

The Sultan Baybars

A Romance Hero Breaks His Links

Jacqueline Sublet

This wasn't merely a man, it was the sultan Al-Malik, Al-Zâhir Rukn al-Dunia wal- Dîn Abû l-Fath Baybars whose swords were the keys to kingdoms, whose standards were like hills and the spears that rose above them were like fires whose duty it was to command men.¹

Between 1260 and 1277, the second half of the seventh century Hegira (the thirteenth century by the Christian calendar), the Bahri Mamluk empire, founded in 1256, was governed by the sultan Baybars, the fourth sovereign of his dynasty. The Bahri's were former slaves from the borders of the Black Sea. They were succeeded in 1382 by the Circassian Mamluks, who were in turn supplanted in 1517 by the Ottomans. The empire comprised a vast territory including Egypt and the eastern part of present day Libya; the Near-East up to the Euphrates; rule over Nubia, Sudan and the north of Ethiopia; and sovereignty over the holy places of orthodox Islam: Mecca and Medina. The empire was threatened, from the east by the Mongols, who made inroads into Iraq and Syria on several occasions (although Egypt remained beyond their reach), and from the north by the Seljoukides of Asia Minor (Rûm). The interior, where the Crusaders held several strongholds was plagued by dissidents, notably the Isma'ilis, a movement derived from shi'ism.

Baybars was trained in the Mamluk military institutions and proved himself against the Mongols and the Crusaders. Once a Sultan, he legitimized his position by summoning the Caliph descendant of the 'Abbasid dynasty from Iraq. His capital, Cairo, emerged as the capital of the Muslim world in an organized, centralized empire.

Biographers, chroniclers and historians, some of whom were Baybars' contemporaries, all wrote histories of this sultan whose

fate had developed in such an extraordinary manner. His heroic adventure was adapted into an “epic-romantic” fresco that was told by storytellers. Several versions of this popular story were preserved in manuscripts or published. *Les trois vies du sultan Baïbars* (The three lives of the sultan Baybars) is based on three kinds of narrative:

- biographies written by contemporary flatterers of the sultan Ibn ‘Abd al-Zâhir, Ibn Shaddâd and Ibn Wâsil²;
- the text of the chronicle edited two centuries later in the ninth/fifteenth century by the Egyptian historian Maqrîzi³;
- the mythic adaptation as it appears in the *Roman de Baïbars* (Romance of Baybars).⁴

Baybars’ character can be studied in terms of the ties that connect him to the members of his class, that of the Mamluk elite, and in terms of his ties to space and time. In fact, it is in his way of breaking the ties that connect him to his caste, to space and to time that one can see the development of a heroic figure.

Onomastic Ties

Baybars belonged to the dynasty of Bahri Mamluks, former slaves who lacked a family genealogy. The organization of their names, which like medieval Muslim names, were made up of varied components. One such name prompted a Mongol host listening to a Mamluk ambassador announcing his full name to say: “You have many names in order to give the impression that you are numerous.”⁵ Mamluks were bought at a young age and imported into Syria and Egypt by the princes of the preceding dynasty, the Ayyubids, and by the Mamluks themselves. Baybars, the original name by which the sultan was known as a child, is a Turkish name which literally means “tiger prince.” Like other Mamluks, who were Muslim and didn’t know their ancestors, Baybars-turned-prince replaced his missing genealogy with fictitious kinship: he is “ibn ‘Abd Allâh” (“son of ‘Abd Allâh,” literally “son of God’s servant.” In this instance, ‘Abd Allâh, now a common name, retains its literal meaning). To add to this brief genealogy in spite of being unable to refer to a dynasty, tribe or place of origin,

Baybars, as the Mamluks did, made the elements of his name a record of the ties that linked him not to his ancestors, but to different characters that represented the stages of his emancipation and his ties to his fellow Mamluks. "They gave us the names of the merchants who bought us because many of us bore the same first names; how was one to distinguish between us if not by the identity of the merchant who imported us?"⁶⁶ Also on this list were the names of the masters who bought, trained and freed them, and who had given them a military education. These names explained their ties to the merchants and masters, but they also took the place of "family relationships" between the Mamluks themselves, for many among them had been bought and sold by the same merchants and trained by the same masters.

