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**INSCRIPTIONS OF BAHRI
MAMLUK SULTANS
(AN ANALYSIS
OF CONTENT)**

**HEBA ABD-EL-AZIZ
EL-TOUDY**

2004

The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

**INSCRIPTIONS OF BAHRI MAMLUK SULTANS
(AN ANALYSIS OF CONTENT)**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Arabic Studies Department
(Islamic Art and Architecture)

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts

by

Heba Abd-el-Aziz El-Toudy

Bachelor of Science, Chemistry

(under the supervision of Dr. George T. Scanlon)

December 2004

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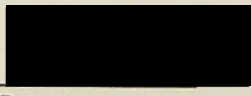
has been approved by

Dr. George T. Scanlon
Thesis Committee Chair/ Advisor
Professor- Department of Arabic Studies- The American University in Cairo

Dr. Bernard O'Kane
Thesis Committee Reader
Professor – Department of Arabic Studies – The American University in Cairo

Dr. Chahinda Karim
Thesis Committee Reader
Assistant Professor – Department of Arabic Studies – The American University in Cairo


Department Chair 2005
Date


Dean 5/1/05
Date

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I would also like to thank my family and my colleagues in the Islamic Art and Architecture Unit for their continuous help and support.

For my parents

I owe to my parents everything. They have spent every minute of every day in this field and have been a passion for art, architecture, and history. It was a pleasure and will remain to be.

هذان في الدنيا هما الرحماء*

* Ahmad Shawqī, Wulida al-Hudā

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Chapter One: Pre-Mamluk Royal Inscriptions of the Islamic World Up to the Fatimids of Egypt

Prior to the Mamluks, the use of inscriptions to represent certain aspects of the ruler, such as his power or his piety, was common in the Islamic world. It is argued that the early Islamic use of inscriptions to address the public was not a novelty in the eastern Mediterranean region. Irene Bierman mentions that Roman authorities, for example, "put writing on the entablatures of the central buildings of the fora, and displayed letters on banners and standards in military processions."¹ Muslim rulers did not invent the use of inscriptions in buildings, however, the role that Arabic, as a language, and Islam, as a religion played in the development of the use of inscriptions was rather strong. Muslims had to decorate their religious buildings with two means: stylized representations and inscriptions, because they avoided the use of human or animal depictions in these buildings lest they would have any Christian character. Arabic was the language of the new faith and the new official power, therefore, it became a main decorative element of religious buildings. In addition, the written language lends itself rather easily to decorative use.

¹ Bierman, *Writing Signs*, 2

Bierman argues, however, that the use of inscriptions in public space to relay certain messages to one or more sectors of the public in the eastern Mediterranean region was a Fatimid novelty that first appeared with the mosque of al-Hākim.² This may be true for the ideological messages that the Fatimids at that point were keen on conveying. Also, in conveying an ideological message, the Fatimids had to present the ruler, in this case the Imam, as both a religious sacred figure and a secular ruling figure, depending on the audience they were addressing.³ But, concerning the current study, it is useful to examine the practice of early Muslim rulers until the Zangids and Ayyubids, to trace the development of the use of inscriptions by the ruler to relay a certain message about himself to the public.

There remains, of course, the argument of how effective inscriptions were as a tool to address the public. Bierman, in her *Fatimid Public Text*, makes the assumption "that the minimal literacy sufficient to enable at least the relevant urban people to fulfill their duties to act appropriately is one which enables many beholders to read names and titles, dates, and

² Bierman, 2

³ Bierman, 76

other similar data."⁴ It is a convincing assumption, especially, when one considers the format in which early inscriptions were written, using words that were familiar and expected by the audience, thus easy to read.⁵ Relying on the expected format and wording to contribute to delivering the message could be one of the factors why construction inscriptions generally had a common arrangement that lasted for a long time: first the construction or restoration order, followed by the name, titles, and adjectives of the ruler, then wishful prayers, and finally, the date. In addition, there must have been intermediary persons or mediators in society who were literate and read for those who could not make out what was written on the building. The location of the building would play a big role as well as the location of the inscriptions outside or inside the building. It would take some time to finish a building and execute the inscriptions, hence during the building time and after its inauguration, passers-by would certainly be curious to see what was written on this new building, especially if the building itself, or its inscriptions, were magnificent enough. Word of mouth would then transfer to the whole urban population what the new inscription reads. In that sense, inscriptions must have been a medium for the ruler to address the public.

⁴ Bierman, 25

⁵ Bierman, 26

There are several other issues of concern. One is royal patronage. Only a few building narratives are related by historians. In some cases, accounts show that the patron was personally involved in the building, therefore, it can be assumed that he was also involved with deciding the exact format and words used to describe him. But, there is always the unanswered question of the level of this involvement. Did the royal patron give an exact written text to be followed by the team of artisans? Did he do that with every building he commissioned? Another issue is that of taste and fashion that may have had some bearing on a certain dynasty following some formats of inscription for long periods of time. Yet another issue is that of rivalry that may have caused a number of rulers to adopt a certain format. The present study shall not attempt to answer these questions fully, but, wherever relevant, possible explanations of such issues will be presented.

It is important to note the early titles and wishful prayers given to a ruler in inscriptions on buildings and other media to examine their elaboration over time. Umayyad and early Abbasid inscriptions of the rulers had a lower tone of personal glory than later Muslim rulers. Al-Maqrīzī reports

that a bridge (*qantara*) built by 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān in Fustat had an inscription, dated to 69/588, reading:⁶

"هذه القنطرة أمر بها عبد العزيز بن مروان الأمير اللهم بارك له في أمره كله وثبت سلطانه
على ما ترضى وأقر عينه في نفسه وحشمه أمين وقام ببنائها سعد أبو عثمان وكتب عبد
الرحمن في صفر سنة تسع وستين"

(This bridge was ordered by 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān, the amīr, may God bless all aspects of his life, establish/maintain his rule to His satisfaction, and make him content with himself and his family and entourage, Amen. Its building was undertaken by Sa'd Abū 'Uthmān, writing by 'Abd al-Rahman in Safar of the year sixty nine).

The only title that 'Abd al-Azīz is given is that he is an Amīr, which is a mere statement of fact. There is no mention of his personal qualities and there are no adjectives given to him. The prayers simply wish that Allah blesses all aspects of his life and establishes or maintains his rulership, or sultanate, on the terms that please the Almighty, notably a pious and modest tone. The larger section of the inscription is taken up by prayers for divine support and satisfaction as well as personal happiness. In part, since building in general as seen from several inscriptions was an act of goodness and piety, the amīr probably believed that it was an appropriate

⁶ Combe et al, *Répertoire* Vol. I, 7

chance for prayers. Also, people who read this inscription would recite the same prayers for the builder upon reading them, thus multiplying the blessings upon him. This early example is important because it shows how such inscriptions initially started.

Examining Umayyad and early Abbasid inscriptions shows that in most cases there was a tendency to precede the name of the ruler by the term 'Abd-Allah.⁷ Of course, this emphasized the piety of the ruler who constantly reminded the readers of the inscription that he is a servant of Allah. But, it seems that in these early times too, despite the lavishness that several rulers adopted as a way of life, they were keen on reminding themselves that they were mere humans and servants of the Almighty. Early evidence of epigraphic statements on stamps (*akhtām*) suggests that. These statements did not merely state the names of rulers, but reflected their piety and belief. Among this category is the stamp of al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik: "Walīd! You will die!" (يا وليد إنك ميت),⁸ which would be al-Walīd's way of reminding himself that he will die and be judged, so that he remains a good ruler. The Abbasids also had the same practice, where for example, the stamp of Caliph al-Mansūr referred to his

⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. I & II

⁸ Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk* Vol. I, 112

own pious self, stating: “‘Abd-Allah trusts and believes in Allah” (الله ثقة) (عبد الله وبه يؤمن).⁹ A later example, which showed that this trend continued for a while, is Al-Mu‘taḍid bi-Allah, whose stamp was “Ahmad believes in Allah, the One” (أحمد يؤمن بالله الواحد).¹⁰ Such stamps would not have been seen by the general public, but perhaps by the bureaucracy. It is thus concluded that they served to remind the ruler himself, more than anyone else, of his human nature.

Few inscriptions survive from the Umayyad period; however, they show that the Caliph’s name was always preceded by ‘Abd-Allah. The title given to the Caliph is *amīr al-mu‘minīn* (Prince of the Faithful), and in one recorded instant al-Walīd b. Yazīd is referred to as *al-khalīfa* (The Caliph).¹¹ Wishful prayers given to the Umayyad Caliph in such recorded inscriptions have a simple pious tone that seems casual enough to have been the norm of conversations. In the construction inscription of the Dome of the Rock, originally mentioning the name of the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik, later removed and replaced by the name of the Abbasid al-Ma’mūn, the wishful prayers are:¹²

”تقبل الله منه ورضى عنه أمين رب العالمين“

⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. I, 116

¹⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. I, 122

¹¹ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 7-22

¹² *Répertoire* Vol. I, 9

(may Allah accept from him and be satisfied with him. Amen to the Lord of all worlds). It is a pious act to establish such a shrine, so the prayers are for acceptance of such good deeds.

Another construction inscription of Caliph Hishām at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbī bear the standard reference to him as the Servant of Allah and the Prince of the Faithful, in addition to his personal name.¹³ The prayer given to him is: أوجب الله أجره (May Allah make certain his reward).¹⁴

The Spanish Umayyads, after declaring themselves a separate Caliphate from the Abbasids, used the same format employed by their ancestors in several recorded instances. The same format was adopted by the Abbasids and several Umayyad inscriptions show that they followed the royal format of caliphal inscriptions: the name of the patron would be preceded by the title 'Abd-Allah and followed by the title *amīr al-mu'minīn*. For example, a piece of stone with a construction inscription dated to 333/944-5 mentions:¹⁵

"...عبد الله عبد الرحمن أمير المؤمنين أيده الله..."

