



Transfer of Authority in the Bahri Mamluks State (648-784 AH/1250-1382 AH)

A distinct political model in the history of Islamic civilization

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المخلص: يتناول هذا المقال موضوعا مهما في تاريخ المماليك الذي غطى أكثر من قرنين ونصف من تاريخ المشرق الاسلامي، وهو موضع كيفية تداول السلطة في دولة المماليك البحرية على وجه التحديد، حيث أنّ التجربة المملوكية في ذلك قد شكّلت استثناءً واضحاً في التاريخ الاسلامي الذي لم يعرف في اكثره الا نمطا واحدا وهو الحكم الوراثي، ولكن تاريخ المماليك عرف أنماطا أخرى لانتقال السلطة ، وقد رأينا أنّ هذه التجربة جديرة بالدراسة و البحث بسبب تميزها وتفردها. حيث أنّنا من خلال هذا المقال حاولنا استقراء تاريخ دولة المماليك البحرية ، وتبيين اشكال انتقال السلطة فيها من خلال العديد من الأمثلة و التجارب التي حفل بها تاريخ هذه الدولة ، وأيضا من خلال تحليل منظومة الحكم المملوكية و معرفة أهم خصائصها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المماليك -الدولة البحرية -السلطة -الوراثة -الاستيلاء

Abstract: This article deals with an important topic in the history of the Mamluks, which covered more than two and a half centuries of the history of the Islamic East, which is the subject of how power was transferred in the Bahri Mamluk state in particular, as the Mamluk experience in this constituted a clear exception in Islamic history, which for the most part knew only one pattern, which is hereditary rule, but the history of the Mamluks knew other patterns of transfer of power, and we have seen that this experience is worthy of study and research because of its distinction and uniqueness.

Through this article, we attempt to explore the history of the Bahri Mamluk state and demonstrate the forms of transfer of power within it through numerous examples and experiences that abound in the history of this state. We also analyze the Mamluk system of government and understand its most important characteristics.

Keyword:-Mamluks –Bahri State –Power –Inheritance -Seizure

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Mamluk state is a unique case in medieval Islamic history. The elements that established this state, first in Egypt and then in the Levant and some other eastern regions, were not indigenous to these lands. Rather, they were a heterogeneous group of white slaves, whom the Ayyubid(الأيوبيون) sultans and their emirs greatly increased in number for various reasons, including strengthening the army, particularly from the Turkish element



that was initially dominant, and also with the aim of injecting new blood into Islamic society.

These foreign Mamluks were able to seize power and maintain it within their own tribe for more than two and a half centuries, spanning two major states: the Bahri Mamluk or Turkish state(الدولة البحرية أو التركية), and the Burji Mamluk, or Circassian, state(الدولة البرجية أو الشركسية).

Many reasons and factors contributed to facilitating the Mamluks' access to the throne of Egypt and the Levant, some of which were internal and related to the weakness of the last Ayyubid princes and the dispersion of their word, and some of which were external, as the Crusades and the Mongol attack on the Islamic East, while they had serious repercussions on the country, had a positive aspect in favor of the Mamluks, as their contribution to repelling the Seventh Crusade led by Louis IX in the year 648 AH / 1250 AD, and their victory over the Mongols in the Battle of Ain Jalut(معركة عين جالوت) in the year 658 AH / 1260 AD, were factors that helped support the legitimacy of their access to power and their continued presence in it.

They increased their popular support and highlighted the need for a single, unified force to lead the country in the face of turbulent political and military circumstances.

These characteristics were not present in anyone other than these Mamluks, who had proven their great competence and distinction in more than one test. Just as the Mamluks

distinguished themselves in the way they came to power, they also distinguished themselves in the way they administered and transferred it. Their experience in the transfer of power was unique in light of the general environment and the long history of hereditary rule throughout the Islamic East.

The Mamluk experience encompassed multiple forms of government and diverse methods of attaining power, as well as the unique composition of functions and authorities within the Mamluk political system. Political circumstances and surrounding factors, both internal and external, were the deciding factors in determining the type and nature of rule.

In this article, we will attempt to answer a key question:

What was the form of power in the Bahri Mamluk state? How was power transferred and circulated? What were the reasons and circumstances for this unique experience?

The answers to these questions will be provided by examining models of the transfer of power in the Bahri Mamluk state and providing examples of each model, with all the distinctive features these forms entail.

2. Mamluks:

The term Mamluk in the language refers to the meaning of a slave being bought and sold¹, In other words, it was associated with a class of white slaves of the Asian race in particular, whom the princes and sultans of the Islamic world were keen to buy and integrate into special military divisions during the days of peace, which were added to the general army in the days of war².

The races of this white slave varied from Turks to Romans to Persians and Circassians, but the Turkish and Circassians



(jarakissa)(الجراكسة أو الشراكسة) races were the best and most distinctive because of their peculiarity suitable for the life of soldiers and wars in general, especially as the country of those nations - Stretching from Crimea to the Caucasus and Asia Minor to Mesopotamia - has known a bitter history of wars between various peoples and countries, which added to them more experiences in ferocity and endurance³.

