

Historian Baybars Al-Duwaidar (d. 725 AH/1325 AD) and his Role in the Administration of the Mamluk Maritime State

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Abstract

This research deals with the role of the historian Baybars al-Duwaidar in the administration of the Mamluk state, it is limited to studying the biography of this personality and the extent of his contribution to the administration of the Mamluk state without addressing the scientific side of him represented in his many works, especially his famous book (*Zubdat al-Fikra in the History of Hijrah*), as it is known that this historian, who is known for his important works, had assumed important positions in both the military and civilian Mamluk state. This research sheds light on this aspect.

HisNameandLineage

The first name of the author of the book *Zubdat al-Fikrah fi Tarikh al-Hijrah* and other works is mentioned in most historical sources as *Baybars al-Khatā'ī*. Ibn Taghribirdi (d. 874 AH) added to it, referring to him as *Baybars ibn Abdullah*. However, Al-Sakhawi (d. 902 AH) stated that his name followed a common custom of that era, which was to add the designation *ibn Abdullah*¹ for those whose father's names were unknown. This practice was applied to Baybars because he was among the Mamluks who were brought to Egypt at a young age, and this naming convention applied to him².

His Family

It is noteworthy that the sources provide no information about his family, nor did Baybars al-Dawadar himself mention anything about them. This seems common in the Mamluk era, as most prominent figures in the state were slaves brought to the region at a young age, leaving no knowledge of their original families. All that is known about him is that his lineage traces back to the Khatā' tribes.³

¹ Jamal al-Din al-Muhassin Yusuf ibn Taghri Bardi (d. 874 AH / 1469 CE), *Al-Manhal al-Safi wa al-Mustawi Ba'd al-Wafi*, edited by Muhammad Amin, Said Abd al-Fattah Ashour, (Egypt: Egyptian General Book Organization, n.d.), Vol. 3, p. 477.

² Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi (d. 902 AH / 1496 CE), *Al-Daw' al-Lami' Li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tasi'*, (Beirut: Maktabat al-Hayat, n.d.), Vol. 3, p. 74.

³ **The Khatā' Tribes:** These were Turkish tribes that lived in the northern regions of China. Over time, these tribes became scattered, until a powerful leader emerged in the early 4th century AH (10th century CE). This leader was able to unite them under his rule and declared himself their

His Birth:

The sources do not provide a specific date for the birth of Baybars al-Dawadar, as it occurred before he settled in Islamic lands. However, based on the consensus in the sources that he was 80 years old at the time of his death in 725 AH / 1325 CE, it is likely that he was born around 645 AH / 1248 CE.⁴

His Place of Birth

The sources do not specifically mention the exact location of Baybars al-Dawadar's birth. However, he himself stated that he first arrived in Egypt from Mosul in 659 AH / 1260 CE⁵. Despite this, Al-Zarkali mentioned an account claiming, "*Baybars al-Mansuri al-Khatā'ī al-Dawadar, Rukn al-Din, a historian and one of the emirs of Egypt, was born and died there [in Egypt].*"⁶ This account is questionable, as it contradicts what Baybars al-Dawadar himself stated.

emperor between the years 304 AH / 116–927 CE. This leader was **Tai Tzu**. His successor continued to conquer northern China and granted his family the title "Liao," named after the region they ruled.

The Liao dynasty ruled from 304 / 519 AH - 916 AH / 1125 CE. Later, they left their original homeland in northern China and migrated to Turkestan, where they established a state known as the **Qarakhanid state** in 519 AH / 1125 CE. This state lasted for over a century until it was destroyed by the Mongols in 615 AH / 1218 CE.

Sources:

1. Ahmad ibn Ali al-Qalqashandi (d. 821 AH), *Subh al-Asha fi Sinaa'at al-Insha'*, edited by Muhammad Hussein Shams al-Din, Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1407 AH / 1987 CE, Vol. 4, p. 481.
2. Hafiz Ahmad Hamdi, *The Khwarezmian State and the Mongols*, Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 1949, p. 60.

⁴ al-Dhahabi, *Al-Ibar*, Vol. 1, p. 174; Ibn Habib, *Tadhkirat al-Nabiha*, Vol. 2, p. 158; Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi (d. 845 AH / 1440 CE), *Al-Muqaffa' al-Kabir*, edited by Muhammad al-Ya'lawy [d. 1436 AH], Beirut - Lebanon: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2nd ed., 1427 AH / 2006 CE, Vol. 2, p. 306; Ibn Taghribirdi, *Al-Manhal al-Safi*, Vol. 3, p. 477; Ibn al-'Imad al-Hanbali, *Shadharat al-Dhahab*, Vol. 8, p. 120.

⁵ Baybars al-Duwidar (d. 725 AH / 1324 CE), *Zubdat al-Fikr fi Tarikh al-Hijrah*, edited by Donald S. Richard, (Beirut: Matba'at Maktabat Hasib Dar 'Aam wa Awladuhu, 1998), p. 71.

