphate to Cairo and fought valiantly against the Mongols, his name is mentioned in the oral tradition of the Egyptian people along with the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (786-809) and Salah ad-din Ayyubi. Researcher Zaki Muhammad Hasan writes about Sultan Beybars: "Given the organization of the army, its strict management, the construction of roads, the repair of seaports, the fortifications, the reduction of taxes, he successfully fulfilled Ahmad ibn Tolun's dream of moving the caliphate to the Egyptian capital as a great ruler and a great politician, a puppet government". [19:4]

## V. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ABBASID CALIPHS IN CAIRO

According to K. Bosworth, "the caliphate in Cairo legitimized the rule of Egypt by the Mamluks and served as a spiritual food against the Mongols and the Crusaders". [7:36]

According to the medieval historian As-Suyuti, the Abbasid caliphate, abolished by the Mongols, carried out its activities in Egypt, not to embellish the rule of the rulers. After Baghdad, the world lived without a caliph for only three and a half years, and the rest of the time Cairo replaced Baghdad as the "caliph's residence." There, the rules of Islam are rising, the Sunnah is at its peak, heresy has been eradicated, and at the same time scholars, scholars and nobles are living there. Where there is the last caliphate after the Prophet, there will be trust and obedience to the Qur'an. Speaking of his contemporary, the caliph Mutawakkil the second, he said that "the people continue to love him". [16:72-73]

Only the religious prestige of the caliph made him prominent. There could be no question of sharing power with the Egyptian sultans. However, Ali Ibrahim Hasan wrote in his book *Tarikh al-Mamalik al-Bahriya* that "The name of the caliph is mentioned in the sermon and the names are on the coins". [13:266-273] The caliphs in Egypt were recognized by the Indians and coins were minted with their names. After the death of Caliph Mustaqfi (1340), even in India until 1343, his name was read in the sermon, written on coins. [24:104, 18:137-138]

The medieval historian Al-Zahiri (d. 1468) writes: "... whoever is a sultan without swearing on behalf of the caliph by the sword, he is a rebel, he is not allowed to appoint anyone as a judge, if he does something like that, his decision is not valid (i.e. the ruling person),

even his marriage contract ... ". [6:40-41] In such cases, a certificate (oath) is taken from the caliph. If the Sultan ascended the throne for the second time, the ceremony was repeated. Some caliphs took oaths from several sultans. Caliph Abu 'Abbas Ahmad ibn Mustaqfi (1340-1351) took the oath of office from eight sultans, and Caliph al-Mutadid Billah (1414-1441) from six sultans. [23:67]

Theoretically, the caliph, along with the chief judges of the four sects, had the right to remove him from the post of the sultan. In practice, however, it only gave the official impression that the sultan had been overthrown by large military commanders.

In 1453 a strange event took place in which Caliph al-Qaim (1451-1455) claimed his right. That same year, Sultan Inol accused the caliph of acting against him. To get out of his predicament, the caliph addressed the sultan as follows: "I will take away the right of caliphate from myself and change your sultanate as well." Seeing such a strange situation, in order to get out of this precarious situation Chief Justice Alam ad-Din al-Bulqani said: "The caliph removed the right of the caliphate by himself, he is no longer the caliph and therefore cannot remove the sultan from office". [10: 16, 23:68]

In his book *The Khilafah*, Arnold sought to shed light on the difference between the medieval Roman Empire and the first Arab caliphate. He writes: "The emperor did not interfere in the religious affairs of the population. The Pope was in charge of the religious affairs of the state. In the Arab Caliphate, both of these responsibilities are assigned to the Caliph. The caliph had to be able to hold both religious and political positions as head of state. The caliph was to be the imam of the people in prayer, the commander of the army, and many other duties". [24:133] However, the "caliph" in Cairo was not the head of government. In practice, he was an honorary title and was known as a defender of Islam and Sharia, a patron of science and science. [6:49]