¹³ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 23 and Kervran et al, *Index géographique*, 103

¹⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 23

¹⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. IV, 89

(‘Abd-Allah ‘Abd-al-Rahman, the Prince of the Faithful, may God support him).

Early Abbasid inscriptions show the slow development of the royal titles and wishful prayers. Since the evidence from the Umayyad period is not enough, one cannot claim that the Umayyads never referred to themselves more elaborately or used more elaborate prayers. But the development of the Abbasid programme suggests that both the Umayyads and early Abbasids had simple programmes. However, among the earliest recorded Abbasid inscriptions are a couple that are rather elaborate, at sacred places. It can be assumed that such elaboration is caused by the nature of the places hosting the inscriptions, which were viewed by all Muslims on pilgrimage, thus are most appropriate to present the good qualities of the Caliph. In these inscriptions, *amīr al-mu‘minīn* is addressing all the faithful, not a population of a certain area. The first, an inscription recorded at the Mosque of the Prophet in Madina, dateable to 135/752-3, during the reign of Abū al-‘Abbas al-Saffāh, only mentions the Servant of Allah and the Prince of the Faithful, without a personal name:¹⁶

...أمر عبد الله أمير المؤمنين بتقوى الله وطاعته والعمل بكتاب الله وسنة نبيه صلى الله عليه

وسلم وبصلة الرحم وتعظيم ما صغر الجبابرة من حق الله وتصغير ما عظموه من الباطل

¹⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 29-30

وإحياء ما أُماتوا من الحقوق وإماتة ما أحيوا من العدوان وأن يطاع الله ويعصى العباد في طاعة الله والطاعة لله ولأهل طاعة الله ولا طاعة لأحد في معصية الله يدعو إلى كتاب الله وسنة نبيه وإلى العدل في أحكام المسلمين والقسم بالسوية في فيئهم ووضع الأخماس في مواضعها التي أمر بها الله لذوي القربى واليتامى والمساكين.

The inscription, however, concentrates on the orders given by *amīr al-mu'minīn*, which are many general orders within the main frame of Islam. The orders are: piety and obedience to God; following the Book of God and the *sunna*; keeping good contact with ones relatives (*ṣilat al-rahīm*); exaltation of the truth of God that was diminished by the arrogant/tyrant people; diminishing what they have exalted of falsehood; reviving the rights they have stopped; stopping the aggression they have revived; that God be obeyed; that servants of God are disobeyed to obey Him (i.e. that no man is to be obeyed if it is disobedience to God); that obedience be to God and those who obey Him; that there must be no obedience to anyone if it is disobedience to God; obeying the Book of God and the *sunna*; justice in the judgments among Muslims; even division of their bootys; and distributing the alms as intended to the related ones, the orphans, and the needy. The inscription gives *amīr al-mu'minīn* all required power, importance, and status through his orders. With these orders he presents himself truly as a prince of the faithful because he guides them to all

things a faithful Muslim should do. There is, of course, the reference to the tyrants, who in this case can be assumed to be the Umayyads, since this inscription is dateable to three years after the Abbasids came to power. This inscription can easily be seen as a statement of power as much as it is a statement of piety. One notable thing about this inscription is that it is rather eloquent in a manner that would probably resemble a *khutba* of the time. Though rather eloquent, it is not as musical as later long inscriptions which gave great care to rhyming.

The second inscription is at the Ka'ba, dated to 140/757, during the reign of al-Mansūr, and it records the enlargement of *al-masjid al-harām* by *amīr al-mu'minīn*.¹⁷ Again the caliph is only referred to as "Abd-Allah the Prince of the Faithful," followed by a prayer that Allah be generous to him. The inscription explains that he ordered this enlargement out of his concern for the matters of Muslims. A good part of the inscription is dedicated to prayers for the *amīr al-mu'minīn*, who, like the previous inscription, is not referred to as a caliph. The prayers refer to God's generosity and support to *amīr al-mu'minīn* to carry out this work, wish for him to be greatly rewarded by God in this life and the hereafter, but most importantly wish that God makes his victory powerful and supports

¹⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. 1, 31

him: "وأعز نصره وأيده..." This seems to be the first recorded appearance of the later very common wishful phrase throughout the Islamic world: "may his victory be powerful."

Two recorded inscriptions at the mosque of Madina of al-Mahdī follow the same traditions of early Abbasids. In both inscriptions, al-Mahdī is referred to as 'Abd-Allah two consecutive times,¹⁸ once as a title as was common for Abbasid caliphs and a second time because it is part of his personal name: 'Abd-Allah Muḥammad al-Mahdī. One of the inscriptions is dated to 162/778-9 and includes the prayer أصلحه الله (may God make him righteous), which was later used by several Abbasid caliphs. The inscriptions mentions that al-Mahdī is thankful for having been chosen for enlarging the Mosque of the Prophet and mentions his reasons for that: hoping for God's contentment, His reward, and His generosity. The other inscription copies the text of the Madina inscription, dateable to 135/752-3 and adds to it several prayers that also include أعز نصره (may God make his victory powerful).

Although Abbasid textiles cannot be considered as a main vehicle for addressing the subjects, they shed light on the development of titles and

¹⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 35-7

prayers. The first recorded instance of giving the title *al-khalīfa* on an inscription, after that given to al-Walīd mentioned above, is on a textile made for Hārūn al-Rashīd dated to 190/805-6, which partly reads:¹⁹

"...الخليفة الرشيد عبد الله هرون أمير المؤمنين...."

In addition to the typical Abbasid "Abd-Allah" and "*amīr al-mu'minīn*," al-Rashīd is primarily referred to as the Caliph. A prayer that becomes very common in inscriptions of later times is first recorded on a *kiswa* for al-Rashīd dated to 191/806-7, namely, اطل الله بقاءه (literally, may God prolong his existence/life).²⁰ The same prayer is again made for al-Rashīd in an inscription at the mosque of Madina and for his son al-Amīn on a textile fragment.²¹

The inscriptions recorded from the reign of al-Ma'mūn indicate that he adopted the title of *al-imām*.²² This seems to be a conscious decision of al-Ma'mūn, since it appears on several of the inscriptions surviving from his reign. However, the appearance of *al-imām* originated in the eastern Islamic lands. Al-Qalqashandī mentions that the first person to adopt this title was Ibrahim b. Muhammad, the first Abbasid to be given a *bay'a* for

¹⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 63

²⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 63

²¹ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 65 & 75

²² *Répertoire* Vol. I, 80-1, 91-2, 148-9, 165, 166-7

the Caliphate.²³ Al-Basha clarifies that the account of al-Qalqashandī shows that in the case of Ibrahim b. Muhammad, *al-imām* was a personal title, not a title of royalty, since al-Qalqashandī mentions, in his *daw' al-subh al-musfir*, that Ibrahim b. Muhammad was given the title of *al-imām*, Muhammad b. 'Alī was given the title of *al-saffāh*, and Abū Ja'far was given the title of *al-mansūr*.²⁴ It is a possibility that the first Abbasid caliph to be called *al-imām* as an honourific title was al-Mahdī, when he was an heir to the Caliphate, since the title appears on one of his coins dated to 151/768-9,²⁵ however this is not conclusive evidence. The coins of al-Amīn and al-Ma'mūn show their power conflict and the role titles played in it.²⁶ When al-Rashīd was the caliph, al-Ma'mūn had coins struck with the title *walī walī 'ahd al-muslimīn*, meaning the second in line to throne, since he was supposed to follow after his brother, al-Amīn.²⁷ When al-Amīn became caliph in 193/809, al-Ma'mūn used the title *walī 'ahd al-muslimīn*, this time meaning "heir to the throne."²⁸ Al-Amīn wanted to give the Caliphate directly to his son, Mūsā who was

²³ Al-Basha, *Al-Alqāb al-islāmiyya*, 167

²⁴ Al-Basha, 167

²⁵ Al-Basha, 168

²⁶ Al-Nabarawi, *Al-Sikka al-islāmiyya*, 5-6

²⁷ Al-Nabarawi, 6

²⁸ Al-Nabarawi, 6

given the title *al-nāṭiq bi al-ḥaqq* or Utterer/Speaker of Truth, so he minted coins in the name of his son that read:²⁹

"مما أمر به الأمير الناطق بالحق موسى بن أمير المؤمنين"

(By the order of the Prince *al-nāṭiq bi al-ḥaqq* Mūsā, the son of the Prince of the Faithful.) In response to this threat al-Ma'mūn minted coins using elaborate titles:³⁰

"الإمام المأمون ولي عهد المسلمين عبد الله بن أمير المؤمنين"

(*al-imām al-Ma'mūn* the heir apparent of the Muslims, 'Abd-Allah, the son of the Prince of the Faithful). The conflict reached a peak in 195/810-11, when al-Amīn stopped the mention of al-Ma'mūn in the *khutba* and instead mentioned his sons, Mūsā al-Nāṭiq bi al-Ḥaqq and 'Abd-Allah al-Qā'im bi al-Ḥaqq.³¹ So, al-Ma'mūn minted coins terming himself *al-imām al-Ma'mūn*, without mentioning the title *walī 'ahd al-muslimīn*, which meant that he considered himself Caliph, since it was his right to claim the Caliphate per the *kitāb al-bay'at* that al-Rashīd compelled his sons to accept.³² Al-Ma'mūn then minted coins with:³³

"مما أمر به عبد الله عبد الله إمام المؤمنين"

²⁹ Al-Nabarawi, 6

³⁰ Al-Nabarawi, 6

³¹ Al-Nabarawi, 6

³² Al-Nabarawi, 6

³³ Al-Nabarawi, 6-7

(By the order of 'Abd-Allah 'Abd-Allah the Imam of the Faithful.) It is notable that al-Ma'mūn starts using the standard reference of Abbasid caliphs as 'Abd-Allah but avoids the title only associated with the caliph, namely *amīr al-mu'minīn*. Instead, al-Ma'mūn refers to himself as *imām al-mu'minīn*, a title with the same meaning, but different wording. Al-Ma'mūn refers to himself as "*al-imām al-Ma'mūn amīr al-mu'minīn*" and "'Abd-Allah 'Abd-Allah al-Ma'mūn *amīr al-mu'minīn*" on his *sikka* only after his army defeated that of al-Amīn and he got the *bay'a* of the people of Khurasan, thus considering himself a legitimate caliph.³⁴ The *sikka* was one of two major signs of ruling power, the other being the *khutba*. Coins were an excellent means of addressing the public due to the large number of people who would be exposed to the words written on them.³⁵ Similarly, the *khutba* addressed large numbers of people, who heard the name and titles of the person in power, without having to read them. Therefore, the power conflict of al-Amīn and al-Ma'mūn is rather important because it shows the use of such means to publicize the person in power through the titles given to or used by that person.