⁶ Khayr al-Din bin Mahmoud bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Faris, Al-Zarkali al-Dimashqi, *Al-'Alam* (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm Lil-Malayin, 15th ed., 2002), Vol. 2, p. 80.

His Upbringing

Baybars al-Dawadar mentioned that he arrived in Egypt in 659 AH / 1260 CE⁷, during the reign of Sultan al-Zahir Baybars⁸.

It can be estimated that Baybars al-Dawadar was about 14 years old at the time of his arrival in Egypt, based on the previously mentioned birth year. He arrived accompanied by his master, al-Tawashi⁹, who resided in the Hārat al-Bunduqīyyīn (Venetian Quarter) in Cairo, where he purchased Baybars. Later, Emir Saif al-Din¹⁰ purchased him, raised him according to the

⁷ Baybars al-Duwidar, *Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 71.

⁸ Al-Zahir Baybars: He is Baybars al-‘Ala’i al-Bunduqdari al-Salahi, Rukn al-Din, King al-Zahir, the one known for his conquests, news, and legacies. He was born in the land of the Qipchaq. He was captured and sold in Sivas, then transferred to Aleppo, and from there to Cairo. He was purchased by Prince Ala' al-Din Aydakin al-Bunduqdar and remained with him until he was taken by King al-Salih (Najm al-Din Ayyub), who placed him in his private service during the reign of King (al-Muzaffar) Qutuz. He fought alongside him against the Tatars in Palestine. Later, he conspired with the army commanders to kill Qutuz, and they did, after which Baybars took control of the Sultanate of Egypt and the Levant in 658 AH and assumed the title of King (al-Qahir, Abu al-Futuh), before abandoning that title in favor of King (al-Zahir). His notable military campaigns against the Tatars and Crusaders (Franks) are legendary, and during his reign, the caliphate moved to Egypt in 659 AH. His legacies, buildings, and historical accounts are numerous. He died in Damascus.

Zarkali, *Al-A'lam*, Vol. 2, p. 79.

⁹ Al-Tawashi: The term "Tawashi" refers to the eunuch mamluks who were assigned to serve the Sultan's households and harem. Saeed Abdul Fattah Ashour, *The Mamluk Era*, (Cairo: Al-Nahda Al-Arabia, 2nd ed., 1976), p. 455.

¹⁰ Al-Mansur Qalawun: He is Sef al-Din Qalawun, of Qipchaq origin. He was brought to Egypt and bought by Prince Ala' al-Afsanqar, a mamluk of Al-Adil Abu Bakr bin Ayyub. After the death of his master, Ala' al-Din, Qalawun was transferred to the service of King al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, becoming one of the Bahri Mamluks. He remained in service during the reign of Shajarat al-Durr. When Al-Mu'izz Aybak took power and killed the knight Aqta'i, Qalawun joined those who left Egypt from the Bahri Mamluks. He went through various changes until he became the Atabeg of the army in Egypt during the reign of Sultan al-Adil Salamat bin al-Zahir Baybars. Later, he overthrew al-Adil Salamat and took the throne in 678 AH.

established Mamluk traditions of the time, and enrolled him in a school where he studied various sciences.

According to Baybars himself, "*Qalawun enrolled me in the school*¹¹, and God bestowed His grace upon me, teaching me His noble Book and honoring me with the study of the *Qur'an*, as a blessing from the Lord of all worlds¹²." When Emir Saif al-Din Qalawun traveled with Sultan al-Zahir Baybars to the Levant in 659 AH / 1260 CE, he left Baybars in the care of his wife, the mother of al-Ashraf Khalil, at her residence¹³.

From the brief details available about the biography of Baybars al-Dawadar, it becomes evident that much of his life before assuming prominent positions in the Mamluk administration is shrouded in mystery, particularly the period he spent in Mosul. The only known fact is that he was a mamluk of al-Tawashi Mujahid al-Din al-Mawsili. This ambiguity might have been intentional on Baybars' part, as he seemed keen to conceal his past, which he likely deemed insignificant. To him, his true life began upon his arrival in Egypt, marking the start of his journey from being a mere mamluk to achieving prominence.

His Teachers and Students

The sources that documented the biography of Baybars al-Dawadar did not provide any information about his teachers. This absence is likely because Baybars himself did not mention them, merely stating, "*Qalawun enrolled me in the school, and God bestowed His grace upon me, teaching me His noble Book and honoring me with the study of the Qur'an, as a blessing from the Lord of all worlds.*"¹⁴

The Positions and Roles Held by Baybars al-Dawadar in the Mamluk Sultanate

Baybars al-Dawadar held a prominent and esteemed position in the Mamluk Sultanate of the Bahri Turks. He lived through the reigns of the key sultans who played significant roles in the establishment of the Mamluk state. Since his arrival in Egypt, he was involved in many important and decisive events in the history of the state, which brought him closer to the centers of power. This proximity to the ruling authorities enabled him to assume important roles and positions in the administration of the Mamluk state.