The Turkish element has had the lion's share in compared to other races, where the use of Turks in the Islamic East has been common since the first Abbasid era, as the sources of history contain references to the era of al-Ma'mun (المأمون العباسي) (198H-218H/813M-833M) Even before that, but the reliance on them as a general phenomenon in Abbasid society is dating back to the era of **al-Mu'taṣim bi'llāh** (المعتصم بالله العباسي) (218 AH-227 AH/833 AH-842 AH), who preferred them over others, founded them military teams and a special city of Samarra to be their own stability after their presence in Baghdad caused many problems to people⁴.

The importance of Turks in the Muslim community has increased the success of some of their leaders in the tasks entrusted to them. As for the Turkish leader known as al-Afshin, (الإفشين), who succeeded in eliminating the revolution of Babak Khorramdin (بابك الخرمي) in the era of **al-Mu'taṣim**

bi'llāh in 222 AH/837 AD, This has led to some of them holding high office in the state. Their ambitions increased and their ranks increased, and even entire countries inside and outside the Abbasid caliphate were of Turkish origin, like the Tolonian (الدولة الطولونية) state in Egypt.

In the 6th century AH/12 AD the reliance on the Turkish Mamluks in the Nori (الدولة النورية) and Ayyubid (الدولة الأيوبية) states increased. Entire groups attributed to its princes, such as Nasiriyah (النورية), Assadism (الأسدية) and others, were formed. This opened the way for these Mamluks to rise to the scene, especially in the late Ayyubid state. Many historians associate the Bahri Mamluks with the last Ayubid king, Najmuddin Ayub. (نجم الدين أيوب), who bulked up their purchase of them and inhabited them in the island of Rawdah (جزيرة الروضة) in the Nile from which they took their description of the Navyri⁵ (البحرية).

And It was the nucleus that founded the Mamluk State, which lasted almost a century and had the greatest impact in the history of Egypt and the Levant, especially as it played many roles in the course of its events and history in general.

3. A Brief Introduction about Bahri Mamluks State (648 AH-784 AH /1250 AD-1382 AD)

The circumstances of the Bahri Mamluks State were akin to a Caesarean birth. It also had the greatest impact on The military nature of that emerging state which has been described throughout its history, Its emergence coincided with the Seventh Crusade against Egypt, led by Louis IX of France, known as Saint Louis, who believed that there was no way to retake the Holy Land from Muslims except by taking control of Egypt⁶.



This campaign was blessed by Pope Innocent IV⁷, Then It moved in the year 648 AH/1250 AD after three years of efforts to mobilize Support and endorsement throughout Europe, and the total personnel of the campaign amounted two thousand eight hundred (2800) cavalry except for infantry and sailors and attachés of the army, who numbered fifty thousand (50,000), on board one thousand eight hundred ships (1800) between large and small⁸.

Initially, this campaign achieved some success, as the Franks were able to enter and control Damietta(دمياط)⁹ and seize many weapons and ammunition. In return, Sultan Al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, who was seriously ill, withdrew to Al-Mansoura(المنصورة) in the south and remained waiting¹⁰.

Shortly after, Louis IX and his army advanced to Mansoura after the arrival of support from France, This coincided with the death of the Ayyubid Sultan Najm ad-Din Ayyub, which weakened the Egyptians and depressed their morale, Louis IX took advantage of this, achieving some victory at the beginning of the Battle of Mansoura,(معركة المنصورة) Sources mention that his soldiers were able to reach the Sultan's castle , Here, the great role of the Salihi Mamluks(المماليك الصالحية) emerges, who took the initiative and repelled the Frankish soldiers, turning the defeat into a resounding victory, In this regard, the historian Al-Maqrizi(المقريزي) says, "Then the Bahri Mamluks emerged and launched a stronge attack on the Franks until they drove them

away and fled. They were seized by swords and pins, and one thousand five hundred of their notables were killed. From that day on, the Mamluks emerged and became famous”¹¹

We should not miss here the last phrase of Al-Megrizi, which is to say The Bahri Mamluks emerged from that day and became famous, as it clearly reflects the definitive transfer of power from the Ayyubids to a new element In the region, It will have the greatest impact on the making of its history, both political and military. It was the Same phrase of AL-Megrizi that made historians and scholars of ancient and modern times associate the military nature of the Mamluk state with the circumstances of its origin in the midst of the Seventh Crusade.

In addition, what can be called the military legitimacy that gave them the right to rise to power and assume the sovereignty of Egypt and the Levant, because of their great contribution to saving the country from falling into the grip of the crusaders.