Baybars ibn 'Abd Allâh's name was al-Bundoqdârî because he had been bought by Aïdakîn al-Bunduqdâr (Marco Polo remembered this name and called Baybars: "le Bondocdaire"). Two elements: *al-Sâlihî* and *al-Najmî* were added because he had belonged to the last Ayyubid sultan, al-Sâlihî Najm al-Dîn. When he reached adulthood a Mamluk was given a nickname with a religious aspect containing *al-Dîn* ("the Muslim religion, faith"). Baybars was called *Rukn al-Dîn* (literally: "pillar of religion/of faith"). When he took the throne, he changed this nickname: Rukn al-Dîn became *Rukn al-Dawla wal-Dîn* ("pillar of temporal and spiritual power"), an honorary title that recognized his doubled powers. He also took a title: *al-Malik al-Zahîr* ("the Magnificent Sovereign"), a reigning name chosen in the conventional manner according to a model espoused by the sovereigns of his dynasty (he had wanted to take the title "al-Mâlik al-Qâhir" which means "the conquering sovereign" but, on the advice of his friends, he relinquished this title rumored to bring bad luck). Finally he took a *kunya* (an element containing Abû which means "father," "who has," and "owner of" which was testimony to his freed status), this was *Abû l-Fath* (literally: "the conquering").

But after 1263, four years after his seizure of power, Baybars severed the ties that bound him to his Mamluk compatriots by signing a letter to the sovereign of Yemen using neither the conventional formulas nor any of the elements of his name:

[Baybars] received the ambassadors sent by the sovereign of Yemen, who presented him with twenty horses equipped for war, several elephants, a wild she ass with a stripped coat, as well as a great number of curiosities and precious objects. In return, they gave the Yemen prince a robe of honor, a banner and a gift: a tunic, chosen from among the sultan's clothes, that the prince had asked for as a pledge of trust. In this same gift, they sent him a breastplate and other arms and said to him: "We have sent you both a costume of peace and a costume of war; this last is made up of articles that we have worn on battlefields". In the letter written to this prince, Baybars was given the title "His august and royal Highness, the sultan", and he wrote out in his own hand the word "the Mamluk."⁷

To proclaim, with a mixture of modesty and pride, his only quality to be "Mamluk, servant [of God]" was a definitive statement of his belonging to the dynasty of Bahri Mamluks, but it was a break with the tradition of signing missives according to a pious formula, and it also failed to acknowledge the ties of identity that connected him to his Mamluk comrades.

Strange Relations to Space and Time

Even before his accession to power, Baybars furnished early proof of his exceptional destiny: in the desert, a place that represented the point of departure from Islamic lands, he found the means to survive: water and straw.⁸

How did this relation to space and time develop after his coming to power? After the murder of his predecessor, the sultan al-Malik al-Muzaffar Qutuz, Baybars made his compatriots swear an oath to him as he sat on the throne set up under a tent. Next, he installed himself in the residence of the Mamluk sultans, the Citadel of Cairo. He remained there for two months out of the public's sight: he secured his power, planned his policy and turned his attention to better understanding those with whom he intended to rule. Finally, he made an appearance for the people of Cairo. The celebrating city was decorated, and he was mounted on a horse shaded by a yellow and gold silk canopy. Thereafter, he was often seen leaving the citadel to give himself over to his favorite amusements: the game of the golden pumpkin (archers would shoot at a pigeon inside a golden or silver pumpkin), polo, naval jousts, riding at the head of warring expeditions across

Egypt and Syria, confronting his enemies as far as the borders of Turkey and the heart of Anatolia and finally making the pilgrimage to Mecca and strengthening his dominion in the Holy Places. He was also able to consolidate his power thanks to mounted couriers that brought communications to Damascus in four days, and the pigeon post, which he reorganized in order to keep abreast of events in his empire.⁹