Ahmad bin Ali bin Abdul Qadir Abu al-Abbas al-Husaini al-'Ubaydi Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi (d. 845 AH), *Al-Suluk Li Ma'rifat Dawal al-Muluk*, ed. Muhammad Abdul Qadir Atta, (Lebanon - Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiya, 1418 AH / 1997 CE), Vol. 2, p. 122.

Muhammad bin Shakir bin Ahmad bin Abdul Rahman bin Shakir bin Harun bin Shakir, known as Salah al-Din (d. 764 AH), *Fawat al-Wafayat*, ed. Ihsan Abbas (Beirut: Dar Sader, 1974), Vol. 3, pp. 203-204.

¹¹ Al-Maktab: A place designated for teaching the Sultan reading and writing.

Beberis al-Dawidar, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mamloukiya*, ed. Abdel Hamid Saleh Hamdan, (Cairo: Al-Dar Al-Masriyya Al-Lubnaniyya, 1407 AH / 1987 CE), p. 12.

¹² Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 70.

¹³ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 71.

¹⁴ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 70.

His Contributions to Military Activity

Baybars al-Dawadar participated in military campaigns, the first of which took place in 664 AH / 1265 CE during the reign of Sultan al-Zahir Baybars, towards the lands of the Armenians.

Baybars referred to his role in this campaign, stating, "*At that time, I was in the service of Emir Saif al-Din al-Mukhdum Qalawun, serving on the left flank.*"¹⁵

This means that Baybars al-Dawadar held the position of *al-Junayb* (commander of the left flank) and remained in this role throughout that year. Additionally, in the same year, he participated in the military campaign directed at the Crusader fortresses surrounding Tripoli, alongside Emir Saif al-Din Qalawun, the Atabeg of the troops.

He participated in the conquest of the Crusader Principality of Antioch in 666 AH / 1268 CE. Baybars referred to this campaign, stating, "*I was part of this blessed expedition. As for my master Qalawun and those with him, he marched from Afamiya, and we reached al-Qusayr in the morning. We skirmished with its inhabitants, fighting both in the morning and evening. We then moved on to Antioch, where we camped on the western side, at the foot of the mountain.*"¹⁶

However, Baybars did not mention the specific position he held during this campaign. In 669 AH / 1270 CE, Emir Qalawun took him along when he headed to the Kurdish Fortress. Baybars referred to this, stating, "*We stayed there for ten days, and the suburbs were captured. The army advanced, and the Sultan took control of the fortress on the 24th of Sha'ban.*"¹⁷

He was then appointed to the position of *Amir* and later promoted to become one of the Emir's leading officers. This is understood from his statement, "*I was fortunate to be made one of his emirs, and this was his practice with all his servants, to raise their ranks.*"¹⁸

His Appointment to the Rank of Amir with the Title of Fifteen Tawashi

When Sultan Al-Mansur Qalawun assumed the sultanate in 678 AH / 1279 CE, Baybars' position was elevated when he was granted the rank of *Amir* with the title of fifteen *Tawashi*. As Baybars himself stated, "*In this year, the Sultan bestowed upon me the rank of fifteen Tawashi.*" This promotion significantly enhanced his status within the Mamluk military hierarchy.¹⁹

His Appointment as Amir of the *Tablkhana*

In 683 AH / 1284 CE, Baybars al-Dawadar was promoted to one of the highest positions in the Mamluk state, the rank of *Amir of the Tablkhana* (commander of the royal military band)²⁰. As

¹⁵ Al-Janib: The plural is *Janayib*, referring to the reserve horses that followed the Sultan in wars in case they were needed. See Muhammad Qandili al-Baqali, *Al-Ta'rif bi-Mustalahat Subh al-Asha*, (Egypt: Egyptian General Organization for Book, 1983), p. 92; Saeed Abdul Fattah Ashour, *The Mamluk Era*, p. 428.

¹⁶ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 111.

¹⁷ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mamloukiya*, p. 70.

¹⁸ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 247.

¹⁹ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 247.

²⁰ *Al-Tablkhana*: Refers to the "house of drums," which includes drums, trumpets, and other related instruments. The head of this unit is known as the "Amir of the Hundreds" (Amir al-'Asharat),

he himself stated, *"In this year, the Sultan bestowed upon me the command of the Tablkhana with fifty horsemen, and granted me the iqtā' (land grant) of Emir Izz al-Din Aybak al-Afdham al-Salihī, Amir of Jandar, and upgraded it to one hundred horsemen. He also issued a decree confirming this, dated the 5th of Shawwal."*²¹

He also mentioned this in another instance, saying: "I was transferred from the Sultan's charity to the command of the *Tablkhana*, which is one of the blessings of God that He granted through his hands, and I will continue to remember it as long as I live, preserving it in my records to be spread when the days of my life close. How could I fail to mention it and neglect to express my gratitude, as it remains a legacy passed down from my predecessors and flourishing with the future."²²

It appears that Baybars al-Dawadar's appointment to this position significantly elevated his status within the Mamluk authority.