The rest of the war resulted in a Mamluk victory at the Second Battle of Mansurah¹², led by **Turanshah**, (توران شاه), son of Sultan As-Salih Ayyub, who was summoned from Hisn Kaifa¹³ (حصن كيفا) on Upper Syria, where he was governor, The army of Louis IX, which had fled towards the village of Fariskur¹⁴, (فارسكور) was scattered, and a great massacre took place among its ranks. Among the most prominent heroes of this victory were: Faris al-Din Aktai, (فارس الدين أقطاي), Baybars al-Bunduqdari, (بيبرس البندقداري), and Izz al-Din Aybak¹⁵, (عز الدين أيبك) and In the background was the widow of Sultan As-Salih



Ayyub Shajar al-Durr (شجر الدر) who was also a slave of the Sultan, whom he freed and married.

The Seventh Crusade ended with the defeat of the Crusaders and the capture of their king, Louis IX, which ended the Crusaders' dream of controlling Egypt. On the other side, the emergence of the Bahri Mamluks as an influential force in the new ruling equation disturbed the new heir, Turanshah who worked to tighten the noose on the Mamluks, diminish their role, and even deliberately humiliate and distort their image. The situation escalated when he threatened his stepmother, demanding that she hand over all the money and property left by his father¹⁶.

Here again the legitimacy gained by the Mamluks through their contribution to saving the state is highlighted. Fearing the loss of their new gains, they agreed to assassinate Turanshah and end the last chapter of the Ayyubid state forever¹⁷, Thus, the rule is transferred to the Mamluks, who declared Shajar al-Durr as sultana in Safar of the year 648 AH/May of the year 1250 AD, As an agent for her son, With the help of the prince Izz al-Din Aybak as guardian¹⁸, and Thus The Bahri Mamluks State was born out of complex political and military circumstances that influenced it's history and form of the transfer of power. This created a unique experience of governance in Islamic history.

Even though the Mamluks themselves are engaged in a

continuous struggle for young power, Between Shajar al-Durr and her new husband, Aypak, who began to rule without her and without other Mamluks such as Faris al-Din Aktay , Baibars al-Bunduqdari, and Bilban al-Rashidi(بلبان الرشيدي). and others, Later between Saif-eddin Qutuz, Baibars and Qalawun(قلاوون) But the silent consensus among all of them was that it was impossible to relinquish power to any other party outside the Mamluks.

This is what happened in their unification against the remnants of the Ayyubid led by Al -Nasser Youssef(الناصر يوسف), the owner of Aleppo, who retook Damascus and tried to march to Egypt to recover the throne of his ancestors. Despite the intervention of the Abbasid caliphate for reconciliation between the two parties¹⁹, and the various alliances that were made between the rivals.

Ultimately, the Mamluks gained new legitimacy after they successfully halted the Mongol advance at the Battle of Ain Jalut(معركة عين جالوت) in Ramadan 658 AH/1260 AD²⁰, Which resulted in at least two things, the first being the elimination of the last hope of restoring governance to the Ayyubids. The second is the beginning of a new era in the history of Egypt and the Levant under a new state called the Bahri Mamluks, which left its mark on the history of the region with its political and military characteristics.

With reference to the sources of history, many of them consider the year 648 AH/1250 AD as the year of the establishment of the state Thus, the sultana Shajar al-Durr is the first sultan of this



state, even she ruled for a few months and then faced religious and social opposition as a woman and gave up in accordance with certain arrangements for Izz-Eddin Aybak, Who continued until 655 AH/1257 AD²¹, then succeeded by his son Al-Mansour Ali(المنصور علي) under the guardianship of Al- Muzzafar Qutuz(المظفر قطز) to the year 657 AH/1259 AD, And then Qutuz ruled for a year, that is, up to the year 658 AH/1260 AD However, he was assassinated by Baibars al-Bunduqdari, who was nicknamed al-Dhahir(الظاهر بيبرس) and continued to rule the new state until 676 AH/1277 AD²².

According to this arrangement, some historians and researchers consider Baybars to be the true founder of the Mamluks state²³, and that all of his predecessors fall within the preliminary stage of establishment, especially with the internal and external conflicts that accompanied it, which did not allow the emerging state to settle until many years later²⁴.

The Mamluks State lasted from 658 AH/1250 AD to 784 AH/1382 AD, and traded on its rule twenty-five sultans, the first of which was Sultan Shajar al-Durr (648 AH/1250 AD), and the last Sultan Haji(السلطان حاجي) (783 AH-784 AH/1381 AD-1382AD), With two sultans ruling more than once due to the coup against them.

The Mamluks state is credited with many important military achievements, including the victory over the Mongols in Ain Galut, and also ending the Crusader presence in the Islamic East by expelling them from the city of Acre in 690 AH/1291 AD,

fighting the Mongols and stopping their harm to the Levant and Egypt for long periods, and expanding the state at the expense of the Seljuks(السلجقة) and others.