³⁴ Al-Nabarawi, 6-7

³⁵ Bierman, 14

The title of "*al-imām*" also appears simultaneously in the Maghrib, where it was adopted by the first of the Idrisids and was seen on a minbar at the Great Mosque of Tlemcen, in an inscription dated to 174/790-91 and in another inscription on the same minbar by the second Idrisid, dated to 199/814-15, indicating that this title was adopted by this ruling family.³⁶ The Idrisids were descendants of the Prophet,³⁷ and it is possible that they used this title in defiance of the Abbasids, although the couple of surviving inscriptions shows that they did not refer to themselves by the title *amīr al-mu'minīn*, that would indicate absolute independence from the Abbasid caliphate.

The title "*al-imām*" appears in the inscriptions of several later Abbasid caliphs, especially on cloth fragments, e.g. al-Musta'īn bi-Allah, al-Muhtadī bi-Allah, and al-Mu'tamid 'alā-Allah.³⁸

The prayer given to Ziyadat Allah in the construction text of the Great Mosque of Susa dated to 206/821-2 was the by then standard *أطال الله بقاءه* (may God prolong his life).³⁹ This prayer that appeared for al-Rashīd on a

³⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 42 & 77

³⁷ Hutt, *North Africa*, 15

³⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 122, 151, 173, & 187

³⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 113

kiswa, which means it was advertised for all Muslims, starts appearing in the Maghrib, that was gaining autonomy from the Abbasid caliphate, although still recognizing it as the supreme Sunni power as evident by Ziyadat Allah being given the title of *al-amīr* in the inscription at Susa. *Al-Amīr* would never be a rival title to the ones given to the Abbasid caliph. In Spain, a couple of inscriptions dated to 220/835 at Merida refer to ‘Abd al-Rahman b. al-Hakam, the Umayyad ruler at the time, as *al-amīr*.⁴⁰ At that point the Spanish Umayyads had not yet declared their rule a caliphate and still adopted the title of *al-amīr* rather than *amīr al-mu’minīn*, which was only used by Caliphs and which Spanish Umayyads used in later times.

In addition to *al-amīr*, in his construction text of his mosque in Cairo, dated to 265/878-9, Ahmad b. Tūlūn is referred to as *mawlā amīr al-mu’minīn*.⁴¹ *Mawlā* can be translated as “friend” or “supporter.” In this same inscription, Ibn Tūlūn is referred to as Abū al-‘Abbās, which is probably a *kunya*, that was given to the house of the Abbasids, which Ibn Tūlūn did not see a problem in borrowing. It is interesting to note that recorded inscriptions show that Abbasids did not refer to their house

⁴⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 192-3

⁴¹ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 197-8

before the appearance of autonomous provincial rulers. In one case, at the mosque of Zaytuna in Tunis, in an inscription dated to 250/864-5, al-Musta'in bi-Allah is referred to as *al-imām al-musta'in bi-Allah amīr al-mu'minīn al-'abbāsī*.⁴² Since the Abbasid Caliph wanted his name on this construction, now under autonomous amirs, he had to clarify that he was the Abbasid Prince of the Faithful, as well as the *imām*, all required statements to differentiate him from the amirs, affiliated to him only in name. The term Abū al-'Abbās appears on textiles made for al-Mu'tamid 'alā Allah and al-Mu'tadīd bi-Allah.⁴³

Another interesting aspect of Tulunid inscriptions is the appearance of the *kunya* "*abū al-jaysh*" (literally Father of the Army, meaning Head and Controller of the Army) on a couple of textiles, one made for al-Mu'tamid 'alā Allah, dateable to 279/892-3, and the other for al-Mu'tadīd bi-Allah, dated to 280/893-4.⁴⁴ The *kunya* is not of the Caliph but is of *al-amīr* Khumarawayh b. Aḥmad, also referred to in the inscription as *mawlā amīr al-mu'minīn*. Both textiles are made in Egypt, so were probably gifts from the prince of Egypt to the Caliphs. This same *kunya* was used in

⁴² *Répertoire* Vol. II, 75

⁴³ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 251-2, 258, 261, 265, & 266

⁴⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 253-4 & 258

Yemen around the year 340/951 by the Ziyadi amīr Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm.⁴⁵

The use of a *kunya*, other than Abū al-‘Abbas, and the use of titles, other than those that were parts of their personal names (e.g. al-Mahdī, al-Rashīd, al-Ma’mūn), does not seem to have been common with the early Abbasids, judging from the recorded inscriptions. Al-Muwaffaq is referred to on a plaque at the Ka‘ba dated to 272/885-6, when he was heir apparent, as:⁴⁶

"...أبو أحمد الموفق بالله الناصر لدين الله ولي عهد المسلمين أطل الله بقاءه..."

(Abū Ahmad Al-Muwaffaq bi-Allah, the supporter of the religion of God, the heir apparent of the Muslims, may God prolong his life)

And on another plaque at the same place, dated to 273/886-7, he is referred to as:⁴⁷

"...الناصر لدين الله ولي عهد المسلمين أبو أحمد الموفق بالله أخو أمير المؤمنين أطل الله بقاءهما..."

(The supporter of the religion of God, the heir apparent of the Muslims, Abū Ahmad al-Muwaffaq bi-Allah, brother of the Prince of the Faithful, may God prolong their lives), which are recorded incidents of the use of a *kunya* (Abū Ahmad) other than Abū al-Abbās, but it is only a name and not a title of virtue. It is interesting that the two inscriptions use the same

⁴⁵ Al-Haddad, *Al-nuqūsh al-athāriyya*, 36

⁴⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 233

⁴⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 234

titles for al-Muwaffaq, although placed differently, except for the addition of *akhū amīr al-mu'minīn* (brother of the Prince of the Faithful).

Apparently, additional titles of glory started appearing first in the inscriptions of the provinces, where the princes wanted to announce their power.

A recorded Ikhshidid construction text at the Ḥaram of Jerusalem, dated to 350/961-2 refers to the Ikhshidid prince as *al-amīr* 'Alī Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Ikhshīd, but refers to Kāfūr as "al-Ustādh Abū al-Misk Kāfūr al-Ikhshīdī."⁴⁸ This inscription shows that Kāfūr, when he was the *ustādh* at Egypt, had the *kunya* of Abū al-Misk (Father of Musk). This is an interesting *kunya* because it is not significant of valour or piety as most later *kunyas*, nor does it refer to descent, but probably was used to indicate Kāfūr's high level in authority or society. It has to be noted, however, the eloquence of using a *kunya* that, in meaning, is rather suitable to the meaning of his name, Kāfūr (literally, Camphor). This *kunya* was clearly an aspect of praise only mentioned in that context. In his *kāfūriyyat* of praise, al-Mutanabbī, the most famous poet, repeatedly mentions this *kunya*.⁴⁹ Also, in one instance, al-Mutanabbi refers to him

⁴⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. IV, 173

⁴⁹ Azzam, *Dīwān Abū al-Tayyib*, 441, 445, 451, 452, 457, 458, 463, 465, 466, 469, & 480

with his official title, *al-ustādh*, and he also adds to it "*al-malik*" (The King).⁵⁰ However, in the *kafuriyyat* of dispraise, al-Mutanabbi refers to Kāfūr with his personal name or with a diminution form: *kūwayfir*.⁵¹

The inscriptions of the Umayyads of Spain show interesting developments. As mentioned above, these Umayyad autonomous rulers stopped using the title *al-amīr* and replaced it by *amīr al-mu'minīn* in the standard Umayyad and early Abbasid format after they declared themselves a separate Caliphate. The first recorded inscription that mentions the title of 'Abd al-Rahman III, *al-nasīr li-dīn Allah* (the Supporter of the Religion of God), is the construction inscription of the Great Mosque of Cordoba dated to 346/957-8.⁵² The Abbasid al-Muwaffaq adopted this title first after he defeated the *zanj* in 270/883-4.⁵³ 'Abd al-Rahman III used this title after he declared himself Caliph.⁵⁴ So, when 'Abd al-Rahman declared a separate Caliphate from the Abbasids, he did not invent an honourific title for himself, but rather used an attractive title already employed by the Abbasids and advertised at the

⁵⁰ Azzam, 447

⁵¹ Azzam, 482 & 486

⁵² *Répertoire* Vol. IV, 24

⁵³ Al-Basha, 529

⁵⁴ Al-Basha, 530

Muslim site of pilgrimage. In this inscription, 'Abd al-Rahman follows the Abbasid prayer أطال الله بقاءه (May God prolong his life).

Prior to the inscription of al-Mutawakkil at the Nilometer of Cairo, royal inscriptions were in most cases rather eloquent, but the Nilometer inscription seems to be the earliest surviving to show a keen conscious attempt at rhyming that later becomes the common practice all over the Islamic world. Rhyming inscriptions had a double aesthetic value. They are musical to the ear of the reader when they are read out loud, and since rhyming involves the use of similar letters, they were easier to execute and more attractive to the eye as decorative elements of the inscription, although this decorative aspect was not apparent in early inscriptions, like those of the Nilometer, where the writing is there to record more than decorate the building. The inscription of al-Mutawakkil dated to 247/861-2 mentioned:⁵⁵

"...أمر عبد الله جعفر المتوكل على الله أمير المؤمنين ببناء هذا المقياس الهاشمي لتعرف به زيادة النيل ونقصانه وأطال الله بقاء أمير المؤمنين وأدام له العز والتمكين والظفر على الأعداء وتتابع الإحسان والنعماء وزاده في الخير رغبة وبالرعية رافة..."