His Appointment as Deputy of Karak

Only two years passed in his role as *Amir of the Tablkhana* before Baybars al-Dawadar was appointed to a more important position: the Deputy of the city of Karak. Baybars al-Dawadar conveyed this through his account of a military campaign that Sultan Qalawun planned to undertake. The Sultan sent for him to gather troops for participation in the campaign, stating, *"The Sultan sent an army with Emir Hussam al-Din Turtashi, Deputy of the Sultanate, to Karak. They marched to it and laid siege using catapults and other equipment. They asked for safe passage, which Emir Hussam al-Din secured for them, ensuring their safety and well-being. He also wrote to the noble gates requesting the sending of one of the Sultan's trusted officials to bring them the seal of security."*²³

From this passage, it becomes clear that Sultan Al-Mansur Qalawun granted safety and affixed his seal to the document. He entrusted Baybars al-Dawadar with the task of carrying this message. Baybars himself recounted, *"The Sultan appointed me to deliver it to them, along with the safety of the noble ones. I traveled by postal service to Karak, where I met Emir Hussam al-Din. I informed them of my arrival, entered with the safety document, and delivered the Sultan's message, outlining the terms of his favor and kindness... This reassured their hearts, and they descended from Karak Castle to Emir Hussam al-Din, where they were received with respect and reverence."*²⁴

In another account, Baybars al-Dawadar mentioned: *"The Sultan traveled to Karak with a small entourage, leaving the army stationed in Gaza. He informed me that he aimed to train me in Karak, so I took the necessary supplies and preparations and proceeded in his service as though I were migrating. We reached Karak on the 10th of Sha'ban of that year. The Sultan camped on its outskirts, ascended to its fortress, and inspected its conditions. He ordered the digging of the*

who supervises the instruments during their use every night and manages them while traveling.

The purpose of these instruments seems to be to intimidate the enemy in war, strengthen the morale of the soldiers, and announce their movements to the people. Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-Asha*, Vol. 4, p. 13.

²¹ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 250.

²² Beberis al-Dawidar, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mamloukiya*, p. 112.

²³ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Al-Tuhfa*, p. 115.

²⁴ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 255.

*cistern at the Bab al-Nasr gate, which had been neglected and filled in. He reorganized the Arab tribes, and the men stationed there, renewed the land grants for the Arab emirs, and facilitated their connections. The Sultan appointed me to stay in Karak as his deputy, and I remained there, while Emir Izz al-Din Aybak al-Mawsili left.*²⁵

From the mentioned texts, it is evident that Sultan Al-Mansur Qalawun appointed Baybars al-Dawadar as the deputy of the Sultanate in Karak after dismissing Izz al-Din Aybak al-Mawsili and replacing him with Baybars. Baybars detailed this appointment. Following the death of Sultan Al-Mansur Qalawun in 689 AH / 1290 CE, his son Al-Ashraf Khalil assumed the throne.²⁶

The sultanate passed to him, and at the beginning of his reign, he decided to liberate Acre from the Crusaders. Baybars al-Dawadar spoke of himself during this time, saying: *"I was then in Karak. When the news of this campaign reached me, orders came from the Sultan to prepare the armories"*²⁷

²⁵ Beberis al-Dawidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 255.

²⁶ *Al-Ashraf Khalil bin Qalawun*: He was the second son of Sultan Sef al-Din Mansur bin Qalawun, the eighth sultan of the Mamluks of the Turkish Bahriya dynasty in Syria and Egypt. He was born and raised in Egypt and was given the title "Al-Ashraf" during his father's lifetime. His father, Sultan Qalawun, appointed him as his heir after the death of his elder brother, Alaa al-Din Ali, in 687 AH / 1288 CE. He was proclaimed Sultan after his father's death in 689 AH / 1290 CE, and he was also referred to as "Salah al-Din." While many assume he took this title in association with the famous leader Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi due to his victories against the Crusaders on the Levantine coast, he actually adopted this title during his father's reign, before his military achievements. His lineage traces back to his father, Sef al-Din Mansur Qalawun al-Alfi al-Salihi al-Najmi al-'Alayi. Abd al-Zaher, Muhi al-Din, *Tashrif al-Ayam wa al-'Usur fi Sira al-Malik al-Mansur*, edited by Murad Kamil Muhammad al-Najjar, (Cairo: Al-Sharika al-'Arabiyya li al-Ṭibā'a, 1961), p. 248; Ibn Daqmaq, Sārim al-Dīn Ibrahim bin Muhammad Aydamir al-'Asqalani (d. 809 AH / 1407 CE), *Al-Jawhar al-Thamin min Sīrat al-Khulafā' wa al-Muluk wa al-Salātīn*, edited by Said Abd al-Fattah Ashour (Saudi Arabia: No Publisher, 1982), p. 310.

²⁷ *Al-Zarrādakhāt (Zardakhānah)*: This refers to the place designated for storing weapons and military equipment (such as swords, Arab bows, crossbows, spears, and shields). The term can also refer to the weapons themselves.