The political achievements include the revival of the Abbasid caliphate in the year 659 AH/1261 AD after its fall in Baghdad by the Mongols in the year 656 AH/1258 AD, and this event was of great symbolic importance in the whole nation because of the religious and political importance of the caliphate among Muslims, and added to the Mamluk stock among the people and contributed to the stabilization of the pillars of their rules.

The history of the Mamluks state can be divided into two major phases, the first of which begins from the establishment until the year 741 AH/1341 AD, the year in which An-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun(الناصر محمد بن قلاوون) died after his third reign, which began in the year 709 AH/1310 AD, which is the longest, This is the first stage in which the state has developed significantly in various political, military, economic and scientific fields. It was ruled by great sultans who had the greatest influence in the development of various aspects of the state, including the addition of the aforementioned Al-Mansur Qalawun(المنصور قلاوون) (678H-689H/1279M-1290M), Ashraf Khalil ibn Qalawun(الأشرف خليل بن قلاوون) (689H-693H/1290M-1293M).

The second phase was ruled by the sons of An-Nasir Muhammad and his grandchildren for forty years in unstable conditions, neither politically nor economically.



In this Phase The Mamluks princes played important roles in sewing conspiracies and fabricating crises so that their influence over the sultans would continue, This is reflected negatively on the various parts of the country ; Many sects of the Circassian Mamluks (المماليك الجراكسة), who took advantage of the situation in the end and seized the state under the leadership of Prince Sayf ad-Din Barquq (سيف الدين برقوق) to begin a new phase historically known as the Mamluk State Tower from the year 784 AH/1382 AD to the year 922 AH/1517 AD.

4. Methods of Authority transfer in Bahri Mamluks state:

The Mamluk state System has many characteristics and features that made it unique. Given later with earlier Islamic experiences, the factors and variables controlling the ways of assuming power were varied. Among them is the imbalance between the Mamluks themselves, since the only bond to which these princes were subjected was the bond of the Mamluks with his master.

Another link is added to this called by the term common to Mamluk historians in Khashdashi, Which means fellowship between different Mamluks because of their affiliation with a common master ;They carry his title added to their names²⁵.

The strength or weakness of the sultan's personality was often a decisive factor, thanks to which he was able to direct the special bonds between the Mamluks to the destination that serves his

survival on the throne, so that he could turn it to his advantage through the game of balances Mastered by many sultans²⁶.

Among them was Al-Zahir Baybars, who implemented a two-pronged policy. On the one hand, he sought to appease the Mamluk leaders with positions, jobs, and fiefdoms, and on the other hand, he brutalized all his opponents and adversaries without mercy in a bloody message through which he was able to make his rivals despair of overthrowing him or removing him²⁷.

In general, through our study of the history of the Bahri Mamluks state, we have discovered that the circulation and transfer of power within the state apparatus occurred in one of three ways:

1/ The Shura.

2/ The Seizure and The coup.

3/The Inheritance.

Before delving into the details of these three methods, with examples from the history of the Bahri Mamluk state, it is important to note that the only method known to the various states and dynasties in Islamic history, in the East and the West, was hereditary, whereby power was transferred directly or indirectly from the ruler to the crown prince. Seizing power by force, or what is known today as a coup, was another form of transfer of power. However, the influence and role of shura (consultation) have diminished since the era of the The Rashidun (the rightly-guided') (الخلفاء الراشدون)

Therefore, we believe that the Mamluk experience of



governance was unique in an Islamic environment dominated by the logic of hereditary rule, and The marginalisation of shura (consultation) as one of the most important determinants of legitimate politics in Islam.

4.1 The Shura:

Shura is one of the foundations of governance in Islam, and many verses in the Qur'an, in addition to a number of honorable prophetic hadiths (الأحاديث النبوية), have stipulated this in order to connect the individual with society and mobilize opinions on important issues²⁸, and because the consensus is one of the important sources in Islamic legislation, it was primarily a matter of choosing the ruler who is accepted by the masses of the Ummah.

However the Shura (consultation) that we meant in this topic did not require the existence of “the people of solution and contract” or Ahl al-Hall wa'l-Aqd (أهل الحلّ والعقد) of Scholars and opinion holders.

So It was a special Mamluk shura, where the Mamluks are strangers to Egypt and the Levant. They always had the feeling that they were not from the country and had no absolute right to rule it. They gained that legitimacy from their defense against the Mongols and the Crusaders when all the rulers in the capitals and provinces abdicated their responsibilities to the nation. Because of this, they formed a special class of them that was

independent of the rule of the country and was unique in the functioning of the state²⁹.

The Mamluks' diverse origins and affiliations, depending on their masters, led to bloody conflicts among them. The rise of a new sultan or the assumption of a new position by a Mamluk prince necessarily meant the rise of his Mamluks and their companions, forming a new class born of shared servitude served as a protective wall against their opponents, and could sometimes pose a threat if their loyalty was bought or if one of their members became greedy and saw himself as an advantage and priority in the government.