He established his camp at Yubnâ on the twenty-sixth day of the same month; while he was taking a bath in his tent, the mail arrived from Damascus. Without waiting an instant, without giving himself the time to cover his nudity, the prince had the letter read to him. The letter, sent by al-Malik al-Mansûr, the sovereign of Hamah, announced that he, accompanied by several princes, had reached Al-Bîra that Monday with his troops [...] and that the Mongols, had taken flight at the sight of the sultan's army, destroying their machines and sinking their boats. In this disorderly retreat friends no longer recognized friends and fathers forgot which were their sons. Four days had elapsed between the writing of the letter at Al-Bîra and its arrival in Yubnâ. Pigeons had carried it first to Hamah, then to Damascus. From there it had been taken by mounted courier in order to arrive at Yubnâ.¹⁰

Baybars was able to go out unrecognized thanks to certain stratagems that he was fond of. Two centuries later, this theme of ubiquity appears in the chronicle by Maqrîzî, the historian: "Everyone in Egypt and Syria was in the dark about what the sultan was doing, knew not whether the prince was in Syria, in Hedjaz or elsewhere. And as a result of the respect and fear that he inspired, no one dared speak a word of the matter." Like the caliph Hârûn al-Rachîd, he disguised himself and left the citadel at night to mingle with the people. On occasion he was witness to injustice and disorderly conduct, and he punished those responsible, putting a stop to those leading a bad life.

In order to make long voyages in secret, he made sure of the discretion of a few of his Mamluk compatriots. In 1268, he went to the south of Syria to meet a Mongolian ambassador. He set up his tent, and announced that he was very ill. While a friend feigned to be bringing him remedies, he got out in disguise and left for Egypt. Sometimes he would play polo or help with the launching of boats onto the Nile. On another occasion he wished to surprise his son to whom he had entrusted the government for the first time. Once at the citadel, he remained in disguise for two days before his heir recognized him: "overcome with respect, his son rushed to kiss the

earth. Then there was a somber moment, and the emirs, displeased with these unusual proceedings, kept their hands on their swords and came closer to examine the face of the sultan."¹¹

But his compatriots learned to keep abreast of their master's plans. One of them even unwisely wrote to the sultan who was preparing to make a secret journey: "I would like to make the pilgrimage to Hedjaz with you," even though Baybars was pretending to prepare a simple hunting expedition. For this, the emir had his tongue cut out. Another fact: in 1273 he arrived unexpected and in disguise in Aleppo to inspect the army, but there he found the emirs assembled in a formal retinue. Apparently, the secret had not been well kept.

The hero made efforts, not only to be known, but also to go unnoticed and free from the effects of his renown, for anonymity gave him a good measure of the vanity of power. He said "ordinarily, the world gathers at my door, and today, here I am on the doorstep of this house and no one pays attention to me. Such are the vicissitudes of this world." On another occasion: "where now is the power? Where are the chamberlain, the commander of the guard and all that crowd that form the court? So it is that sovereigns leave the throne and God the Most High is alone eternal."¹²

It seems that Baybars' contemporaries supported the idea that their sovereign had the gift of ubiquity and that his character was able to transmute by means of it. His presence was multiplied in the eyes of witnesses: if he directed his course toward Damascus, the Mongols who were making raids near Aleppo took fright.

Baybars learned that the Tatars, at the first wind of his march, hastened to take flight, for by means of some divine inspiration, everyone was convinced that the sultan's presence alone was equivalent to that of numerous troops and was sufficient to conquer enemies: that his name had the virtue of driving back infidels everywhere.

