

THE FIRST BATTLE BETWEEN THE ELKHANIDS AND THE EGYPTIAN SULTANATE

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Abstract: *This article talks about the campaign of the Mongols to Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid caliphate in 1258, the fall of the caliphate, and the brilliant victory of the Egyptian Sultan Saifiddin Qutuz over the Mongols in 1260.*

Key words: *Mongols, Genghis Khan, Khulagu Khan, Mamluks, Bahris, Sultan Aybek, Sultan Sayfiddin Qutuz, Baybars, Ain Jalut battle.*

Mongolians are a people belonging to the Central Asian region, and their original homeland is the lands on the Mongolia-China side. Mongols were cruel and deceitful desert nomadic tribes. They were a people who were extremely averse to aggression, extortion, bloodshed, and would not hesitate to eat anything they came across, even dog meat. There were many among them who worshiped idols, stars, and the sun, and followed the belief that everything is possible. By the beginning of the 13th century (1206-1215), a huge state was established in Mongolia under the rule of Genghis Khan. During this period, the state of the Khorezmshahs existed in Central Asia, and due to mutual wars, political disunity, and lack of a leader, this powerful kingdom began to face a crisis. The short-lived diplomatic relationship between Genghis Khan (1155-1227) and Muhammad Khorezmshah (1178-1220) ended tragically. In 1219-1221, the Mongols took advantage of the social, economic and political depression of the Khorezmshahs to conquer Central Asia. Many cities in Central Asia, whose material and spiritual culture developed over the centuries, were destroyed - Bukhara, Samarkand, Otrar, Termiz, Khojand, Uzgand, Kesh, Gurganj. Farming oases turned into slums. Craftsmanship and architecture were greatly damaged. A great blow was given to science and culture.

In the first period of the Mongols' marches to the lands dominated by Islam in order to end the Islamic caliphate, they first occupied the lands of

Movarounnahr, Khorasan, and Persia. They ended the state of Khorezmshahs there and gained possession of Asia Minor. It was the turn of Iraq, the center of the Islamic Caliphate. After the death of Genghis Khan, his third son Oktoy will sit on his throne. The territories of Persia and Khurasan were under the control of Genghis Khan's fourth son Tuli Khan. Later, the Elkhanid dynasty was founded here. The greatest ruler of the Elkhanids was Khulagu Khan (1256-1265). Both the Elkhanids, the Joji khan, and the Khigatai khan were subject to the central authority, that is, the great khan. For this reason, Khulagu Khan received the order to march to Baghdad from the palace in Beijing, that is, from the great khan Munke Khan (1251-1260). Thus, by order of Munke Khan, Khulagu Khan gathered a large army and marched on Baghdad. According to Juvaini of Atama, the army included 1,000 Chinese cannons, as well as units of Armenians, Georgians, Turks and Persians. According to the sources, the number of Khulagu Khan's army was from 120,000 to 150,000 people. The commander-in-chief of the army was Khulagukhan himself, besides him, famous Mongolian commanders such as Arghun Agha, Baiju Noyan, Buqa Temur, Kitbuga also had their units.

Caliph had about 80,000 troops. By this time, the Islamic world was in a depressed state. On the one hand, the crusades, and on the other hand, the conquest of the powerful Islamic states in Central Asia by the Mongols left the caliph alone. Only the Ayyubid state came to his aid. These were the emir of Hums al-Ashraf al-Musa and the emir of Kurdistan Shahabeddin Suleimanshah. Khulagu Khan easily overcame the poorly organized defense of the Abbasid caliph and captured Baghdad in February 1258. The last caliph Abdullah al-Mustasim (1242-1258) was captured and imprisoned in his treasury by order of Khulagu Khan, the caliph died of hunger and dehydration. How the city was destroyed is well documented in many historical sources. Historians regretfully recorded that the largest library in the city was burned along with thousands of books related to various fields of science. Different sources give different information about the people who died during the Mongol invasion. In particular, 50,000 of the caliph's soldiers died, while Martin Sicker writes that 90,000 civilians died. In addition, a number of Western authors wrote about the extermination of 200,000 to 800,000 civilians on this day, while the works of Arab authors indicate that these numbers are 2 million. Of course, modern estimates are much lower than these numbers. In our opinion, Martin Sicker's calculations are more realistic.

The fact that the Mongols easily conquered the Islamic countries scared everyone. By this time, Egypt was the only Islamic country that did