⁵⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. II, 44

The first prayer for *amīr al-mu'minīn* is for God to prolong his life, then follow the others wishing him power, control, victory over the enemies, frequency of blessings, and finally hoping that God makes him more desiring of goodness and more merciful to his subjects. The prayer part of the inscription is the one in rhyme.

Evidence of early Islamic royal inscriptions shows that this medium was used mostly modestly. The titles given to caliphs and rulers were not that elaborate and in most cases only informed of the position of the patron e.g. *amīr al-mu'minīn* or just *al-amīr*. Also, prayers were mostly brief, mainly asking for God's contentment, support, reward, powerful victory, and the like. Later inscriptions show further development that is also associated with the flourishing role of inscriptions as a decorative element in art and architecture.

Chapter Two: Pre-Mamluk Royal Inscriptions of the Islamic World - The Fatimids of Egypt and their Contemporaries

The Fatimids had a religious ideology that they were keen on publicizing and propagating. The Fatimid caliph or imam was not simply a leader for the people he was governing, and contrary to the Abbasids in Baghdad and the Umayyads in Spain, the "Fatimid Isma'īlī ruler functioned in a dual role: both as Caliph to all those within his empire (all Muslims, Jews, and Christians) and as Living Imam to Believers (Isma'īlīs)."⁵⁶ In his account of the procession of the Fatimid al-Mustansir (r. 427-87/1036-94), Nāṣir-i Khusraw reports reading the name of the Imam on the saddlecloths of the horses in the procession, which is a clear indication of how prominent and noticeable the name of the Imam was.⁵⁷ Several surviving textile fragments from the Fatimid era in Egypt show the messages that the Imams were conveying. On a textile fragment from Egypt dated to 355/965-6, prior to the Fatimid conquest of Egypt, the inscription reads, in part:⁵⁸

"...نصر من الله وفتح قريب لعبد الله ووليه سعد أبي تميم الإمام المعز لدين الله أمير المؤمنين

صلوات الله عليه..."

⁵⁶ Bierman. 60

⁵⁷ Bierman. 96

⁵⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. V, 11

In this inscription, al-Mu'izz is termed the Servant of God and His Friend. His personal name is mentioned, Ma'add; his *kunya*, Abū Tamīm, which is a *kunya* that serves as a name rather than an adjective - as was the Abbasid practice; then his title, al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah. He is also given two titles representative of his position: *al-imām* and *amīr al-mu'minīn*. Although "*al-imām*," for Fatimids, bears a deeper connotation than just "The Leader" as it literally means, its mention as well as its coupling with *amīr al-mu'minīn* is as old as the Abbasid change of the construction inscription of the Dome of the Rock, where the name of the original builder, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, was replaced by that of al-Ma'mūn referring to the latter by: *al-imām al-Ma'mūn amīr al-mu'minīn*.⁵⁹ Using both titles, especially *amīr al-mu'minīn*, shows the Fatimid statement of a separate Caliphate from that of the Abbasids. What shows as a distinctive Fatimid innovation, directly relevant to Isma'īlī ideology, is the prayer for al-Mu'izz: *ṣalawāt Allah 'alayhi* (may God bestow His prayers/blessings upon him). This prayer, reserved in Islam for Prophets, is extended to the Fatimid Imams since they claimed descendency from the line of Prophet Muhammad. It is worth noting, however, that prior to the Fatimids, the Idrisids, who ruled established Fez and ruled from it, adopted the title of *al-imām* and a couple of inscriptions on a minbar at the Great Mosque of

⁵⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. I, 9

Tlemcen, dated respectively to 174/790-1 and 199/814-15, mention the prayer for the Idrisid rulers and their ancestors as *radiya Allahu 'anhum* (may God be content with them), which is a different prayer than the usual Abbasid one and which bears some reverence. In addition to the exact same titles, the prayer *ṣalawāt Allah 'alayhi* is shown in its more complete form on an ivory box from al-Mansūriyya, dateable to 359/969-70, as:⁶⁰

"...صلوات الله عليه وعلى آبائه الطيبين وذريته الطاهرين..."

(May God bestow His prayers/blessings on him, his good forefathers, and his pure descendants). The longer form of the prayer shows more emphasis on the descent of the Fatimid caliph from the pure line of the Prophet and extends the prayer to his descendants.

Since the previous inscription is on a box, it was probably for the personal use of the caliph. However, the construction text at al-Azhar, dated to 360/970-1, mentions the same titles again and a similar prayer, where the forefathers are termed *al-tāhirīn* (The Pure) and the descendants are termed *al-akramīn* (The Respectable/Noble).⁶¹ This inscription would have been intended to record the builder and the year of establishment as

⁶⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. V, 89

⁶¹ *Répertoire* Vol. V, 95

well as advertise this information to whoever prays at the mosque. The mosque at the time would have "primarily served the Isma'īlī population of the royal city."⁶²

Following al-Mu'izz, Fatimid caliphs of Egypt adopted the same formula in their inscriptions. The caliph would be first termed: عبد الله ووليه (the Servant of God and His Friend); then comes the personal name of the caliph; his *kunya*; the title *al-imām*; the nominal title of the caliph; the term *amīr al-mu'minīn*; then, finally, the prayers. The elements of this formula are rather similar to the Abbasid caliphal inscriptions, only with the Fatimids, the term *al-imām* bears an ideological dimension and the prayers are totally different, since they also reflect Isma'īlī ideology. A couple of textile fragments from the period of al-'Azīz, dated to 370/980-1 and 371/981-2, respectively, stick to that formula and in both he is referred to as:⁶³

"...لعبد الله ووليه نزار أبي منصور الإمام العزيز بالله أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه وعلى

آبائه الطاهرين..."

and

"...لعبد الله ووليه نزار أبي المنصور الإمام العزيز بالله أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه..."

⁶² Bierman, 73

⁶³ *Répertoire* Vol. V, 134 & 136

There is no difference in the formulae except for the prayers that are a little longer in the first case. Inscriptions of Caliph al-Hākim also mostly reflect the same formula, although in many cases there is a mention of his father al-‘Azīz. The part referring to al-Hākim on a textile fragment, dated to 391/1000-1, reads:⁶⁴

...لعبد الله ووليه المنصور أبي علي الإمام الحاكم بأمر الله أمير المؤمنين بن العزيز بالله

صلوات الله عليهما وعلى آبائهما الطاهرين صلاة ترضيهم إلى يوم الدين..."

Al-Hākim's personal name was al-Mansūr, which is clear from the inscriptions of al-‘Azīz mentioning his *kunya*: Abū Manṣūr or Abū al-Mansūr. In addition, this textile fragment shows prayers that are more elaborate expressing the wish that God's blessing satisfies al-Hākim, al-‘Azīz, and their forefathers until Judgment Day. This textile fragment exemplifies early attempts at rhyming inscriptions in the Fatimid era, where three words end in a *ya* and *nūn*, namely, *al-mu'minīn*, *al-ṭahirīn*, and *al-dīn*. On another cloth fragment, a very similar formula is used but al-‘Azīz is referred to as *al-imām*, too.⁶⁵ Several other inscriptions on textiles record al-Hākim's use of his *kunya*: Abū ‘Alī, where ‘Alī is his son, al-Zāhir li-I‘zāz Dīn Allah.⁶⁶ Bierman argues that the mosque of al-Hākim marks the beginning of a new trend in the eastern Mediterranean,

⁶⁴ *Répertoire* VI, 40

⁶⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. VI, 118

⁶⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. VI, 149-50 & 155-6

where the inscriptions on its minarets "presented a significant departure in the conventional uses of writing because it was used to address a group audience in public space."⁶⁷ She believes that, in general, prior to al-Hākim's mosque, "those in authority displayed writing in public spaces only in limited fashion," mainly "at urban thresholds and on lintels over the entrances of some major buildings."⁶⁸ What is of concern to the current study is how al-Hākim placed his names and titles in a manner that best advertised them. On both minarets of the mosque, inscription bands with large letters show the names and titles of al-Hākim. Bierman notes that "more space in these bands was allocated to the name of the Imam al-Hākim, his titles and date, than to words from the Book" and further adds that the elaborate decorative character of the letters of these bands was again breaking the tradition of "officially sponsored writing."⁶⁹ However, the content of the bands carrying his name is simple: "Imam al-Hākim bi-Amr Allah, Commander of the Believers, may the blessings of God be on him and on his pure ancestors, ordered to be done in the month of Rajab of the year 393."⁷⁰ This shows no innovative titles and no

⁶⁷ Bierman, 2

⁶⁸ Bierman, 3

⁶⁹ Bierman, 86 & 89

⁷⁰ Bierman, 90

emphasis on prayers. It is even simpler than the typical formula seen on surviving textile fragments.

The restoration inscription of al-Zāhir, son of al-Hākim, at the Dome of the Rock, dated to 413/1022-3, has the typical elements of the Fatimid formula for the caliphs.⁷¹ Al-Zāhir is referred to with his title - *al-imām*; his *kunya* - Abū al-Ḥasan; his name - 'Alī; his caliphal name - al-Zāhir li-I'zāz Dīn Allah; mention of his father - Son of al-Hākim bi-Amr Allah; title of his father - *amīr al-mu'minīn*; and prayers for al-Zāhir, his forefathers, and his sons - may God bless him, his pure forefathers, and his honourable sons. However, the mention of the amīr responsible for carrying out the restoration, 'Alī b. Aḥmad, is elaborate compared to previous inscriptions. 'Alī is first referred to as: his servant (i.e. the servant of al-Zāhir), then with a couple of honourific adjectives: *thiqat al-a'imma* (the Trusted by the Imams) and *sadīd al-dawla* (Supporter of the State); and lastly a prayer - may God reward him. Although some emphasis is made on the amīr, it is still simple compared to later Fatimid viziers, for example.