Even in sport, his presence was impressive: "the sultan multiplied himself in the eyes of spectators who couldn't tell whether they had seen him or not."¹³ When he took part in the work of his soldiers, who were laying siege to a fortress held by the Franks, and dug in the galleries under the ramparts (the galleries were lined with powder which was then ignited to undermine the walls), they remarked upon the extraordinary vitality of the sultan: "occupied

night and day with waging war, moving the rocks, he did twice as much as the others." The members of his entourage also worked in an almost super-human manner "without ever having to be relieved." His endurance was legendary, "he was seen standing guard on horseback with a lance in his hand for four days."

The sultan personally gave himself over to constant labor, busying himself sometimes with digging the earth, sometimes with pulling the wagons to remove the earth and stones, so as to inspire, by means of example, the zeal of others. He was seen walking alone, carrying a shield, sometimes in the mine, sometimes going into doors that they had just opened, sometimes by the side of the water from where he shot arrows at the Frank's boats, pulling at the ropes of wagons, climbing up the palisades and from there launching arrows. In a single day, he would launch up to three hundred[...] During this siege, Baybars enjoyed circulating alone between the armies with no one to dare look at him or point him out.¹⁴

When he swam across the Nile to prove his strength, cloaked in armor and leading two horses mounted by men, no one was amazed by his exceptional prowess (in fact he was supported by goatskins filled with air). It seemed natural that he should be on one bank and then on the other in an instant. This kind of ubiquity wasn't surprising.

Baybars was capable of peopling the space in which he transformed himself not only with his presence, but also with noise. Thus, before he came to power:

During the combat that confronted them [against Egypt] our sultan circulated among the ranks of his army with a drum – a signal between him and his comrades – coming from the right, the left, from all over. Our sultan directed himself toward the front until he reached the standard bearers who he pulled apart in order to go and break the enemy's spears, to throw their drummers to the ground and scatter the enemy's soldiers. He accomplished what had never been done, not even the knight 'Antar nor any other hero of Islam or ante-Islam.¹⁵

To be ubiquitous is also to free oneself from the bonds of time. One could say that if ubiquity defies space, it follows that it should also defy time. Baybars entertained a strange relationship to time; the proof that he gave of his endurance places him outside of temporality. Even before his rise to power, his biographer Ibn 'Abd-al-Zâhir notes: "He trained himself to fight infidels and to pursue the holy war, taking no notice of the length of the nights nor of the days."¹⁶ On the subject of a destroyed fleet belonging to

an enemy, Baybars said : "it is possible to rebuild a fleet in a day, not a fortress in a day."

As a culmination of the paradox, Baybars defied space, the past and even the present when, upon seating himself on throne of the Seljoukids of Asia Minor, he declared: "I've conquered this throne, not to remain here, but to show that everything is effortless to me."

Finally Baybars' death, such as the chronicles tell it, is linked to this notion of ubiquity. It is also that of a hero by virtue of its strangeness, for Baybars defied fate until the end (the theme of this death is apparent in the motifs used in legends). In 1277, a fortune teller predicted to Baybars that a *malik* [king, prince] would soon die, poisoned in Damascus. Baybars, whose ruling name was "al-Malik al-Zâhir" wanted to avoid this outcome and he resorted to a trick to avoid being this *malik* mentioned by the fortune teller: he organized a banquet to which he invited a prince of the name "al-Malik al-Qâhir." Baybars tipped a poison into the cup of *qumiz* (the fermented mare's milk that is the drink of the Eurasian steppes) that was offered to the guest; he drank, felt the effects of the poison, and left. But Baybars, in turn, drank from the same cup. The cup-bearer, unaware of the heinous crime, had presented it to him, and he died after several days of suffering.

Even before his own death, Baybars had become a hero, freed of the contingencies of space and time. Thus he rebuilt, even reinvented, a universe according to his own specifications and gave himself a meaning that can be summarized in three themes: hero of Islam, center of a universe and founder of a nation, and hero of a novel.

