
Barbarossa' Marine Strategy the Role of Algeria

KADIOGLU Muhsin¹

¹Istanbul Technical University, Turkey

kadiogm@itu.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT: *Hayreddin Barbarossa is the biggest admiral of Turkish and Islamic history. Barbarossa' victory over the crusader navy has not been passed on to any other admiral.*

As it is known, Hayreddin Barbarossa has written the war stories with the order of Suleiman the Magnificent. The name of this book is "Gazavat-ı Hayreddin." This book contains objective information about religious, political and military conflicts with Spain and the Habsburg Empires. On the other hand, in this book there is information on the invitation of Hayreddin Barbarossa to Algeria, economic, social, cultural and religious status of Algeria at that time, and power struggles.

In this study, the role and importance of Algeria in the maritime strategy of Hayreddin Barbarossa will be evaluated in the context of the information given in the mentioned book.

KEYWORDS: Algeria, Barbarossa, Hayreddin Pasha, Kapudan Pasha, Ottoman, Marine strategy

Resume: Hayreddin Barbarossa is the greatest admiral of Turkish-Islamic history. He was among the world's greatest admirals with his victory in the battle of Preveze.

There is a book that Hayreddin Barbarossa has written about his wars and memories. It is possible to understand the ideals of Hayreddin Barbarossa in this book.

In 1538, Hayreddin Barbarossa defeated the Crusader's navy about five times stronger and larger than his own navy. In his book, this great victory is only mentioned in one page. This proves how a humble person he is.

Hayreddin Barbarossa was sea trading before the sea wars. Knights of Rhodes confiscated his brother's ship and martyred his a brother. The Knights of Malta also confiscated his two trade ships. After Barbarossa

had arrived in Tunisia, he began to seize the vessels of the sea pirates. He was distributing to the Muslims what he had taken from the pirates. Many Muslims living in North African cities wrote letter to him and asked for help. He helped every Muslim (who) asked for help. The reason for coming to Algeria was the invitation letter of Muslims. His two brothers were martyred while trying to help Muslims in Algeria. The place of the tomb of his one brother Baba Aruj has been unknown nowadays. Hayreddin Barbarossa not only helped Algerian Muslims, he also helped the Muslims of Andalusia. The real goal of Hayreddin Barbarossa was to win mitzvah and consent of God. Everyone who has the idea of the Islamic Union has to know Barbarossa.

I. Introduction

In 1480 the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon merged and “Kingdom of Spain” had been emerged. The Granada Prince rebelled against his father. He attacked the Kingdom of Spain to show his power, but he was captured. As the Granada Emirate lost power in this war, the Kingdom of Spain began to take over the cities of Granada Emirate. Boabdil had accepted the patronage of the Kingdom of Spain for the throne.

Between 1482 and 1492, the two great empires of the Islamic world, the Ottoman Empire and the Mamluk Sultanate, were at war. The Mamluk Sultanate purchased naval vessels from Spain to use against the Ottoman Empire. The Muslims' caliphate lived in the Mamluk Sultanate.

In the Spain Kingdom, the idea of “Reconquista” was revived. Reconquista meant “re-conquest”. The conditions had been very suitable for banish from the Iberian peninsula to the Muslims! The Pope was giving full support to the “Catholic Monarchy”.

Under these circumstances, the Ottoman Empire could had given limited support to the Andalusia Muslims. The Ottoman Empire sent a fleet under the command of Kemal Reis to help the Muslims of Andalusia and the Jews. This help was not enough. The Andalusia Muslims were fleeing to North Africa to survive. For Muslims there were three options: to convert, to run away, to look like convert... They had no power for the fight. The Barbarossa Brothers, under these circumstances, started to operate in the seas.

II. The Book of Hayreddin Barbarossa' Wars and Memories

The Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent gave an order like this to the Hayreddin Barbarossa one day: *“How and why did you and your brothers start in the jihad? Who is the family? Small or large until this time; on land or at sea, how did you do wars? Write all in poetry or prose in complete and correct form. I will put yours books in my library next to old-time history books!”*

Hayreddin Barbarossa's life and memories had been written by Seyyid Muradi. He was a valiant sailor who participated in naval battles on the vessel of the Durak Reis from the chieftains under the command of Hayreddin Barbarossa. He sang the Hayreddin Barbarossa's war stories in a poem format. As his writings were beautiful, the soldiers memorized and read these epics. Seyyid Muradi wrote what he had heard from Hayreddin Barbarossa, what he had seen saw, and what he had heard from the other commanders.

III. The Features of the Book

Hayreddin Pasha's Wars is a two-part series. In the first chapter, the events that had happened until 1541 are told. The second part describes the events between 1541-1546.

Hayreddin Pasha's Wars is a kind of autobiography. This book is the first autobiography experiment in the Turkish literature.

One of the manuscript copies of Hayreddin Pasha's Wars has been in the Topkapi Palace Museum Library in the Istanbul. The second part is in a single writing in Paris Bibliotheque Nationale. (MS, Supplément turc, No. 1186). This book also has a copy in Madrid Escorial (No. 1663).