⁷¹ *Répertoire* Vol. VI, 175-6

It is useful at this point to examine contemporary evolution of titles and prayers on inscriptions in other parts of the Islamic world. In the Islamic west, the Abbasid formula, employed by the Spanish Umayyad Caliphate, continued to be adopted, with additional elements. A construction text from Cordoba, dated to 358/969-70, states an order by al-Mustansir to his heir apparent to construct a building:⁷²

"...أمر الإمام عبد الله الحكم المستنصر بالله أمير المؤمنين ولي عهده وخليفته على عبادته الحافظ لخدمته والواقف عند حدوده والشاكر لنعمته أطل الله بقاءه في أتم كرامة وأعم سلامة وأكمل سرور وغبطة بهذه البنية فتمت بعون الله وقوته..."

The caliph is referred to typically, as *al-imām* al-Ḥakam the Servant of God, followed by his caliphal title: al-Mustansir bi-Allah, and his office: *amīr al-mu'minin*. This inscription, though does not mention the name of the heir apparent, refers to him in more detail through adjectives.

Probably, the heir apparent was closely involved with the construction process since the all the adjectives indicate his loyalty to the caliph, something that he seems to have wanted to emphasize. The heir apparent's position is noted by two phrases of the same meaning: *walī 'adihi* (his heir apparent) and *khalīfatihī 'alā 'ibādihi* (his successor to lead his servants/subjects). The adjectives given to the heir apparent are: *al-hāfiẓ li-khadamihi* (protector of his servants), *al-wāqif 'inda ḥudūdihi*

⁷² *Répertoire* Vol. V, 27

(literally, the one stopping at his limits, meaning, the one observing his rules), and *al-shākir li-ni'matihi* (the thankful for his blessings). Finally, it is not clear whether the prayer applies to al-Mustansir himself or his heir. It is more probable that the prayers are for the successor, since they follow his adjectives. He is wished that God give him a long life, in utmost honour, most prevailing safety, and most perfect happiness and joy. There is also some attempt at rhyme in only two words, namely, *karāma* and *salāma*. It is also notable that the adjectives given to the heir reflect extreme respect for the caliph to the point of assigning to him aspects normally connected with the Divine (e.g. blessings and *hudūd* or limits). It is clear, though, that this is only out of respect, since the Spanish Umayyads, unlike the Fatimids, had no ideology that ties the caliph with God. The caliph has the right to rule only because he inherited this right, and this implies nothing else than worldly authority. Other inscriptions of al-Hakam mention prayers for blessings, power, health, etc.: and stick to the typical formula: *al-imām 'Abd-Allah al-Hakam al-Mustansir bi-Allah amīr al-mu'minīn*.⁷³ An inscription on a minbar from Fez, dated to 395/1004-5, mentions the name of the Spanish Umayyad caliph Hisham II:⁷⁴

⁷³ *Répertoire* Vol. V, 116

⁷⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VI, 51

...هذا ما أمر بعمله الخليفة المنصور سيف الإسلام عبد الله هشام المؤيد بالله أطل الله بقاءه

على يد حاجبه عبد الملك المظفر بن محمد المنصور بن أبي عامر وفقهم الله تعالى...

Again the formula is typical but the inscription does not mention the title “*al-imām*,” rather Hisham is termed *al-khalīfa*, which was not that usual. It appears, for example, on several cloth fragments made for the Abbasid al-Muqtadir bi-Allah, dated to years from 310/922-3 to 313/925-6.⁷⁵ It is possible that *al-khalīfa* is used because this minbar was actually supervised by the caliph’s *hājib*, so, the common title used in communication, rather than inscription, was employed. It is interesting to note that some additional title appears here, namely, *sayf al-islām* (The Sword of Islam). This is one of the early instances of showing titles of honour or valour on inscriptions.

Of most interest is the Islamic east, where the development of titles on inscriptions moved at a fast pace. On a construction text on a couple of wooden panels from Persia, dated to 363/973-4, and on another wooden panel from Persia dated to the same year, the Buwayhid ‘Adud al-Dawla is referred to by several titles.⁷⁶ However, due to the use of the title “*Tāj al-Milla*” (Crown of the Religious Community), it is more accurate to

⁷⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. III, 137, 151, 163

⁷⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. V, 101-4

date these panels after the year 367/977.⁷⁷ Abū Shujā' had requested this title from the Abbasid caliph in 339/950, but was denied it.⁷⁸ It was only in the year 367/977 that Abū Shujā' was given this title and it is highly improbable that he dared to use it in his inscriptions prior to that year.⁷⁹ On these wooden panels 'Adud al-Dawla is first referred to by his title Tāj al-Milla; then the honourific Persian title *shāhinshāh* (King of Kings); his *kunya* Abū Shujā'; his name Fannakhusraw; and another title, for which he is most known, 'Adud al-Dawla (Support of the State). Tāj al-Milla is the first title to appear with the word *al-milla* (the religious community) in it.⁸⁰ Here we also note the early appearance of *shāhinshāh*, a title closely related to pre-Islamic Persia, which starts being adopted in Persia probably after the autonomous ruling families of Persian origin appear strongly on the scene of the eastern Islamic lands, recognizing the Abbasid caliph only in name. The Buwayhids even occupied Baghdad in 945.⁸¹ The title *shāhinshāh* "did not appear on 'Adud al-Dawla's coins until 370/981," but "it was in common use before that."⁸² Al-Mutanabbī employed this title in a *qasīda* addressing Abū Shujā' in the years

⁷⁷ Blair, *Monumental Inscriptions*, 43-44

⁷⁸ Blair, 44

⁷⁹ Blair, 44

⁸⁰ Al-Basha, 231

⁸¹ Ettinghausen and Grabar, *Art and Architecture*, 209

⁸² Blair, 44

354/965 and 359/969.⁸³ The two titles of Abū Shujā', 'Aḍud al-Dawla and Tāj al-Milla, are in rhyme. Abū Naṣr Bahā' al-Dawla, son of 'Aḍud al-Dawla, has a recorded commemorative text from Persepolis, dated to 392/1001-2, in which he is referred to by the titles: Bahā' al-Dawla, *diyā'* *al-milla*, *ghiyāth al-umma*, as well as the *kunya*: *Abū Naṣr*.⁸⁴ Like his father, Bahā' al-Dawla (Radiance/Beauty of the State), in addition to his personal title, adopts a composite title with the word *al-milla*: *diyā' al-milla* (Light of the Religious Community). He is also referred to by *ghiyāth al-umma* (Saviour of the Nation) and by *abū naṣr* (literally, Father of Victory, meaning the Victorious One). Abū Naṣr, son of Abū Shujā' was given the title *bahā' al-dawla wa diyā' al-milla* by the Abbasid caliph in 379/989.⁸⁵

A funerary text from the mausoleum of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, dateable to 421/1030, reads:⁸⁶

...غفران من الله للأمير الأجل السيد الملك المؤيد يمين الدولة وأمين الملة أبي القاسم محمود

بن سبكتكين رحمة الله عليه ولمن حفر له

(Forgiveness from God to the Amīr; the Most Respectable; the Master; the King; the Supported; Right Arm of the State; the Honest Keeper of the

⁸³ Blair, 44

⁸⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VI, 42-43

⁸⁵ Blair, 60-61

⁸⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. 207-8

Religious Community; Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. Sabaktakīn; May God have mercy on him and on those who dug (his grave) for him).

It is quite noticeable here that there is an elaboration in the normal titles and formula that has prevailed in the Islamic world. Maḥmūd is described by several words that bear the same meaning - the Amīr; *al-sayyid* (the Master); and *al-malik* (the King). *Al-sayyid* and *al-malik* are not previously common titles. On a lead plaque, dated to 401/1010-11, from Gurgānj that records the foundation of a minaret by the Ma'mūnid Khwarazmshah ruler Abū al-'Abbās Ma'mūn b. Ma'mūn, he is referred to as *al-sayyid al-malik*.⁸⁷ Maḥmūd is referred to by the new terms *al-ajall* (the Most Respectable) and *al-mu'ayyad* (the Supported) later to become rather common. He is, as the fashion of the time goes, referred to by a couple of rhyming honourific phrases that serve as adjectives, namely, *yamīn al-dawla* (Right Arm of the State) and *amīn al-milla* (Honest Keeper of the Religious Community). After the "Ghaznavid generals replaced their Samanid amirs," and recognized the Abbasid caliphate, "caliph al-Qādir granted Maḥmūd of Ghazna" the title *yamīn al-dawla wa amīn al-milla*.⁸⁸ However, on his tombstone, dateable to the same year, Maḥmūd is referred to by the title Nizām al-Dīn (Order of the Religion),

⁸⁷ Blair, 80

⁸⁸ Blair, 61

in addition to al-Amīr, al-Ajall, and al-Sayyid, as well as his *kunya* – Abū al-Qāsim.⁸⁹ Al-Qalqashandī reports that this title – Nizām al-Dīn – was first given by the Abbasid caliph al-Qādir bi-Allah to the Buwayhid ruler Abū Nasr Baha' al-Dawla and he assumes that this was the start of such titles i.e. composite ones with al-Dīn being one of the words.⁹⁰ As was the practice with several historical inscriptions of the Ghaznavids, the script at the tomb of Maḥmūd is *Naskh*.⁹¹ In contrast to the prevailing Kufi, executing the historical inscription in *Naskh* would serve to catch the eye, even if it was not as ornamented as the Kufi.