It was these complex considerations that forced Mamluks of all classes to sit at the consultative table, forced against their will, and often agreeing to the choice of the appropriate sultan, driven by the demands of politics, sometimes united by a common enemy, and agreeing in their views on the Mamluks' interest in not losing power for any reason.

In the history of the Mamluk state, we have observed three instances in which consultation was the deciding factor in selecting the most suitable sultan, given various circumstances and considerations. In the first instance, the selection of Shajar al-Durr was dictated by several factors. These included the fact that the Mamluk princes—Aybak, Aktay, Baibars, Qutuz, and Qalawun—did not have the courage to assume power, so they preferred to choose her because she was the wife of their sultan and master Najm al-Din Ayyub. They also chose her because of her conflict with her stepson, Turan Shah, who posed a grave



threat to their existence. Supporting her was dictated by gratitude to her and her husband, and by rewarding her and them for fighting the Crusaders and protecting the entire country. This occurred at a time when all the Ayyubid princes in the Levant had retreated³⁰.

Even when political and religious parties objected to the elevation of a woman to the Sultanate, the new solution did not come out of the consensus of the Mamluks, so they chose among them Muez Aybak, who proposed to him to marry Shajar al-Durr and assume the position of guardian of her son the boy Sultan³¹, and this is the second case of the Mamluk Shura.

The sense of the imperfect legitimacy of the Mamluks remained a feeling for them, and their reaction was to unite towards against any external enemy, it happened with the remnants of the Ayyubid dynasty, and with the revolt of the Arabs of Egypt led by Hisn al-Din Ben Thalab (حسن الدين بن ثعلب), who openly declared that he does not recognize the legitimacy of the Mamluks, who are Strangers of the country³².

In the face of this Mamluk unity, dictated by circumstances, internal conflict soon erupted among them, along with greed, conspiracies, and struggles for position among the Mamluk princes. However, the new sultan, Aybak, also known as al-Mu'izz, displayed a strong personality that his companions had not reckoned with. He ruled alone, without his wife, which brought him into conflict with her and with his other allied

princes. This conflict ended with the death of Aktay, the expulsion of other princes such as Baybars and Qalawun from the country, and the dominance of the Mu'izzis Mamluks(المماليك المعزية)³³.

However the new sultan also fell victim to his wife's plots when he further marginalized her and then considered marrying another woman. As a result, she ended his life in 655 AH/1257 AH, and he was later punished in the same way by his Mamluks³⁴. The Mamluks then agreed to transfer power to their sultan's son, Ali ibn Aybak, whom they renamed al-Mansur. This was all orchestrated by Sayf al-Din Qutuz³⁵, This is the third form of shura, albeit one that appears to be hereditary. This is because the selection was the result of Mamluk consensus, and also because Qutuz could have seized power but preferred to remain in hiding as the sultan's deputy and guardian.

This position, that is, the deputy of authority, was considered one of the most dangerous positions in the Mamluk state apparatus, as many of those who coveted power would struggle for this position and remain in it, moving the wheels of the state from behind a curtain in the name of the minor sultan. Whenever he found the opportunity, he would pounce on the throne and he had secured for himself the loyalty of the active members of the state, by choice or by force.

We conclude this element by pointing out that this type of Shura was closer to the aristocratic form than to the legitimate form, due to its lack of popular approval³⁶, which is one of the pillars of Islamic Shura. However, it was necessary due to the circumstances of the emergence of the Mamluk state, and it was an exception in the models of governance in the Islamic world as



a whole.

4.2/ The Seizure and The coup

The emirate of domination or seizure is known as a forced tradition in which the prince or ruler seizes the country by force. The jurists have agreed to permit it in order to preserve the Sharia laws, stop the bloodshed, and protect religious rulings, as long as the dominating prince does not deviate from the rulings of religion and the requirements of Sharia³⁷.

The case of seizing power was repeated many times in Islamic history before the Mamluk era, but what is new in it this time is that we can distinguish between two types of it: first Seizing power in the Mamluk experience was done by trickery and planning without the need to shed blood or create chaos in the country, while the coup, which is often accompanied by a bloody conflict between the various parties and major political and military disturbances. We found in the history of the Bahri Mamluk state examples of both cases.

One of the most prominent examples of the state of usurpation is what happened with Prince Saif al-Din Qutuz, who took the position of deputy of the Sultanate, pretending to be concerned about the interests of the young Sultan al-Mansur Ali bin Aybak, as he did not show any greed for power so as not to incite the Mamluks against him, and he did not allow anyone to dispute his position of deputy, including Prince Alam al-Din Sanjar (علم الدين سنجر), whom he arrested and threw into prison³⁸.

But in reality, he was waiting for the right opportunity to seize power, and The circumstances served him well when the Mongol threat reached the borders of Egypt. Qutuz took advantage of that to ascend to the position of Sultan, claiming that the country needed a conquering Sultan to fight the Tatars, not a young boy who did not know how to manage a kingdom³⁹.