Hero of Islam

Baybars summoned the descendant of the Abbassid caliphs to Cairo by escort and stood up to welcome him, he recognized his Abbassid status and had the religious authorities bestow upon him the title "al-Malik al-Mu'tasim." Then he presented him with an oath of allegiance, and in turn had the caliph recognize him as the legitimate sultan. The caliph would be a puppet sovereign that Baybars confined rather than installed in the citadel. In this he

accomplished a symbolic act: the caliph came from Baghdad, for half a century it had been the seat of the caliphate. There the caliph had been held prisoner, dependent on foreign dynasties. In 1258, the Mongols had killed the preceding Abbassid, and it was Baybars who proved himself capable of reestablishing the caliphate's "sacred presence" and restoring its rights.

The caliph thus endowed Baybars with the title of sultan not only of Egypt and Syria, but of all of the territories of Islam, as well as those territories recently conquered. The name of the sultan, with his emblem, the lion, and the name of the caliph were printed on the coinage, and their two titles were announced throughout the empire during the Thursday sermons. Among the Mamluks, Baybars was a "sun in the midst of stars, a lion that watches over his cubs."¹⁷ He trained himself to fight infidels and waged holy war. The chronicler could therefore present him as a hero whose warrior courage led him to victory, but who was also divinely blessed:

Before our sultan, a horse served not to fight, a horse was not used for war, but in flight. None remained that dared dream of victory, no one could guarantee a pious man eternal rest. Then came our sultan, sent by God to strengthen the boldness of the believers, to awaken their courage and put confidence in their step, to make them hold high their standards once more. The ambitious goals of our sultan, his bravery and fearlessness during the initial victories resulted in a period of dissent between the princes which engendered resounding victories and speedy conquests that assured the security of the people.¹⁸

Center of a Universe and Founder of an Empire

The biographers and chroniclers restore the lineage of the hero of Islam: they compare him to 'Antar, one of the most famous pre-Islamic heroes, but above all they set him opposite an anti-hero: Turanchâh, the legitimate son of this same Sâlih. Baybars, who was the Sâlih's Mamluk, was also his spiritual heir, for Sâlih had educated and formed him, and instilled in him the virtues of his dynasty. Nothing was more striking than the contrast between the son and the Mamluk. For the historian Ibn 'Abd al-Zâhir, the faults of the anti-hero took effect on many levels:

-his lax attitude during battle:

[Tûrânshâh] never dreamed for an instant of getting astride a horse and joining in the battle against the Franks. Instead he was seen to climb onto a boat to watch the fighting as a spectator when his duty was to fight and to rally his people around him.¹⁹

- his inability to fulfill his role in the dynasty:

Our sultan was convinced that nothing good would come of al-Malik al-Muzaffar [Tûrânshâh], that he would not engender any king capable of restoring the divine honor to his lineage and that the word "sultan" emptied of meaning would alone be transferred to his descendants, that if he was left to rule without intervention, it would lead to the ruin of the country and her subjects and that would be the end of the people's unity. And all of that would lead to the dissolution of the kingdom, the kingdom that Saladin had built (...).²⁰

The historian does well to point out that Baybars not only noticed the consequences of Tûrânshâh's conduct, but that he also knew its source: "Our master, al-Malik al-Zâhir [Baybars] was witness to this very distressing situation, and adding to the shame that he felt about it, he saw it's cause."²¹

So it was that Baybars became a lion and threw himself into battle to destroy Tûrânshâh and save the heritage that Saladin had constructed and to avoid the arrival of "the end of the unity of the people, and the scattering of wealth." The historian draws a parallel between the qualities that Tûrânshâh lacked and those of which Baybars gave brilliant proof: shrewdness, impartiality, a sense of justice, judgment: "he knew how to recognize the value of the help that was given," "of services rendered" in particular by certain Bedouins. Baybars protected the markets, stopped theft, instituted moral rules, and finally made proof of his courage by attacking Egypt: "an enterprise that none before him had dared." The chronicler said:

This noble empire is that of our Sultan. Al-Malik al-Zâhir Rukn al-Din [Baybars], a brilliant flame at the forefront of all kingdoms, a shining pearl in the necklace of nations, the chosen prince of God- who has granted him all happinesses. All have paid homage to his glorious qualities, for God had granted this empire his benevolent aid, the help of his justice and military successes. this kingdom had enjoyed unparalleled gifts, it had been satisfied with more blessings than any other empire, its happiness became legendary.²²

Hero of a Romance

In the *Roman de Baïbars*, the sultan (such as he was presented by Jean-Patrick Guillaume) is the dispossessed heir of a distant kingdom in central Asia.