The papers of Hayreddin Pasha have gained great interest especially in the West. The work was translated into Spanish in 1578 (*La vida y Historia de Hayreddin Ilamado Barbaroxa, traduzida de Lengua Turquesca en Espahol Castellano*). The first Italian version of the book was translated in 1887 and the second in 1993. (*La vita e La Storia di Ariadeno Barbarossa, Palermo 1887, new edition by G. Bonaffini, Palermo 1993*). The work was probably translated into Arabic while Barbarossa was alive. In 1934, this translation was published by Nureddin Abdulkadir with the name of *“Kitâbü Ġazavâti Arûc ve Hayriddîn”* in Algeria.

It was translated into French in 1837 by Sander Rang and Ferdinand Denis. (*Fondation de la régence d'Alger, histoire des Barberousses, I-II, Paris*

1837). In 1896 Joseph Thury translated it into Hungarian. (Török Törtenitirok, Budapest 1896, II, 279-363). In 1983, A. Gallotta translated it into Italian. (“II Gazavat-i Hayreddin Pasha di Sayyid Murad”, Studi Magrebini, XIII, Napoli 1983).

IV. Why Did They Come to Tunisia?

Barbarossa explains the reasons for going to Tunisia:

The Ottoman Empire is mixed. We go to Tunisia. If we like Tunisia, we settle in Tunisia. We spend our life in jihad. Somehow life is death. If so, we will deliver our life to God in the way of jihad (*Muradi*; 45).

Thus his brother Baba Aruj, Yahya Reis and Khizr Reis came to Tunisia with three vessels. They met with the Muhammed, Bey of the Tunisian and demanded the use of ports for jihad. They said to the Tunisian Bey: “We can win benisons. The community will be rich. (*Muradi*; 92)”

V. The Terms of Agreement With Tunisia Bey

Tunisian Bey Muhammed accepted the proposal and gave them the La Gaulette (Halk-ül Vââd) bastion. They made an agreement with the Tunisian Bey in the following way:

They would give one of eighth of the captives to the Tunisian Bey to be raised as soldiers. They would give two percent of the loot as port right (*Muradi*; 92). The charges would be paid equally from the remaining money (*Muradi*; 117). The remaining money would be divided into two. The rights of the vessels were also specified (*Muradi*; 117).

VI. Tunisia Activities

They had 5 vessels in their first jihad. There were 3 vessels owned by them and 2 vessels belonging to the Tunisian Bey (*Muradi*; 93).

On their first trip, they went to Sardinia Island and took a pirate vessel there. The second vessel they were handling was wheat-loaded. The next morning they took two more pirate vessels. These ships were loaded honey, olives and cheese. They distributed the wheat to the poor people in Tunisia (*Muradi*; 96).

Two years after arriving in Tunisia, they found a barque going to Spain, but Baba Aruj was wounded in the arm. After this success their names were heard everywhere. The King of Spain said to them, “These are the gods now. I will crush your heads without the dragon!”

They made the first great naval battle with the Crusade fleet on the openings of Bejaia Castle. They fought against the ten battle vessels, with only four vessels and the oldest Turkish battle tactics. They captured four vessels. The other 6 vessels escaped and anchored the Bejaia Port. Baba Aruj wanted to take over these vessels, but he lost one arm. Khidr Reis came to help and seized the other 6 vessels (Muradi; 102).

In the 4th year of their arrival in Tunisia they went the Andalusia for help to the Muslims of the Iberian Peninsula. Granada was captured by the Spanish Kingdom. The Kingdom of Spain was making great forces on Muslims in Granada, especially for religious reasons.

Khizr Reis sended gifts to Muhiddin Reis (Piri Reis) and Ottoman Sultan Selim Han after Formentara's raid. He emphasized the importance of "taking the pray of the Islamic sultan" while telling this event (Muradi, 127).

The Ottoman Sultan Selim sent himself and his brother two vessels with 27 seats, 16 bronze bulls and bronze bullets, and also a diamond-sword, two crests and two hil'at gifts (Muradi, 128).

After that, they decided to go to the Sette strait and carry Andalusian Muslims to North Africa. Meanwhile, Muslims of Bejaia and the Arab sheiks wrote letters to Khizr Reis and asked for help. When they received this letter, the vessels were ready to go to the Sette strait. They immediately decided to help to the Bejaia Muslims (Muradi, 130).

VII. Why Did He Come to Algeria?

The Barbarossa Brothers had saved the city of Bejaia from the persecution of the Christians. After this success, the Algerian Muslims sent a letter asking for help from the Barbarossa brothers.

The infidels were at the place called "Paunchy Bastion" in Algeria.

Khizr Reis explained Algerian's situation at then as follows: "The people of Algeria were despised and humiliated by the infidels. Muslims were not able to shop without the Christians shopping. The people of Algeria told us one by one in the letter of persecution against them. After reading this letter they decided to go to Algeria (Muradi, 144)."

They did not force their own soldiers to conquer Algeria. They preferred soldiers who were volunteers come to their heart with pleasure. Their goal was "to save Muslims from persecution and oppression of infidels, to give goodwill in two worlds (Muradi, 145)."