Qutuz easily overcame the difficulties of his decision to seize the sultanate. The Mamluk princes were preoccupied with the threat they faced and the change that had taken place. They also found him a capable man, as he successfully marshalled all possible efforts, including the reintegration of princes who had fallen out of favor since the murder of Aqtay, such as Baybars and Qalawun, and directed these efforts towards the imminent Mongol threat. Another factor that helped him was that sources mention his distinction from other Mamluks: he was not originally a slave, but rather a descendant of a noble ruling family whose lineage traced back to the Khwarazmshahs(خوارزمشاه)⁴⁰.

Although Qutuz did not rule for long, only one year, and he was assassinated by Baybars and his princes allied with him shortly after the Battle of Ain Jalut, the way he came to power inspired many of those who came after him, so they made it a continuing tradition. Among these was Prince Saif al-Din Qalawun, whose name emerged after the death of al-Zahir Baybars in 676 AH/1277 AD as one of the most powerful of the Zahiri Mamluks(المماليك الظاهرية). However, the man pretended to be loyal to al-Zahir , so he did not accept the Mamluks' offer to take



power after they removed al-Sa'id ibn al-Zahir, claiming loyalty to al-Zahir⁴¹.

Then he sought to install Al-Adil Salamish bin Al-Zahir (العادل (سلامش بن الظاهر), the youngest son of Al-Zahir Baybars, in his brother's place, while retaining the position of deputy sultanate for him. When he saw in himself the strength and ability to change the situation, he persecuted the prominent Mamluks who opposed him and seized the throne in the year 678 AH/1279 AD⁴², repeating the experience of Qutuz and confirming the danger of the position of deputy sultanate if it is accompanied by ambition and a thirst for power.

As for the examples of dominance and coup from the history of the Bahri Mamluks, the most important and first of them is The Prince Rukn al-Din Baybars who killed Sultan Qutuz with the rest Mamluks. And Because He was not in his plan to seize power, the Mamluk princes met and were confused about what to do, fearing the consequences of what had happened. Then they reached the conclusion that whoever killed the Sultan would be the one to replace him⁴³.

The most prominent example of the repeated coups in the history of the Bahri Mamluks remains what happened with Al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun, to whom power was transferred after the murder of his brother Al-Ashraf Khalil in the year 693 AH/1293 AD. Because he was not ready for its responsibilities due to his young age and lack of experience, Prince Zain Al-Din

Kutbugha(زين الدين كتبغا) first overthrew him in the year 694 AH/1294 AD⁴⁴, He was the only one of the Bahri Mamluks of Mongol origin. During his reign, the Uwayratiyya(العويراتية)⁴⁵ sect from the Mongol Mamluks came to the country and became the ones who gave orders in the apparatus of power with his support.

This was the reason for a second coup led by Prince Hussam al-Din Lajin(حسام الدين لاجين), one of the most important princes of Sultan Qalawun in the year 698 AH / 1297 AD, taking the title of al-Mansur, pretending loyalty to Qalawun dynasty, and that he did that only for the sake of al-Nasir. However, he suggested to him that he leave for Karak until he grew up and became able to take over power and bear its responsibility, and that he was not greedy for power but merely a guardian over it⁴⁶.

But he began to bring his princes closer and to exclude all his rivals, headed by Prince Shams al-Din Qarasunqur(شمس الدين قراسنقر), who was the deputy of the Sultanate, which hastened his end, as the rest of the Mamluks of Qalawun dynasty allied against him and killed him in the year 698 AH/1299 AD⁴⁷.

Although Al-Nasir had settled on his throne this time for a relatively long period of more than ten years, he soon faced new ambitions, this time from the two guarantors of his kingdom, the princes Saif al-Din Salar(سيف الدين سalar) and Baybars al-Jashnakir(بيبرس الجاشنكير), who were among the most important princes, and they had played a major role in confronting the dangers that the kingdom was exposed to, whether from the Arabs Bedouins and Mongols, and because of that their



influence and power in the country increased, and here Al-Nasir Muhammad chose to abdicate power of his own free will⁴⁸.

Al-Jashnakir ascended to power and was given the title of King Al-Muzaffar in the year 708 AH/1309 AD in what can be described as a white coup against Al-Nasr for the third time. However, his reign did not exceed a year due to the division of the army between those who supported him and those who supported the return of Al-Nasr, His strength was also increased by the support of the viceroys of the Levant and also the Bedouin Arabs who saw in him legitimacy⁴⁹. Then the balance tipped in favor of Al-Nasr, so Al-Jashnakir preferred to submit to reality. This was in the year 709 AH/1309 AD⁵⁰, when Al-Nasr returned to his throne. This time he continued to rule for more than thirty years until he died in the year 741 AH/1341 AD, leaving behind wonderful architectural achievements that remain as a witness to the period of his rule.