He was a half starved vagabond, and mistreated slave who became the adoptive son of a rich lady of Damascene high society and the protégé of that lady's brother-in-law, the vizier Nejm ed Dîn who brought him to Cairo to present him to the king. Inclined to take up with all of the bad boys that he met, his chivalrous nature led him before the courts. He was also a perfect juror, pious and morally irreproachable. They knew that he was destined to take the throne.

Of the universe in which the action unfolds: "this universe, in appearance resembles ours at all points, but for a few differences. There the trajectory of character development seem governed by the same combination of luck, necessity and choice that make up the weft of our existence"[...] "and yet there are moments, rare and fleeting when they come to the confused realization that all of this is only an appearance, that in reality they are only pawns in a giant game of chess that a cosmic Player has been playing against himself since time immemorial," or "that they were only standing in for a part in the endless play whose script was apparently written down to the smallest detail. This scene is maintained in a second universe that mysteriously doubles that visible universe: the World of the Secret where, outside of time and space as we know it, the destiny of all of the creatures of the world, past present and future, appear, not in succession, but simultaneously." The World of the Secret is not accessible to the majority of the novel's characters, who know that it exists but that the two universes rarely communicate: in dreams, semi-decipherable books of prophecy, subterranean spots where select scenes of the future or the past appear in figurative (and animated) representations.

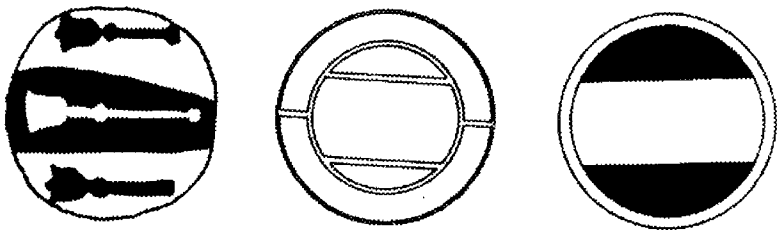
The text that follows is taken from *Roman de Baïbars*²³; the hero, a young troubled man who frequents Cairo's underworld, but is promised a distinguished future, has a dream.

The king sat in the seat of honor, a real lion! He had a black beard and old scars obscured his face. His appearance was so terrifying that a great beast would have fallen struck dead from the sight of it, and he had such a severe demeanor that a pregnant woman would prematurely go into labor at the sight of him! At his right side sat a vizier, it was Châhîn. His vizier on the left side was Nejm El-Dîn. Behind him, on the right stood a tall man with a Persian battle axe on his shoulder; his face resembled that of a lion. On the left side, another axe bearer, large and well built, with black eyes and of a dark skin; one would have taken him for a panther were his face not open and pleasing[...]"My father, asked Baybars, what, then, is this advice and who is this king so powerful and terrifying?" "This king, my son, is you yourself, Baybars. Yes, one day you will rule Egypt."

In the novelistic adaptation, Baybars has once more severed his ties to space and time. He moves in a limited universe in which everything is at his door, even enemies from across frontiers: in place of organizing expeditions against the Mongols, Hulagu, the Ilkhan of the Mongols was brought to and humbled before him. This shrinking of space concerns even the pigeon post service that Baybars established: in the novel, the pigeons travel from one end of the empire to another in a single day.