See:

Al-Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā*, Vol. 4, p. 11;

Ashour, *Asr al-Mamālīk*, p. 444;

Muhammad Ahmad Dhaman, *Mu'jam al-Alfāz al-Tārīkhīyah fi al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1990), p. 86.

*and equipment. My soul yearned for jihad, longing for it as parched earth longs for life-giving rain.*²⁸"

Accordingly, Baybars al-Dawadar requested Sultan Al-Ashraf Khalil's permission to participate in the liberation of Acre. Sultan Al-Ashraf Khalil approved his request and appointed him as one of the commanders of the campaign aimed at expelling the Crusaders from their last stronghold.

Regarding his role in the campaign, Baybars al-Dawadar stated: *"I prepared defensive armories, useful equipment, diligent men, archers, stonemasons, warriors, and craftsmen, and I set out to meet the Sultan."*²⁹

After the liberation of Acre in 693 AH / 1293 CE and its capture from the Crusaders, upon Sultan Al-Ashraf Khalil's return to Egypt, Baybars al-Dawadar requested to be relieved from his position as deputy of Karak. He asked to remain in the Sultan's company. He referred to this in his words: *"He instructed me to proceed to Karak, but I asked to remain in his service, to return with him and in his company, seeking exemption from returning to Karak. He granted the exemption, appointing Emir Jamal al-Din Aqoush as deputy of the Sultanate there. He was a man of good governance and evident leadership."*³⁰

However, accounts from other historical sources differ from what Baybars himself mentioned. Ibn Taghribirdi stated: *"Sultan Al-Ashraf summoned Emir Baybars al-Dawadar, the deputy of Karak, and dismissed him."*³¹ This suggests that Ibn Taghribirdi interpreted the dismissal as a punitive measure rather than a voluntary exemption granted at Baybars' request.

Al-Maqrizi shared the same opinion as his predecessor, stating that Baybars al-Dawadar was dismissed from his position as deputy of Karak by Al-Ashraf Khalil, rather than it being based on Baybars' personal request.³²

However, this dismissal or exemption did not diminish Baybars al-Dawadar's standing within the Mamluk administration. In 690 AH / 1291 CE, he moved to be by Sultan Al-Ashraf Khalil's side in Egypt, where he became one of his commanders and military leaders. In 691 AH / 1292 CE, Baybars al-Dawadar joined Sultan Al-Ashraf Khalil in the campaign to capture the castles of the Romans.³³

Baybars al-Dawadar mentioned this himself, saying: *"We were in the midst of intense siege, fighting, harassment, and skirmishes. From the eastern shore, a group of Tatars appeared among the mountains. The Sultan ordered that a group of soldiers, accompanied by some of the great commanders, be sent to investigate and track their movements. Four leaders from the thousands and their additional units were assigned, including Amir Badr al-Din Baktash, Amir of the cavalry, and I was one of them, along with Amir Rukn al-Din Taqsu al-Nasiri, Amir Sef al-Din Bilban al-*

²⁸ *Baybars al-Duwaydār, Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 278.

²⁹ *Baybars al-Duwaydār, Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 278.

³⁰ *Baybars al-Duwaydār, Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 284.

³¹ Yusuf ibn Taghrī Birdī ibn Abdullah al-Zāhirī al-Ḥanafī, Abū al-Maḥāsin Jamāl al-Dīn (d. 874 AH), *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah*, (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, no date), Vol. 8, p. 9.

³² al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk*, Vol. 1, p. 154; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-Kabīr*, Vol. 2, p. 306.

³³ *Baybars al-Duwaydār, Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 289.

Halabi, and Amir Husam al-Din Lajin al-Salhadar al-Mansuri. We all set out with great speed, crossing the Euphrates from the area of Samisat, and traveling east throughout the day and night. We followed their tracks but found no trace of the Tatars. We immediately returned and joined the battle until we successfully captured the Castle of the Romans."³⁴

His Promotion to Military Ranks

After the death of al-Ashraf Khalil in 693 AH / 1294 CE³⁵, Muhammad al-Nasir took over the Sultanate during his first reign. During this time, Baybars al-Dawadar continued to hold important positions in the Mamluk state, especially in the military. In 693 AH / 1294 CE, he was promoted to the rank of Amir of 100 horsemen initially, and soon after, he became the Amir of 1,000, which was one of the high military ranks.³⁶

His Return to Administrative Work

It seems that Baybars al-Dawadar did not remain in military service for long. He took over the administration of the Diwan al-Insha, which was responsible for overseeing the incoming and outgoing mail from the gates of the Sultanate, in addition to handling matters related to correspondence and written communications³⁷. In this position, he was granted the title "al-Dawadar,³⁸" a title that became strongly associated with his name and became widely known by it.

³⁴ *Baybars al-Duwaydār, Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 289.

³⁵ *Baybars al-Duwaydār, Zubdat al-Fikr*, p. 298.