The inscriptions of the Marwanids of Diyarbekir (990-1085) show further development of titles. Aḥmad b. Marwān adopts several titles recorded at Diyarbekir between the years 426/1034-5 and 447/1055-6.⁹² He uses several of the titles used by Maḥmūd of Ghazna: *al-sayyid*, *al-ajall*, and *al-mu'ayyad*. In addition, he uses more titles compared to Ghaznavid inscriptions: *al-mansūr* (The Victorious);⁹³ *'izz al-islām* (Glory/Power of Islam); *sa'd al-dīn* (Happiness/Pleasure of Religion); *nasr al-dawla* (Victory of the State); *rukn al-milla* (literally Corner of the Religious

⁸⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VI, 208-9

⁹⁰ Al-Basha, 534

⁹¹ Hillenbrand, "The Architecture of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids," 175

⁹² *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 8, 40-1, 75-6, & 113-14

⁹³ The first recorded occurrence of *al-mansūr* in an inscription is dated to 386/996, when it appears on the gate of Kharput at Diyarbekir (Elisséeff, "La titulature de Nūr al-Dīn, 173)

Community, meaning Pillar of the Religious Community); *majd al-umma* (Glory/Honour of the Nation); and *sharaf al-umarā'* (Honour of Princes). The *kunya* used in Aḥmad b. Marwān's inscriptions is Abū Naṣr. The prayers on his recorded inscriptions are: *أطال الله بقاءه وأدام سلطانه* (may God prolong his life and make his sultanate lasting); *أطال الله في العز الدائم بقاءه* (may God keep him in everlasting glory/power, make his sultanate great, and his enemies submitting); and to Aḥmad and his son *أطال الله بقاءهما وأيد ملكهما* (may God prolong their lives and support their kingship). It is noted that though these inscriptions show advancement, the rhyming later to become very common is not apparent. The next Marwanid prince, Naṣr al-Dawla, has recorded inscriptions at Diyarbekir and Mayafarqin, both dated to 464/1071-2.⁹⁴ The inscription at Diyarbekir refers to him as: *al-sayyid*; *al-ajall*; *jamāl al-islām* (Beauty of Islam); *nizām al-dīn* (Order of Religion); *naṣr al-dawla* (Victory of the State); *'izz al-mulūk* (Power of Kings); *abū al-qasam* (The One with the Oath); and finally his name Naṣr b. 'Izz al-Islam. The inscription at Mayafarqin refers to him as: *mawlānā* (Our Lord); *al-amīr*; *al-sayyid*; *al-ajall*; *al-mu'ayyad*; *al-mansūr*; *jamāl al-islām*; *nizām al-dīn*; *naṣr al-dawla*; *kahf al-milla* (Refuge of the Religious Community); *'izz al-mulūk*; *sultān al-umarā'* (Sultan of Princes); and *abū al-qasam*. Both inscriptions

⁹⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 176-7

are on secular and military buildings and are further evidence that Marwanids were among the early dynasties to use elaborate titles for the ruler. The *kunya* *abū al-qasam* appearing on the citadel of Mayafarqin is quite similar to *abū al-qasim* appearing in the inscriptions of Maḥmūd of Ghazna. *Abū al-qasim* is probably a *kunya* that is a part of the personal name and is not among the titles. It is a common name used after Prophet Muhammad, who had the same *kunya*. The use of *abū al-qasam* is not as clear. On the inscription of Mayafarqin, appears the name of the vizier, Abū Tāhir Salama b. Ibrahīm, who supervised the construction of the citadel and he is referred to as: *al-wazīr*; *al-ajall*; *al-a‘azz* (The Most Powerful); *al-kāmil* (The Perfect); and *za‘īm al-dawla* (Leader of the State). It is notable that the vizier uses *al-ajall* like the ruler as well other titles that entail power like *al-a‘azz* and *al-kāmil*. While titles like *nasr al-dawla* are confined to rulers, the vizier is given a title reflecting his office: *za‘īm al-dawla*.

Around the mid-eleventh century, during the last one hundred years of Fatimid rule, Caliphs lost much of their power to their viziers.⁹⁵ This was reflected in Fatimid inscriptions and it was common to display “the rank and title of the *wazīr*” to indicate “strength where the real strength

⁹⁵ Bierman, 100-1

existed.”⁹⁶ Because they were not claiming to be religious figures, patrons during the last one hundred years of the Fatimid era, who were not caliphs, represented themselves through titles of honour and valour, while the religious emphasis remained confined to caliphs. An inscription on Tura bridge at Damascus, dated to 456/1063-4, mentions that the bridge was ordered to be restored by the mamluk of “al-imām al-Mustansir bi-Allah *amīr al-mu’minīn* may God bless him.”⁹⁷ The personal name of the mamluk, probably Badr al-Jamālī, is not mentioned but his elaborate titles are listed. He is *tāj al-umarā’* (Crown of the Princes); *muqaddim al-juyūsh* (Commander of the Armies); *al-muzaffar* (The Triumphant); *sharaf al-mulk* (Honour of Kingdom); *‘umdat al-imām* (Supporter of the Imam); *sayf al-islām* (Sword of Islam); *mu’izz al-dawla wa sa’dahā wa ‘adudahā* (Giver of Power, Happiness, and Support to the State); *dhū al-ri’asāt* (The One with many Abilities/Talents). The title *dhū al-ri’asatayn* (The One with Two Abilities/Talents) was used in several early inscriptions e.g. it was adopted by al-Fadl b. Sahl, even before he became the vizier of al-Ma’mūn and appears on several coins.⁹⁸ This title was used by an administrator of the Fatimid al-Hākim and it also appears on a couple of construction inscriptions from Toledo dated to 423/1031-2 and

⁹⁶ Bierman, 101

⁹⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 157

⁹⁸ Al-Basha, 295-6

429/1037-8.⁹⁹ *Dhū al-ri'āsatayn* means the holder of the two abilities or talents: the sword and the pen, which means that the person is distinct in the fields of war and administration.¹⁰⁰ Employees of the state were always divided into Men of the Sword and Men of the Pen (i.e. military or administrative employees) and both were competing for power all the time.¹⁰¹ A title like *dhū al-ri'āsatayn* would indicate either influence over both categories or personal distinction in both fields.¹⁰² *Dhū al-ri'āsāt* would mean possessing even more abilities than just those two, as an exaggeration.

The inscriptions of Badr al-Jamālī best show the transfer of true power to the hands of the viziers during the last one hundred years of Fatimid rule.¹⁰³ After the name of Caliph al-Mustansīr and prayers of blessings for him, his pure fathers, and noble descendents, comes the name of Badr al-Mustansīrī, his vizier, with several titles and prayers. A couple of early inscriptions at the mosque of Ibn Tūlūn and the Great Mosque of Ešnā, dated to 470/1077-8, refer to Badr as: *al-sayyid*; *al-ajall*; *amīr al-juyūsh* (Prince of Armies); *sayf al-islām*; *nāṣir al-imām* (Supporter of the Imam);

⁹⁹ Al-Basha, 296

¹⁰⁰ Al-Basha, 295

¹⁰¹ Al-Basha, 294

¹⁰² Al-Basha, 294

¹⁰³ Bierman, 105

abū al-najm (literally: Father of the Star); and finally his name, Badr al-Mustansir.¹⁰⁴ It is clear that by that time the titles *al-sayyid* and *al-ajall* were common in the Islamic east, the Levant and Egypt, though not in the Islamic west. *Amīr al-jayūsh* is Badr's office for he was the Commander of Armies of al-Mustansir.¹⁰⁵ *Sayf al-islām* is a title displaying military power also appearing in the east and *nāṣir al-imām* shows loyalty to the Imam, then still important to claim. The *kunya* of Badr is closely related to his name since *badr* is the full moon. Like the *kunya* of Kāfūr al-Ikhshīdī mentioned before, this *kunya* is honourific, not by reflecting accomplishments, but simply by indicating sublimity. The prayers given to Badr in these inscriptions are: أدام الله قدرته وأعلى كلمته (may God keep him powerful and elevate his word i.e. give him the upper hand). Three years later, on an inscription from Qūṣ dated to 473/1080-1, Badr starts to refer to himself as:¹⁰⁶

"...فتى مولانا وسيدنا الإمام المستنصر بالله أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه وعلى آباءه الطاهرين وأبنائه الأكرمين السيد الأجل أمير الجيوش سيف الإسلام ناصر الإمام كافل قضاة المسلمين وهادي دعاة المؤمنين عضد الله تعالى به الدين وأمتع بطول بقائه أمير المؤمنين وأدام قدرته وأعلى كلمته...."

¹⁰⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 199-200 & 202

¹⁰⁵ Bierman, 101

¹⁰⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 209

(The boy/servant of our lord and master al-Imām al-Mustansīr bi-Allah, Prince of the Faithful, may God bless him, his pure forefathers, and his noble descendents, the Master, the Most Respectable, the Prince/Commander of the Armies, The Sword of Islam, the Supporter of the Imam, the Surety of the Judges of the Muslims,¹⁰⁷ the Guide of the Missionaries of the Believers,¹⁰⁸ may God use him to support religion and give him a long life to please the Prince of the Faithful, keep him powerful, and give him the upper hand).

A very similar formula is recorded on Bab al-Naṣr and dated to 480/1087-8, but in this case his name is mentioned: Abū al-Najm Badr al-Mustansīrī, and there are additional praising phrases suitable for the construction of the military gates, in addition to mentioning the purpose of the construction:¹⁰⁹

"....الذي حصن الله بحسن بتدبيره الدولة والأنام وشمل صلاحه الخاص والعام ابتغاء ثواب الله ورضوانه وطلب فضله وإحسانه وصيانة كرسي الخلافة وازدلالا إلى الله بحيطة أطفاه..."

(...The one with whose good planning God has protected the state and the people. And the one whose goodness is extended to the private and the

¹⁰⁷ Translation after Bierman, 107

¹⁰⁸ Translation after Bierman, 107

¹⁰⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 237-8

public. In hope for God's reward and contentment and asking for His grace and charity and to maintain the chair of the Caliphate and to approach God asking Him to bestow His protection and kindness...).