The extraordinary hero, who stands outside of space and time to accomplish his exploits, acts not only as a mirror for men, but also relieves them of the burden of being heroes. He serves as an anti-mirror, he permits men to be free. The extraordinary conduct of heroes as described by historians and of novelistic heroes serves, it seems to me, not to draw an individual into a vertiginous attempt to imitate, but to realize himself in his own logic, to live a heroic life without having to perform great feats.

Translated from the French by Beatrice McGeoch



Heraldic marks engraved on the front of post office relays. In J. Sauvaget, see note 9.

Notes

1. *Les trois vies du sultan Baïbars*, Imprimerie nationale, "Collection orientale," Texts chosen and arranged by J. SUBLET (ed.), Paris, 1⁹⁹², p.124.
2. Ibn 'Abd al-Zâhir, was born and died in Cairo (1223-1293), was the private secretary of Baybars the sultan. In his work *al-Rawd al Zâhir*, he found moral justification for each of his master's actions. In *Les trois vies du sultan Baïbars*, the section that refers to his rise to power is translated from this text. Ibn Shaddâd (1217-1285), a syrian born in Aleppo who died in Cairo, entrusted with the negotiation of an agreement with the Mongols that failed, took refuge in Baybars' court in Cairo where he became secretary of the chancelary and composed a biography of the sultan. Ibn Wâsil was a syrian historian, the author of a history of the Ayyubid dynasty entitled *Mufarrij al-kurûb*. He served Baybars as ambassador to the king of Sicily Manfred in 1261.
3. Al- Maqrîzi was the author of several chronicles and biographical catalogues as well as a description of Cairo and of Egypt. See Jean-Claude GARCIN's article, "Al-Maqrîzi, un historien encyclopédique du monde afro-oriental," in *Les Africains*, a collection of works under the direction of Charles-André JULIEN, Paris (ed. J.A.) 1977, p.197-233; the translation of his *History of the mamluk sultans*, by Etienne QUATREMER, Paris, 1837, (partial translation revised in the second part of *Les trois vies ...*). Maqrîzi was largely inspired by the previously cited biographies to replace Baybars' character in the dispute over the mamluk dynasty.
4. BOHAS G. and GUILLAUME J.-P., *Le Roman de Baïbars*, translation of the syrian version from Aleppo according to the manuscript discovered by Chafiq Imâm. Of the novel's 60 volumes, nine appeared: *Les enfances de Baïbars*, *Les bas-fonds du Caire*, *La chevauchée des Fils d'Ismael*, *La trahison des émirs*, *Meurtre au hammam*, *Rempart des pucelles*, *La revanche du Maître des Ruses*, *Echec au Roi de Rome*, *Le procès du moine maudit*, Paris, Sinbad-Actes Sud 1985-1998 : selections in SUBLET, *Les trois vies*, *op.cit.*
5. Ibn al-Dawâdârî, *Kanz al-durar* IX, p.71 quoted in J. SUBLET, *Le voile du nom. Essai sur le nom propre arabe*, Paris 1991; arabic trans. by Selim M. BARAKAT, *Hisn al-ism. Qirâ'ât fi al-asmâ' al-'arabiyya*, Damas, French Institute of Arabic Studies (I.F.E.A.D.), to be published in December 1998.
6. Ibid.
7. *Les trois vies*, p.131.
8. Ibid., p.43-44
9. In particular, see J. SAUVAGET, *La poste aux chevaux dans l'empire memlouk*, Paris, Adrien-Maisonneuve 1941. The three illustrations on p. 126, representing heraldic marks engraved on the front of post office relays, are from this book.
10. Ibid. p. 111.
11. Ibid. p. 143.
12. Ibid. p. 142.
13. Ibid. p. 157.
14. Ibid. p. 118-119.
15. Ibid. p. 42.
16. Ibid. p. 28.

17. *Ibid*, p. 28.
18. *Ibid*, p. 25.
19. *Ibid*, p. 29.
20. *Ibid*, p. 30.
21. *Ibid*, p. 30.
22. *Ibid*, p. 24.
23. *Fleur des truands*, p.142.