4.3/ Inheritance:

The Mamluks never believed in inheritance as a means of ascending to the throne. All the great princes considered themselves entitled to power, and the determining factor among them was not lineage, but rather strength, a large following, and the ability to subjugate and subjugate opponents. Moreover, they were all foreigners to the country, so none of them could claim any right to power or authority. Therefore, the struggle among

them intensified whenever a sultan was deposed, killed, or died.

However, many examples of inheritance occurred in the history of the Bahri Mamluk state for reasons and circumstances specific to each case. It began shortly after the assassination of al-Mu'izz Aybak, when his Mamluk emirs installed his son, al-Mansur, on the throne. At the forefront of those enthusiastic about this was Sayf al-Din Qutuz, who saw this as an opportunity to assume the position of deputy and guardian of the sultan. He quickly turned against him, ending his rule, as we saw earlier.

However, this experience of inheritance did not last long, and it cannot be considered a definitive example of inheritance among the Mamluks.

But the most obvious experience in inheritance was with Al-Zahir Baybars, who, despite realizing the difficulty of implementing that, brought the judges, witnesses, and notables and ordered them to swear an oath of succession to his son, Al-Saeed Baraka Khan(السعيد بركة خان) who assumed power after the death of his father in the year 676 AH/1277 AD⁵¹.

However Saif al-Din Qalawun, one of the greatest and most powerful Mamluk princes of the Zahiris, had a different opinion. After much debate and division in the army, the Sultan saw that things were not going in his favor, and that most of the Mamluk princes rejected his rule. He had no choice but to submit to their conditions by giving up power and accepting some fiefdoms in the Levant. In the same way he was appointed, the jurists and judges were brought in and they removed him. They appointed his brother Badr al-Din Salamish(بدر الدين سلامش) in his place and



called him the Al-aadel Sultan, and Saif al-Din Qalawun as his deputy. The coins were issued with two faces, one bearing the name of Al-aadel(العدل) and the other the name of Qalawun⁵².

The truth is that the transfer of power between the two sons of Sultan Baibars was not an actual inheritance, but rather a means of coup that was often repeated, which confirms once again the danger of the position of The Deputy, especially if it was combined with guardianship. If they fell into the hands of a prince aspiring to the sultanate, they were a vehicle for greed for the throne.

The Mamluk princes realized this since the dawn of their state, so they made it a political tradition that was repeated in many stages of Mamluk history.

Prince Saif al-Din Qalawun can be considered the true theorist of the principle of inheritance in the Bahri Mamluk state, as he and his sons and grandsons after him were able to keep the sultanate in their lineage for a period of one hundred and six years (106), which is equivalent to three-quarters of the Bahri Mamluk state history.

Despite the many conspiracies and plots, during this long period , the dynasty of Qalawun was able to resist all the Mamluk conspiracies and remain in power directly or indirectly⁵³.

The following table lists of Mamluk sultans from Qalawun dynasty to the end of the Bahri Mamluk state:

Table 1. Mamluk Sultans of the Qalawun Dynasty

Sultan name	His reign period
Al-Mansour Qalawun	678-689 AH / 1279-1290 AD
Al-Ashraf Khalil In Qlawun	689-693 AH / 1290-1293 AD
An-naser Mohamed Ibn Qalawun(firstly)	693-694 AH / 1293-1294 AD
An-naser Mohamed Ibn Qalawun(scondly)	698-708 AH / 1299-1308 AD
An-naser Mohamed Ibn Qalawun(thirdly)	709-741 AH / 1310-1341 AD
Al-Mansour Abu Bakr Ibn An-naser	741-742 AH / 1341 AD
Al-Ashraf Kojuk Ibn An-naser	742 AH /1341 -1342 AD
An-naser Ahmed Ibn An-naser	742-743 AH / 1342 AD
As-Saleh Ismail Ibn An-naser	743-746 AH / 1342-13 45 AD
Al-kamel Shaaban Ibn An-naser	746-747 AH / 1345-1346 AD
Al-muzafer Hadji Ibn An-naser	747-748 AH / 1346-1347 AD



An-naser Hacen Ibn An-naser 1	748-752 AH / 1347-1351 AD
As-saleh Saleh Ibn An-naser Mohamed	752-755 AH / 1351-1354 AD
An-naser Hacen Ibn An-naser 2	755-762 AH / 1354-1361 AD
Al-mansour Mohamed Ibn Hadji	762-764 AH / 1361-1363 AD
Al-ashraf Shaaban Ibn Hacen	764-778 AH / 1363-1377 AD
Al-mansour Ali Ibn Shaaban Ibn Hacen	778-783 AH / 1377-1381 AD
As-saleh Hadji Ibn Shaaban Ibn Hacen	783-784 AH / 1381-1382 AD

Source: Researcher's achievement

From the table we note that two of Sayf al-Din Qalawun's sons He inherited him in power, first al-Ashraf Khalil in the period from 689-693 AH/1290-1293 AD, before he was assassinated and al-Nasir Muhammad was installed in his place, who was deposed more than once as we saw previously. However, the third period of his rule lasted thirty-one years from 709 AH/1310 AD to 741 AH/1341 AD, and witnessed relative stability during which the state experienced some relative prosperity.