³⁶ Muhammad al-Nāṣir: He is Sultan Muhammad, also known as al-Malik al-Nāṣir, the son of Sultan al-Malik al-Manṣūr, Sayf al-Dīn al-Ṣāliḥi, one of the greatest Turkish rulers and the tenth Sultan of the Mamluk Sultanate. He was born on the 16th of Muḥarram in the year 684 AH (1285 AD) at the Citadel of Cairo. He ruled three times, with his first reign occurring in 693–694 AH.

Al-Ṣafadī, A' yān al- 'Aṣr, Vol. 5, pp. 73-74.

³⁷ Baybars al-Duwidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 299.

³⁸ Al-Dawadar: A title composed of two words, one Arabic (al-Dawā) meaning the inkstand, and the other Persian (Dār), meaning holder. It refers to the position of one who holds the inkstand, acting as the messenger or assistant to the ruler. Among the duties of the Dawadar were transferring messages and affairs on behalf of the sultan, overseeing the couriers and dispatches, and endorsing royal decrees. The role of the Dawadar was sometimes held by commanders of the "asharat" (units of ten) or the "ṭablkhāna" (drum house), and sometimes by commanders of larger units such as the "aluwf" (thousands). It is noteworthy that Baybars al-Duwidar held this position as "Maqaddam Alf" (Commander of 1,000). See: Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, vol. 5, p. 131; Ahmad ibn Ali

Baybars al-Dawadar referred to the decree that appointed him to the position, in which the Sultan praised him greatly:

"When eloquence is mentioned, he is its leader; when writing is considered, he holds its reins. If his fingers ride the steed of the pen, it is by his hand that glory is achieved. If his grasp embraces the sword, who can escape his strike? And if he holds a spear, no fortified fortress can defend against it, nor can any iron withstand his force. He speaks in a manner that captivates the ears..."³⁹ Although Al-Maqrizi and Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani mentioned a version of events stating that Baybars al-Dawadar assumed this position during the reign of Sultan Ashraf Khalil and continued in it during the reigns of Qutuz, Lajin, and Muhammad al-Nasir⁴⁰, there is considerable doubt regarding the accuracy of this narrative. There is no substantial evidence to support it. In contrast, the account that Baybars al-Dawadar took up this office during the reign of Sultan Muhammad al-Nasir is more plausible, as it is backed by the decree issued by the Sultan himself, which Baybars al-Dawadar recounted personally.⁴¹

Al-Maqrizi mentioned the news of Baybars al-Dawadar's dismissal from his position as the head of the Diwan al-Insha (chancery) in the year 704 AH / 1305 CE. He attributed the reason for this dismissal to Baybars al-Dawadar having sent a letter to Judge Sharif al-Din Abd al-Wahhab, the chief scribe, instructing him to write to the governor of Syria.⁴²

The story suggests that after Baybars al-Dawadar instructed Judge Sharif al-Din Abd al-Wahhab to write a letter to the governor of Syria, the judge informed him that such an action required consultation with the sultan. Angered by this response, Baybars allegedly struck the judge on the head. The judge then went to Emir Sallar and shared what had transpired. As a result, a meeting of emirs took place, and they decided to lodge a formal complaint against Baybars al-Dawadar with the sultan, leading to his dismissal from the position of head of the Diwan al-Insha⁴³. However, this account is not fully confirmed, as it contradicts other historical events and the statements made by Baybars al-Dawadar himself.⁴⁴

Niabat al-Ghaybah (Deputy in Absence)

The dismissal of Baybars al-Dawadar from his position in the Diwan al-Insha did not diminish his stature. When Sultan Muhammad al-Nasir assumed power for the second time in 699 AH / 1300

ibn Abdul-Qader Abu al-Abbas al-Husseini al-'Abidi, Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi (*al-Mawa'idh wa al-I'tibar*), Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1418 AH, vol. 3, p. 387; Dhaman, *Mu'jam al-Alfaz*, p. 77.

³⁹ Baybars al-Duwidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 299.

⁴⁰ Al-Maqrizi, *al-Muqaffa*, vol. 2, pp. 306–307; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *al-Durr al-Kamina*, vol. 2, p. 51.

⁴¹ Baybars al-Duwidar, *Zubdat al-Fikra*, p. 299.

⁴² Al-Maqrizi, *al-Suluk*, vol. 2, p. 380.

⁴³ Al-Maqrizi, *al-Suluk*, vol. 3, p. 380; Ibn Fahd, 'Umar ibn Muhammad (d. 885 AH / 1480 CE).

⁴⁴ *Ithaf al-Wara bi-Akhbar Umm al-Qura*, ed. Fahim Muhammad Shiltut, (Jeddah: Dar al-Madani, no date), vol. 3, pp. 140–144.

CE, he ordered the appointment of Baybars al-Dawadar as his Deputy in Absence (Na'ib al-Ghaybah).⁴⁵

The reason for his appointment to this position by the Sultan was due to his involvement, alongside other emirs, in heading to the Levant to confront the Mongol movements.