They had gone with the 500 soldiers volunteered to help to the Algeria. In the leader vessel of Baba Aruj, he travelled on land to the Algeria.

Baba Aruj and his friends changed clothes and entered the market place in the groups of ten, twenty, thirty, forty and fifty people and captured the Algiers city.

The Spanish navy attacked Algeria with forty vessels. Baba Aruj, out of the land, fought the land and the infidelled escape. They decided to settle in the Algeria after they had received this news (Muradi, 158). They arrived at the port of Jijel after 20 days. The city of Jijel distributed a vessel full of wheat to the people. The people of the Algeria were given big honour to the Khizr Reis as the “Reis (Admiral) of Mujahideen” (Muradi, 159).

The following year, the nephew of the Sultan of Tlemcen took refuge in the King of Spain. He wanted to be the Tilmeneen Sultans with military support from the King of Spain, but he could not be successful. Upon this, Baba Oruj took the Telis Castle and proclaimed his Sultanate there.

A year later Khizr Reis learned about his events from his brother Baba Oruj. He made preparations to capture Telis Castle. They captured the four great Spanish naval vessels at the port of Telis.

They planned to land troops the next morning. But that night the apostates and infidels in Telis Castle escaped. They planned to land troops the next morning. But that night the apostates and infidels in Telis Castle escaped. Khidr Reis sent epistle to Telis Bey. He wanted Telis Bey’s apology from him but Telis Bey did not accept it.

Upon this, Baba Aruj holded a meeting with the Muslim clerics. He told the events to the Islamic jurisdiction and wanted a fatwa. According to Islamic law they gave fatwa to kill. They caught the Telis Bey, and punished according to the fatwa.

Meanwhile, the Tlemcen Muslims also sent a letter asking for help from Khidr Reis. Khidr Reis went to punish Tlemcen Bey because he had allowed from the port of Tlemcen to carry grain to the Spain Kingdom (Muradi; 171). But Tlemcen Bey fled to the Morocco.

Khidr Reis forgave Oran from selling grain by sending news to the “Castle town” commander. Because Oran was ruled by Christians (Muradi, 172). Tlemcen’s Muslim bey, with support by Oran’s Christian commander killed the Aruj. Their younger brother Ishak had martyred during the conquer of the castle town. Later, the Spanish vessels attacked with 20,000

soldiers for captured to Algeria, but they did not succeed. Khizr Reis drove them to a great loser. He took 13,500 prisoners. After this success, the Christians gave him the cognomen “Barbarossa” (Muradi 174).

VIII. Conclusion

According to the remembrance of Khizr Reis, we can make the following evaluations:

- a. Khizr Reis came to the North African coast because of the internal turmoil in the Ottoman Empire.
- b. When they arrived in Tunisia, they carried the spirit of jihad. Because death is the result of the life, they preferred to win mitzvah before they died.
- c. After the Granada Emirate was taken over by the Spain Kingdom, they secretly transported the Andalusian Muslims to the North African coast.
- d. They attacked the coastal towns of Spain because Spain Kingdom were persecuting Muslims living in the Kingdom of Spain.
- e. They were distributing free wheat and food to the poor people.
- f. They were hiding in Majorca Island from time to time when they were carrying the Andalusian Muslims.
- g. They also planned to transport the Andalusian Muslims to the North African coast from the Sette strait.
- h. When the Muslims of Bejaia sent a letter and asked for help, they had gone for help to the Bejaia Muslims (*Muradi*; 130).
- i. They saved the Andalusian Muslims who had been sentenced to rowing because they could not pay their taxes (*Muradi*; 134).
- j. Muslims living in the Kingdom of Spain were being persecuted. Despite being a Muslim, Tlemcen Bey was selling careals to the Spain Kingdom. He did not allow to the Tlemcen Bey to sell careals to the Spain Kingdom. He tried to apply the food and careals embargo to the Kingdom of Spain.
- k. They used the Jijel Castle to imprison the infidel prisoners (*Muradi*; 139).
- l. For Khizr Reis, it is very important to get a prayer of the Islamic sultan. The sultan’s prayer for Khizr Reis is like “arcanum.”
- m. He wanted to be praised on the level of God and the public.
- n. Baba Aruj lost his arm in front of the Castle of Bejaia. Thus, Bejaia should be a special highlight for them.
- o. Ishak Reis, the younger brothers of Hızır Reis and Iskender Kethuda,

were martyred during the conquering of the Kalatu'l-Kıla.

p. Khizr Reis's older brother, Baba Aruj, was martyred in Kalatu'l-Kıla.

r. Khizr Reis had captured 13 thousand prisoners in the Temtiros Gulf War. There were 26 captains among these prisoners. The Christians wanted to rescue their captains from captivity by paying money. But Algerian Muslim scholars and judges did not agree. Then Khizr Reis gave up from 3 million "akce." He did not release the Christian captains and executed all of them at the request of the Islamic scholars (*Muradi; 202*).

s. The Muslims who wanted to save their country from the Spanish occupation had settled in the cities of Algeria to harm Spain. Hayreddin Barbarossa had organized these Muslims in Algeria.

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