Then came a new phase that could be called the era of the sons and grandsons of Al-Nasir, which completed the rest of state history, as eight sultans (08) of his sons ruled over a period of twenty-one years, and the average rule of each of them was

approximately two and a half years, which indicates the instability in their eras.

One of the most important sultans of this period was Al-Nasir Hassan bin Al-Nasir Muhammad (الناصر حسن بن الناصر محمد), who ruled twice, the first from 748 AH/1347 AD to 752 AH/1352 AD, and the second from 755 AH/1354 AD to 762 AH/1361 AD. He is considered one of the most important Mamluk sultans because He was known for his righteousness and Reasonableness ; After that came the period of Al-Nasir Muhammad's descendants, during which four sultans (04) ruled until the end of the state in 784 AH/1382 AD.

The success of the Qalawun family in inheriting power and keeping it in their lineage is due to several reasons, including the man's strength and good management, and his surrounding himself with a new class of Mamluks known as the Burji Mamluks (المماليك البرجية), which would eventually bring about the end of the Bahri state.

The period following the death of al-Nasir Muhammad was one in which the final word was held by the deputies of the Sultanate, so the Sultan was nothing more than a signer of the decrees.

Moreover the era was an era of competition for wealth and money, the Mamluks Princes prefer to keep the Sultanate in the Qalawun family rather than receiving it directly, while weighing between the Sultans according to interest and benefit⁵⁴.

5. CONCLUSION



At the end of this article, we wanted to summarize a set of elements that can serve as an assessment of this unique experience in governance, which departed from many of the established rules in the Islamic world of Middle Ages, and constituted a noteworthy exception in an environment dominated by the Inheritance as the sole and unique aspect of the transfer of power.

1-The military nature of the Mamluk state, which began with the raising and education of young Mamluks in a special military manner, in places far from the rest Society, was known as Tebaq⁵⁵(طباق) , It had the greatest impact in outlining a special policy in the transfer of power, through military Groups united by a common upbringing, and unified by the factor of slavery considering the affiliation to one common master, and because of this factor no one was able to covet power unless he was included under a strong Group, with the availability of shrewdness and The leadership personality that facilitated his management of this Aggregation and subjecting it to his orders, and money, fiefdoms and sultanic positions were often tools that helped in its success.

2- By reviewing the lives of the sultans who ruled the Bahri state from its founding in 648 AH/1250 AD to its demise in 784 AH/1382 AD, we find the following:

- Eight sultans (08) were deposed while in power.
- Seven sultans (07) were deposed from power and subsequently

killed.

- Four sultans (04) were killed while in power.

- Only six (06) sultans survived, five of whom died while in power, while Shajar al-Durr abdicated power in favor of her husband, al-Mu'izz Aybak.

These facts truly reflect the extent of the conflict between the various Mamluk sects, and the heavy price paid in the struggle for power, which had significant repercussions on society in various fields.

3- The issue of legitimacy and the right to rule was a haunting obsession for the Mamluks throughout their reign. It was also an easy means for anyone to covet power. No one could claim the right to rule, as all Mamluks were foreigners. Therefore, certain sultanic positions played a key role in facilitating anyone's access to power, such as the position of deputy sultan.

4-This position, that is, the Sultan's deputy, gives its holder powers similar to those of the Sultan himself, as he takes his place during his absence and participates with him in distributing fiefdoms and nominating qualified individuals for state positions. Because of these important tasks, the Sultan's deputy was sometimes called the Mamluks guardian and the second Sultan⁵⁶. In Egypt there were one or two deputies according to the general situation, while the Levant was divided into several deputies according to the major cities there, and the deputies of Damascus and Aleppo had some preference⁵⁷.

5- The danger of this position, lies in the fact that, due to the



powers granted to him, the duties sometimes overlap between him and the Sultan, especially if the latter was weak or young. Indeed, these deputies would quickly turn against their Sultans or kill them if they had the opportunity, as happened with Al-Ashraf Khalil, who was killed by his deputy, Baydra(بيدرا), in the year 693 AH/1293 AD⁵⁸, or as happened with Al-Nasir Muhammad more than once, as we saw previously.

6-In another important statistical note, we find that out of the seventy-four deputies of Damascus(74) throughout the life of the Bahri State, twenty-nine deputies(29) rebelled against the Sultan, and two of them(02) were able to reach the seat of power, while fifteen deputies(15) were executed due to those repeated coups. At the end of this Article, it seems to us that studying the experience of governance in the Bahri Mamluk state is very important, and that it still needs broader research in order to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of political practice in this state, and the social and economic structures that affected it, especially what is related to feudalism, which took a special form in the Mamluk state, in addition to the nature of the sultanic functions and the dimensions that it played in the Mamluk system of government in general.

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