Emirate of the Hajj

In the year 701 AH / 1302 CE, Beibars al-Duwardar was appointed by Sultan Muhammad al-Nasir to serve as the Emir of the Hajj. Beibars himself mentioned the occasion, stating: "In the month of Shawwal of that year, I made the intention to perform the Hajj to the Sacred House of Allah and fulfill the obligatory duty upon every capable Muslim. I was honored to lead the great Egyptian caravan, which was numerous and consisted of thirty emirs. We assigned three riders to rotate in managing the caravan to avoid overcrowding at the watering places"⁴⁶

It seems that the intensifying conflict with the Ilkhanid Mongols required Beibars al-Duwardar to return to military service. After his return from Hajj to Egypt, the Mongols began their campaigns against the Levant in the year 702 AH / 1303 CE⁴⁷. The Sultan sent an army, and Beibars al-Duwardar was among the participants. He mentioned: 'On the 18th of Rajab of that year, 702 AH / 1303 CE, we set out in the name of Allah and His blessings. When we reached Qaqoun, the news arrived confirming that the Tatars had indeed arrived and that Ghazan was with them. They crossed the Euphrates and reached the town of Al-Rahbah, intending to confront it...'⁴⁸

Holder of the Sultan's Camel (Hamil al-Shatr)

After his participation in repelling the Mongol incursions in the Levant and his return to Egypt in 703 AH / 1304 CE, Beibars al-Duwardar was promoted to become the Holder of the Sultan's Camel (Hamil al-Shatr)⁴⁹ In the royal processions. He mentioned this, saying: 'I was favored with

⁴⁵ Baybars al-Duwardar, *al-Tuhfa al-Mamlukiyya*, p. 175.

⁴⁶ Deputy of the Absence (Na'ib al-Ghaybah): This refers to the person appointed to rule in the absence of the sultan. The "deputy in charge" was the deputy sultan in the Mamluk era, as described by al-Qalqashandi as a "concise sultan" or, in essence, the second sultan. The deputy had the authority and influence to manage the state's affairs both in the presence and absence of the sultan. He was an assistant to the sultan during his presence, and a second sultan performing all his duties and responsibilities in his absence. The deputy could function as another sultan—effectively, though not by name—if the sultan delegated him full authority to manage the state or if the sultan was too young or incapable of managing the responsibilities of ruling. Thus, the responsibility for governance fell upon the deputy by the sultan's delegation. Al-Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā*, vol. 4, p. 18.

⁴⁷ Baybars al-Duwardar, *Zubdat al-Fikrah*, p. 364.

⁴⁸ Baybars al-Duwardar, *Zubdat al-Fikrah*, p. 367.

⁴⁹ Baybars al-Duwardar, *Zubdat al-Fikrah*, p. 367.

blessings and chosen to carry the Sultan's camel during the royal processions. I expressed my gratitude for the blessing that had placed me in this position.⁵⁰

Deputy of the Noble Justice and Endowments

When Sultan al-Nasir assumed the throne for the third time in 709 AH / 1309 CE, he appointed Beibars al-Duwidar to the position of Vice of the Shari'a Justice and the supervision of the Egyptian and Syrian endowments (awqaf). Beibars al-Duwidar mentioned this, saying: 'This conduct and the effect of this cherished news, which Allah has made clear through His guidance, and with which He has elevated His authority, are in charge of supervising the blessed endowments in both the Egyptian and Syrian lands, under the auspices of our Lord, the Sultan...'⁵¹

The Position of Deputy Sultan in Egypt

Beibars al-Duwidar reached the pinnacle of his administrative career when he assumed the highest position in the Sultanate after the Sultan himself, that of Deputy Sultan, in the year 711 AH / 1312 CE. He commemorated this personal achievement with eloquent and ornate words, filled with praise and gratitude toward the Sultan. He stated: *"He arranged for me the position of Deputy to his noble Sultanate, a gift of his grace, nurtured by his father's charity. And I, Beibars al-Duwidar, the chronicler of this history and the informant of this news, was honored with the distinction of this office. He adorned me with its honor, entrusted me with its sword that serves the realm, and with its belt, set with pearls, under which pens glow with excellence."*⁵²

Deposition and Imprisonment of Beibars al-Duwidar

The high position Beibars al-Duwidar had attained in the Mamluk administration did not last long. In 712 AH / 1313 CE, he was deposed from his position as Deputy Sultan⁵³. The situation escalated further when he was imprisoned on charges of treason, alongside several other amirs. This was due to the deteriorating relationship between Prince Shams al-Din al-Mansuri, the Deputy Sultan of Damascus, and Prince Aqosh, the Deputy Sultan of the Levant, with Sultan Muhammad al-Nasir. Beibars al-Duwidar was accused of aligning himself with them.⁵⁴

As for the place of his imprisonment, the sources are divided. Ibn Baik, al-Safadi, and Ibn Taghribirdi, who referred to the location of his imprisonment, stated that he was imprisoned in the

⁵⁰ **Al-Shattar (Al-Janaz)**: This refers to a canopy or dome made of yellow silk decorated with gold, with a bird made of silver inlaid with gold on top. It was carried over the sultan's head during the two Eids. See: al-Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā*, vol. 2, p. 141.