In both inscriptions, it is noted that the rhyming now plays an important role and it becomes clear that it is arbitrary. One can only guess who composed the wordings of such inscriptions but it is a fact that rhyming is a clear and abundant factor of all important inscriptions in many areas of the Islamic world. Such inscriptions of Badr clearly show that he has become the powerful figure. Whether the construction is in a province (Qūṣ) or is of an importance and visibility as the new stone gates of Cairo, Badr is represented with similar words and meanings. He is the servant of the Caliph who keeps his religious titles and prayers, but the more important elaborate titles are given to Badr. In addition to titles that reflect his position and military power like *Amīr al-Juyūsh*, *sayf al-islām*, and *nāṣir al-imām*, other titles claim religious position. Badr is termed *kāfil quḍāt al-muslimīn* (The Surety of Muslim Judges) and *hādī du'āt al-mu'minīn* (The Guide of Missionaries of Believers). Badr had "minimized the display of the Imam's name" and "stopped the processions," which made the caliph visible to the whole population, as well as those "in

which the Imam led the Isma'īlī community in prayer at the *musallā*.¹¹⁰

Bierman argues that Fatimids, since the mosque of al-Hākim, in their public inscriptions, were addressing all audiences, except that inscriptions were understood differently e.g. for Sunni Muslims the caliph was only a ruler, but for Isma'īlīs (Believers) he was the infallible interpreter of the Quran.¹¹¹ Badr could not totally abolish the name of the Fatimid caliph, nor could he assume his religious role as understood by Isma'īlīs.

However, he gave himself religious emphasis that was based on his power. He is the Supporter of the Imam, which means that he supports the religious or ruling figure, however the audience interpret the idea of the Imam. He is also The Surety of Muslim Judges and, more importantly for Isma'īlīs, The Guide of Missionaries of Believers. There is no doubt that Badr was making a statement of his own religious importance using those two titles. "Isma'īlī missionaries traveled from the edges of the empire, even into northern India, to properly initiate Believers."¹¹² If Badr refers to himself as the Guide of Missionaries, then he must have been claiming authority over a very important aspect of Isma'īlī belief.

¹¹⁰ Bierman, 108

¹¹¹ Bierman 60, 61, & 90

¹¹² Bierman, 61

A very similar formula appears on all the recorded inscriptions of Badr, with little variations in prayers. In a restoration text at the mausoleum of al-Sayyida Nafīsa, dated to 482/1089-90, in addition to the typical formula, the prayers for Badr are extended to include:¹¹³

"...وَشَدَّ عَضْدَهُ بَوْلَهُ الْأَجَلَ الْأَفْضَلَ سَيْفَ الْإِمَامِ جَلالِ الْإِسْلَامِ شَرَفِ الْأَنَامِ نَاصِرِ الدِّينِ خَلِيلِ

أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ زَادَ اللَّهُ فِي عِلَالَتِهِ وَأَمْتَعَ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِطُولِ بَقَائِهِ..."

(...and may God support him with his son, the Most Respectable, al-Afdal, the Sword of the Imam, the Greatness of Islam, the Most Honourable/the Honour of People, the Supporter of Religion, the Friend of the Prince of the Faithful, may God grant him higher places/levels and please the Prince of the Faithful with his long life...).

At that time, al-Afdal had not yet become a *wazīr*, but it is clear from the inscription that Badr was relating a message: his son would be the succeeding *wazīr*. The titles of al-Afdal, which appear first on an inscription of his father, appear in another inscription on a *mihrāb* at the mosque of Ibn Tūlūn.¹¹⁴ However, in other recorded inscriptions, al-Afdal adopts the formula of his father, but adds to it a *kunya*: *abū al-qāsim* and

¹¹³ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 248

¹¹⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 4-5

his name *shahinshāh*.¹¹⁵ This *kunya* and name were identifiable with al-Afdal. Ibn Taghrī Birdī quotes some literary sources during the era of vizier al-Sāliḥ Ṭalā'i that refer to Badr al-Jamālī as: *amīr al-juyūsh Abū al-Najm Badr* and al-Afdal as: *Abū al-Qāsim Shāhinshāh*.¹¹⁶ It seems that al-Afdal, and after him vizier al-Ma'mūn, found that the standard formula of Badr was identifiable, in composition and terms, with the person in power and both adopted it. On the façade of al-Aqmar mosque, dated to 519/1125-6, al-Ma'mūn is referred to as:¹¹⁷

...السيد الأجل المأمون أمير الجيوش سيف الإسلام وناصر الإمام كافل قضاة المسلمين
وهادي دعاء المؤمنين أبو عبد الله محمد الأمري عضد الله به الدين وأمتع بطول بقائه أمير
المؤمنين وأدام قدرته وأعلى كلمته..."

(...The Master, the Most Respectable, the Prince/Commander of the Armies, the Sword of Islam, the Supporter of the Imam, the Surety of the Judges of Muslims, the Guide of the Missionaries of the Believers, Abū 'Abd-Allah Muḥammad al-Āmirī, may God use him to support the religion and give him a long life to please the Prince of the Faithful, keep him powerful, and give him the upper hand). The names and titles of al-Ma'mūn appear on the façade of al-Aqmar in two bands: one running below the cornice and another, in smaller letters, "runs the width of the

¹¹⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 39-40 & 69

¹¹⁶ Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Al-Nujūm* Vol. V, 311

¹¹⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 146-7

façade at mid-point."¹¹⁸ Because the eyes of the viewers were used to the formula of Badr al-Jamālī, it was very easy to spot the name of the new vizier, placed among the same titles and phrases.¹¹⁹

The next Fatimid vizier, al-Sālīḥ Ṭalā'ī, came to power at a difficult time for the Fatimid Imams, when Caliph al-Zāfir was murdered and replaced by Caliph al-Fā'iz.¹²⁰ Al-Sālīḥ Ṭalā'ī adopted a somewhat different formula. In the construction text of the mosque of al-'Amrī at Qūṣ, Ṭalā'ī is referred to as:¹²¹

"...السيد الأجل الملك الصالح ناصر الأئمة وكاشف الغمة أمير الجيوش سيف الإسلام غياث الأنام كافل قضاة المسلمين وهادي دعاة المؤمنين عضد الله به الدين وأمتع بطول بقائه أمير المؤمنين وأدام قدرته وأعلى كلمته..."

(...The Master, the Most Respectable, al-Malik al-Sālīḥ, the Supporter of the Imams, the Revealer of the Sorrow/Crisis, the Prince/Commander of the Armies, the Sword of Islam, the Rescuer of the Peoples, the Surety of the Muslim Judges, the Guide to the Missionaries of the Believers, may God use him to support the religion and give him a long life to please the Prince of the Faithful, keep him powerful, and give him the upper hand).

¹¹⁸ Bierman, 110

¹¹⁹ Bierman, 110

¹²⁰ Bierman, 117-18

¹²¹ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 282-3

In addition to the titles and prayers copied from the popular formula of Badr al-Jamālī, Ṭalā'ī' is the Supporter of Imams and the Revealer of Crisis, definitely because he came to power in time of crisis and danger to caliphs. Ibn Taghrī Birdī reports that when al-Zāfir was killed, his son al-Fā'iz was very young.¹²² Ṭalā'ī' then took care of the little caliph and managed all his matters.¹²³ Ṭalā'ī' is also the Rescuer of Peoples since he is expected to maintain stability. The additions to the formula follow the standard fashion of rhyming phrases. A very similar formula is adopted by Ṭalā'ī' on the facades of his mosque, dated to 555/1160, outside Bab Zuwayla, with an additional *kunya*: *abū al-ghārāt*.¹²⁴ *Abū al-ghārāt* (literally: Father of Raids, meaning the one responsible for raids) must have been added to reflect his power over his opponents during his era, which according to Ibn Taghrī Birdī, was full of internal turmoil.

When the Ayyubids came to power in Egypt, their inscriptions diverged from Fatimid traditions. Ayyubids came with a strong Sunni ideology keen on representing the ruling figure as a warrior who served God through *jihād*. The Ayyubid inscription formulae were based on the ones

¹²² *Al-Nujūm* Vol. V, 310

¹²³ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. V, 310

¹²⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 20-1

of the Zangids and were introduced to Egypt where they immensely influenced the Mamluks.

The Seljuqs appeared in the Islamic east to become a major power after they dislodged the Ghaznavids and Hovids and controlled Baghdad in 1055, thus imposing their hegemony over the house of the Abbasid caliph.¹²² They were originally Turkish nomads who "had preserved intact the ethnic and tribal identity, and with it their military strength."¹²³ The nomadic origins of the Seljuqs dictated their distribution of power where there were no definite rules for hereditary succession and "territory was often partitioned among a ruler's male relatives."¹²⁴ In their initial stages, Seljuqs followed Turkish tribal rules and the leading figure was simply the eldest of the tribe.¹²⁵ Change came with the first Seljuq sultan Toghrulbek who was not the eldest of his brothers but was the most powerful and influential as well as being the commander of the Seljuq army.¹²⁶ By that time, leaders and armies of Seljuq areas agreed to have one elected Sultan to hold supreme power over them.¹²⁷ Toghrulbek adopted the title "sultan" instead of the title used previously by Seljuqs