not fall under the tyranny of the Mongols. The Mamluk dynasty ruled Egypt. The ruling circles in Egypt began to look for ways not to surrender to the Mongols and to crush them. In such a difficult situation, the Sultan of Egypt al-Malik al-Muzaffar Sayfiddin Qutuz entered the political and military arena. Qutuz set himself the task of crushing the Mongols. The origins of Sultan Sayfiddin Qutuz go back to the Khorezmshahs Anushtegin dynasty (1077-1231). He belonged to the Begdili tribe of the Oguz. Qutuz was a Turkish prince from Iran. He was born around 1221 in the reign of Khorezmshahs. During the fall of the Khorezm Shahs, he was captured by the Mongols and sold as a slave in Damascus. Later he was sold as a slave to the Sultan of Egypt and came to Cairo. Sayfiddin Qutuz's real name was Mahmud ibn Mamdud, and he was also considered one of the children of Muhammad Khorezmshah. However, later research revealed that he was not the son of Muhammad Khorezmshah, but the nephew of Sultan Jalaluddin Manguberdi, that is, the son of his sister. Sayfiddin Qutuz was one of the trusted emirs of the Egyptian Sultan al-Mu'iz Aybek (1250-1257). When the participants of the Seventh Crusade organized under the leadership of the French king Louis IX (1226-1270) attacked Egypt in 1249-1250, Saifiddin Qutuz had a great contribution to their defeat. In 1253, Aybek appointed him as his successor, and Qutuz was given the title of "vice-sultan of Egypt". In January 1254, Sayfiddin Qutuz organized the execution of Farisiddin Oktoy, the emir of the Mamluks, who was considered a rival of Sultan Aybek, in the Cairo fortress. As a result, many Bahris led by Baybars left Egypt. They tried to seize power by attacking Egypt twice in 1257-1258, but Sayfiddin Qutuz suppressed their rebellion. After the assassination of Sultan Aybek in March 1257, Sayfiddin Qutuz became the deputy of Aybek's son al-Mansur Ali. Al-Mansur Ali was a young and inexperienced sultan who was 15 years old. In practice, power was concentrated in the hands of Sayfiddin Qutuz. Amir Sanjar al-Halabi and Sanjar al-Ghatmi were the father-in-laws of the young sultan, and they were also the leaders of a large part of the Bahri. Sayfiddin Qutuz was able to gain the support of his main rival, Sanjar al-Halabi, and took the position of commander-in-chief (otabek al-asakir) of the army, concentrating sole power in his hands. After learning of the Mongol invasion of Syria in 1259, Sayfiddin Qutuz waited for his most dangerous opponents from the Salih and Mu'azi groups to leave Cairo. Sultan al-Mansur removed Ali from the throne, called himself "al-Malik al-Muzaffar" ("the ever-conquering king") and ascended the sultanate throne (November 12, 1259). The legal basis for this event is that al-Mansur Ali was too young to be the leader of the war against the Mongols. It was

ideologically useful for Sayfiddin Qutuz to declare his descent from the Khorezmshahs, as he could act as an avenger for a dynasty crushed by the Mongols. Khulagu Khan's troops captured the city of Aleppo in Syria on January 25, 1260, but the Ayyubid amir al-Nasir Yusuf, who was in Damascus, was in no hurry to help the city. He and Qutuz could not agree on joint actions against the enemy. Baybars, who was in the service of An-Nasir, left him, retreated to Palestine with a group of Kurds and settled near Gaza. From here, he began negotiations with his former enemy Qutuz about receiving "omanlik" (guarantees of safety) upon his return to Egypt. Meanwhile, Khulagu Khan demanded the surrender of Qutuz, to which the Sultan of Egypt responded by executing the Mongol ambassadors. Egyptian ambassadors went to Acre to form an alliance against the Mongols. The Crusader Franks, who ruled there, decided to remain neutral, but allowed the Mamluk army to pass freely through the coastal lands of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. On July 15, 1260, the Mamluks, under the command of Sayfiddin Qutuz and Rukniddin Beybars, set out from Cairo and in August camped near Acre, where they rested and replenished food supplies. On September 3, 1260, in the Battle of Ain Jalut in the Jezreel Valley of Palestine, the Mamluks defeated the Mongol army of Kitbuka. Kitbuka was killed, more than 10 thousand Mongolian warriors died. This battle is the first battle in the history of the world with the use of handguns. The use of such a weapon ensured the superiority of the Mamluks in battle and confused the Mongols. While the Mongols were defeating the left flank of the Mamluk army, Sultan Sayfiddin Qutuz continued to attack the Mongols with military prowess. In their works, historians have provided information about the battle of Ain-Jalut, Sultan Qutuz's military tricks and skillful methods of fighting.

CONCLUSION

After the victory in the battle, Syria came under the control of the Mamluks, Khulagu Khan abandoned the idea of marching into Egypt and Syria. Sultan Sayfiddin Qutuz appointed Sanjar al-Halabi to Damascus and Rukniddin Beybars to Aleppo. On the way back to Egypt, the troops stopped at a military camp near Gaza. A group of emirs, including the Bahris (Baybars and Balaban al-Rashidi) and the Mu'izzis, organized a conspiracy. On October 24, 1260, while hunting, Beybars approached Qutuz and asked them to give him a Turkish girl who had been captured by the Mongols and recaptured by the Mamluks. Sultan Saifiddin Qutuz, who was unaware of the conspiracy, agreed to this request. Beybars kissed Sultan Qutuz's hand as a sign of gratitude. This was a signal for the

conspirators, the Mamluks surrounded Sultan Qutuz and killed him. According to historian Abduzzahir, although Baybars delivered the fatal blow, it was most likely a Mamluk conspirator named Anas al-Silahdar. After the execution of Sultan Qutuz, Rukniddin Baybars took the throne of the Mamluk Sultanate and ruled the state from 1260 to 1277.

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