⁵¹ **Baybars al-Duwaydar**, *Al-Tuhfah al-Mamlukiyyah*, p. 175.

⁵² **Baybars al-Duwaydar**, *Zubdat al-Fikrah*, p. 411.

⁵³ **Baybars al-Duwaydar**, *Al-Tuhfah al-Mamlukiyyah*, p. 228.

⁵⁴ **Abu Bakr ibn Abdullah ibn Aibak al-Dawadari**, *Kanz al-Durr wa Jam' al-Ghurr*, ed. Hans Robert Roemer, (Cairo: Isa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1960), vol. 9, p. 243.

Citadel of Cairo⁵⁵. However, this contrasts with the accounts of Ibn Kathir and al-Maqrizi, who mentioned that he was imprisoned in the Citadel of Karak.⁵⁶

It seems from the preceding information that the discrepancy in sources regarding the place of imprisonment of Baybars al-Duwaidar suggests that he may have initially been imprisoned in the Citadel of Cairo for a temporary period, then transferred to the Karak Citadel until his release.

As for Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, he presented a different account, stating that Baybars was imprisoned in Alexandria⁵⁷, a version not supported by the other historians. The statement, "He was imprisoned in the fortress of Alexandria⁵⁸," raises considerable doubts, as Ibn Hajar was a later historian, and other contemporaneous historians do not confirm this account.

It seems that after spending five years in prison, Baybars al-Duwaidar was released in 717 AH / 1318 CE during a visit by Sultan Muhammad al-Nasir to the Karak Citadel, where he ordered his pardon.⁵⁹

It appears that Sultan Muhammad al-Nasir realized the injustice that Baybars al-Duwaidar had suffered, so in 718 AH / 1319 CE, he decided to restore his honor. The Sultan granted him the endowment of Mughiltay ibn Amir, giving him command over eighty horsemen. He then appointed him the leader of the right wing of the army, making him one of the senior commanders and trusted advisors.⁶⁰

His Titles

Baybars was known by several titles throughout his life. Among them:

1. **Baybars al-Khattai**: This title was attributed to him because he originally belonged to the Khattai tribe.⁶¹
2. **Al-Mansuri**: When he arrived in Egypt in 659 AH / 1260 CE, he was given the title "Al-Mansuri," in reference to Prince Al-Mansur Qalawun, who had purchased him and brought him into his mamluk ranks. This practice of naming slaves after their purchaser was common among the mamluks.

⁵⁵ **Aibak al-Dawadari**, *Kanz al-Durr*, vol. 9, p. 243; al-Safadi, *A'yan al-'Asr*, vol. 2, p. 79; Ibn Taghribirdi, vol. 9, p. 56.

⁵⁶ **Abu al-Fida Ismail ibn Umar ibn Kathir al-Qurashi al-Basri, then al-Dimashqi** (d. 774 AH), *Al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya*, (Cairo: Matba'at al-Sa'ada, n.d.), vol. 14, p. 65; al-Maqrizi, *Al-Suluk*, vol. 2, p. 481.

⁵⁷ **Ibn Hajar**, *Al-Durr al-Kamina*, vol. 2, p. 43.

⁵⁸ **Hajar al-Asqalani**, *Al-Durr al-Kamina*, vol. 2, p. 43.

⁵⁹ **Aibak al-Dawadari**, *Kanz al-Durr*, vol. 9, p. 243.

⁶⁰ **al-Maqrizi**, *Al-Suluk*, vol. 3, p. 3.

⁶¹ See: al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'shā*, vol. 4, p. 481.

3. **Al-Dawadar:** In 693 AH / 1294 CE, after he assumed the position of the head of the Diwan al-Insha (Chancellery), he was given the title "Al-Dawadar⁶²." This was the most famous of his titles, and he became widely known by it more than any of his other titles.

His Death

All sources agree that Baybars al-Dawadar passed away in 725 AH / 1324 CE in Egypt, with some disagreement over the exact day of his death. Both al-Maqrizi and Ibn Taghribirdi stated that he died on the night of Thursday, the 25th of Ramadan, at the age of 80⁶³. However, Ibn Iyad mentioned that he passed away on the 15th of the same month⁶⁴. Al-Safadi reported that Baybars al-Dawadar was buried in the school he established in the Citadel of Cairo, with the presence of the deputy of the sultan and senior amirs.⁶⁵

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⁶² **Al-Dawadar:** A title given to the person responsible for delivering the sultan's messages, news, and dispatches, and for receiving the signatures on general notices, decrees, and letters. See: al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'shā*, vol. 4, p. 110.

⁶³ **Al-Maqrizi**, *Al-Muqaffa al-Kabir*, vol. 2, p. 307; Ibn Taghribirdi, *Al-Nujum al-Zahira*, vol. 9, p. 263.

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