The caliphs of Cairo never ruled a specific organization, no religious affairs at all. They were (apparently) the rulers of the Muslim world. They attended ceremonies, praised the sultan every month along with the sheiks, and took oaths from the new sultans. At the same time, the Abbasids polished the rulers of the Islamic world, glorified Egypt as the "husband of the caliphate," and adorned the Mamluks. The Egyptian sultans were not worried about the existence of other caliphs, including the fact that the rulers of the neighboring Muslim state had accepted the title of caliph from the Quraysh tribe. In the mosque of Madinah, in front of pilgrims from all over the world, in honor of the Ottoman Sultan Boyazid II (1481-1512) an inscription "Mawlane Amir al-Mu'minin as-Sultan al-Malik al-Muzaffar" was inscribed in his name. [8:146] In contrast, the Mamluks retained their titles of 'Islamic



sultan" and "servant al-haramayn." In this regard, the Mamluks did not shy away from even provoking armed conflict. According to the Russian researcher N.A. Ivanov, many Muslim rulers in the XIV-XV centuries objected to the fact that the Mamluks were the leaders and patrons of the holy city. For this reason, several of disagreements arose over the sending of the Ka'bah to Mecca, which was based on the struggle for supremacy in the Muslim world. Amir Temur, Shah Rukh, and some of Turkmen dynasties did not recognize the religious leadership of the White Rabbit and Black Rabbit Egypt. [15:13]

## VI. AMIR TEMUR AND THE TEMURIDS

In 1429, 1435-1436, and in 1443, Shakhuh declared his claim as patron of the holy cities. Uzun Hasan, the ruler of Iran from the White Kuyunli dynasty, marched against the Mamluks in 1472. However, says Barthold, the advantage of the Egyptian sultans was that for a long time as the patron saint of the holy cities, neither the "caliphate" of Timur, nor Shahrukh and his relatives, nor the black sheep Turkmens, nor the white sheep that replaced them (second half of the XV century). He was not as respected by the Turkmen dynasty as they were".[6:52] In this regard, it is necessary to comment on the fact that W. Barthold called the place ruled by Amir Temur a caliphate. Because Amir Temur showed that he was a real genius in the matter of the Abbasid caliphate. According to Ibn Khaldun, when the fortress inside Damascus surrendered, a man came to Amir Temur, introduced himself as a descendant of the Abbasid caliphs who had passed through Baghdad, and demanded that the Owner be appointed caliph as the true heir. Suppose that if Amir Temur took him to Samarkand and declared him the successor of the Abbasid caliphs, the "Samarkand caliphate" would inevitably reach the twentieth century. However, Amir Temur did not like to be ridiculed in the face of such a false reputation, or rather history, and took a very sensible measure: he summoned the faqihs and judges, including Ibn Khaldun, and discussed on this person. After weighing their opinions on the scales of justice, he told the plaintiff, "You have heard the fatwas and the judges. It has become clear that you have no right to demand a caliphate from me".[12] It is noteworthy that the issue of electing a caliph was discussed by representatives of three sects under the leadership of Amir Temur - Hanafi scholar Abd al-Jabbar ibn Nu'man al-Hanafi (many scholars around Amir Temur belonged to this sect), the Egyptian judge Burhan ad-Din Ibn Muflih, a representative of the Hanbali sect. At this meeting, which was attended by al-Hanbali and a representative of the Maliki sect, a medieval historian, the judge of this sect Ibn Khaldun, the issue of claiming the caliphate was recognized as a false caliph. Through this work,

Amir Temur once again proved that he was not only a great commander but also a prudent sage.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Accordingly, the plans to move the Khilafah residence from Baghdad to Cairo were not only in Zahir Beybars, but also during the Toluniyya period. But the plan failed. This project was successfully implemented by Sultan Beybars. Contributing to this is the place of Sultan Qutuz's victory over the Mongols. Some medieval historians say that after Baghdad, the world lived without a caliph for only three and a half years, and the rest of the time, Cairo replaced Baghdad as the "caliph's residence." There, the caliphate was carried out legally, the Islamic sciences were developing, and scholars and savants believed that they were carrying out their activities. Some wrote that the caliphate in Cairo had no function, only that its name glorified it.

## VII. CONCLUSION

1. Many medieval historians have argued that Sultan Zahir Beybars "came to the throne through two corpses" (Sultan Oybek and Qutuz), and that Sultan Beybars got out of the situation when the Islamic world was in trouble, in preserving the caliphs, in continuing the caliphate, and in His contribution to the development of the country which is invaluable.
2. As a defender of Islam, epic works were written about the Mamluk sultan Zahir Beybars.
3. Reflecting on the transfer of the caliphate to Samarkand, Amir Temur once again confirmed that he is not only a great commander, but also a calculating sage.
4. The "Caliph" in Cairo was not the head of government. In practice, he bore an honorary title, known as the defender of Islam and Sharia, the patron of science.
5. The caliphate in Cairo legitimized the rule of Egypt by the Mamluks and served as a spiritual food against the Mongols and the Crusaders.

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