¹²² *History of the Seljuqs*, 1055, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067, 1068, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, 1073, 1074, 1075, 1076, 1077, 1078, 1079, 1080, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1085, 1086, 1087, 1088, 1089, 1090, 1091, 1092, 1093, 1094, 1095, 1096, 1097, 1098, 1099, 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1107, 1108, 1109, 1110, 1111, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1115, 1116, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124, 1125, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1129, 1130, 1131, 1132, 1133, 1134, 1135, 1136, 1137, 1138, 1139, 1140, 1141, 1142, 1143, 1144, 1145, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1149, 1150, 1151, 1152, 1153, 1154, 1155, 1156, 1157, 1158, 1159, 1160, 1161, 1162, 1163, 1164, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, 1169, 1170, 1171, 1172, 1173, 1174, 1175, 1176, 1177, 1178, 1179, 1180, 1181, 1182, 1183, 1184, 1185, 1186, 1187, 1188, 1189, 1190, 1191, 1192, 1193, 1194, 1195, 1196, 1197, 1198, 1199, 1200, 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, 1206, 1207, 1208, 1209, 1210, 1211, 1212, 1213, 1214, 1215, 1216, 1217, 1218, 1219, 1220, 1221, 1222, 1223, 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1234, 1235, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1240, 1241, 1242, 1243, 1244, 1245, 1246, 1247, 1248, 1249, 1250, 1251, 1252, 1253, 1254, 1255, 1256, 1257, 1258, 1259, 1260, 1261, 1262, 1263, 1264, 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, 1269, 1270, 1271, 1272, 1273, 1274, 1275, 1276, 1277, 1278, 1279, 1280, 1281, 1282, 1283, 1284, 1285, 1286, 1287, 1288, 1289, 1290, 1291, 1292, 1293, 1294, 1295, 1296, 1297, 1298, 1299, 1300, 1301, 1302, 1303, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1307, 1308, 1309, 1310, 1311, 1312, 1313, 1314, 1315, 1316, 1317, 1318, 1319, 1320, 1321, 1322, 1323, 1324, 1325, 1326, 1327, 1328, 1329, 1330, 1331, 1332, 1333, 1334, 1335, 1336, 1337, 1338, 1339, 1340, 1341, 1342, 1343, 1344, 1345, 1346, 1347, 1348, 1349, 1350, 1351, 1352, 1353, 1354, 1355, 1356, 1357, 1358, 1359, 1360, 1361, 1362, 1363, 1364, 1365, 1366, 1367, 1368, 1369, 1370, 1371, 1372, 1373, 1374, 1375, 1376, 1377, 1378, 1379, 1380, 1381, 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2710, 2711, 2712, 2713, 2714, 2715, 2716, 2717, 2718, 2719, 2720, 2721, 2722, 2723, 2724, 2725, 2726, 2727, 2728, 2729, 2730, 2731, 2732, 2733, 2734, 2735, 2736, 2737, 2738, 2739, 2740, 2741, 2742, 2743, 2744, 2745, 2746, 2747, 2748, 2749, 2750, 2751, 2752, 2753, 2754, 2755, 2756, 2757, 2758, 2759, 2760, 2761, 2762, 2763, 2764, 2765, 2766, 2767, 2768, 2769, 2770, 2771, 2772, 2773, 2774, 2775, 2776, 2777, 2778, 2779, 2780, 2781, 2782, 2783, 2784, 2785, 2786, 2787, 2788, 2789, 2790, 2791, 2792, 2793, 2794, 2795, 2796, 2797, 2798, 2799, 2800, 2801, 2802, 2803, 2804, 2805, 2806, 2807, 2808, 2809, 2810, 2811, 2812, 2813, 2814, 2815, 2816, 2817, 2818, 2819, 2820, 2821, 2822, 2823, 2824, 2825, 2826, 2827, 2828, 2829, 2830, 2831, 2832, 2833, 2834, 2835, 2836, 2837, 2838, 2839, 2840, 2841, 2842, 2843, 2844, 2845, 2846, 2847, 2848, 2849, 2850, 2851, 2852, 2853, 2854, 2855, 2856, 2857, 2858, 2859, 2860, 2861, 2862, 2863, 2864, 2865, 2866, 2867, 2868, 2869, 2870, 2871, 2872, 2873, 2874, 2875, 2876, 2877, 2878, 2879, 2880, 2881, 2882, 2883, 2884, 2885, 2886, 2887, 2888, 2889, 2890, 2891, 2892, 2893, 2894, 2895, 2896, 2897, 2898, 2899, 2900, 2901, 2902, 2903, 2904, 2905, 2906, 2907, 2908, 2909, 2910, 2911, 2912, 2913, 2914, 2915, 2916, 2917, 2918, 2919, 2920, 2921, 2922, 2923, 2924, 2925, 2926, 2927, 2928, 2929, 2930, 2931, 2932, 2933, 2934, 2935, 2936, 2937, 2938, 2939, 2940, 2941, 2942, 2943, 2944, 2945, 2946, 2947, 2948, 2949, 2950, 2951, 2952, 2953, 2954, 2955, 2956, 2957, 2958, 2959, 2960, 2961, 2962, 2963, 2964, 2965, 2966, 2967, 2968, 2969, 2970, 2971, 2972, 2973, 2974, 2975, 2976, 2977, 2978, 2979, 2980, 2981, 2982, 2983, 2984, 2985, 2986, 2987, 2988, 2989, 2990, 2991, 2992, 2993, 2994, 2995, 2996, 2997, 2998, 2999, 3000, 3001, 3002, 3003, 3004, 3005, 3006, 3007, 3008, 3009, 3010, 3011, 3012, 3013, 3014, 3015, 3016, 3017, 3018, 3019, 3020, 3021, 3022, 3023, 3024, 3025, 3026, 3027, 3028, 3029, 3030, 3031, 3032, 3033, 3034, 3035, 3036, 3037, 3038, 3039, 3040, 3041, 3042, 3043, 3044, 3045, 3046, 3047, 3048, 3049, 3050,

Chapter Three: Pre-Mamluk Royal Inscriptions of the Islamic World - Saljuqs, Zangids, and Ayyubids

The Saljuqs appeared in the Islamic east to become a major power after they dispossessed the Ghaznavids and Buyids and controlled Baghdad in 1055, thus imposing their hegemony over the house of the Abbasid caliphate.¹²⁵ They were originally Turkish nomads who "had preserved intact their ethnic and tribal identity, and with it their military strength."¹²⁶ The nomadic origins of the Saljuqs defined their distribution of power where there were no definite rules for hereditary succession and "territory was often partitioned among a ruler's male relations."¹²⁷ In their initial stages, Saljuqs followed Turkish tribal rules and the leading figure was simply the oldest of the tribe.¹²⁸ Change came with the first Saljuq sultan Tughrulbek who was not the oldest of his brothers but was the most powerful and influential as well as being the commander of the Saljuq armies.¹²⁹ By that time, leaders and amirs of Saljuq areas agreed to have one elected Sultan to hold supreme power over them.¹³⁰ Tughrulbek adopted the title "*sultān*" instead of the title used previously by Saljuqs:

¹²⁵ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 86

¹²⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 86

¹²⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 86

¹²⁸ Abū al-Nasr, *Al-Salājiqa*, 116

¹²⁹ Abū al-Nasr, 116-7

¹³⁰ Abū al-Nasr, 117-8

shāhinshāh.¹³¹ The title *shāhinshāh* was adopted by the Būwayhid ‘Aḍuḍ al-Dawla (338-72/949-83) as his official title, “and continued to be used by his successors on their coins and in court documents, sometimes in conjunction with its Arabic equivalent *malik al-mulūk*.”¹³² Each of the Saljuq princes who ruled provinces was termed a *shāh* or king.¹³³

Tughrulbek had no sons and when he died, his nephew, Alp Arslān, became the new Sultan because he was powerful enough to gain the backing of the Saljuq amirs.¹³⁴ Tughrulbek and other Saljuq sultans after him asked for recognition from Abbasid caliphs, which meant that they recognized, at least in name, the Abbasid caliphate as the legitimate Islamic authority.¹³⁵ Saljuqs were influenced by Sassanian ideas of kingship, although they did not adopt them completely. Several books were written for Saljuq sultans to explain how a sultan should be chosen and how he should pursue government.¹³⁶ These books did not claim an absolute divine right for the sultan, for they stated that the sultan must follow the Islamic laws of jurisdiction.¹³⁷ So, according to these sources, the sultan was chosen by God but his behaviour must be governed by the laws of God. Thus, Saljuq sultans adopted ideas that were quite similar to

¹³¹ Abū al-Nasr, 119

¹³² De Blois, “*Shāhinshāh*,” *El* Vol. IX, 190-191

¹³³ Abū al-Nasr, 117

¹³⁴ Abū al-Nasr, 119

¹³⁵ Abū al-Nasr, 120-21

¹³⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 87

¹³⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 87

those adopted by the Abbasid caliphs. The Saljuq vizier Nizām al-Mulk, in his book *Siyāsat nāmeḥ*, which he presented to the Saljuq Sultan Malik Shāh in 1086/479, refers to the sultan saying:

“God has chosen the sultan, bettered him over His servants, and made them all submit to him, they derive their authority and levels from him, but he derives his power from his God who entrusted him with His servants. So, for him (the sultan) to have pride and grace over other kings, he has to have good manners and fine characteristics.”¹³⁸

Also, al-Rāwandī (d. 599/1119), the Saljuq historian, explains in one of his books that:

“The sultan is the successor of God on earth and the governor in terms of His religion and impositions. Allah has given him a special blessing and gave him part of His sultanate. He (God) offered him (the sultan) to take care of His creatures and used him to support His right course.”¹³⁹

The Saljuqs were keen on titles and understood their value. Nizām al-Mulk explains in the *Siyāsat nāmeḥ* that maintaining one's title is part of the honour of a kingdom.¹⁴⁰ al-Rāwandī informs us that the Abbasid

¹³⁸ Abū al-Nasr, 21 & 128

¹³⁹ Abū al-Nasr, 23 & 128

¹⁴⁰ Abū al-Nasr, 134

caliph assigned a title to the Saljuq sultan once he approved him.¹⁴¹ In addition to being termed a sultan, Tughrulbek was given titles by the Abbasid caliph in 447/1055.¹⁴² He was termed *al-mu'azzam* (the Glorified); *rukn al-dunyā wa al-dīn* (the Corner/Pillar of the World and the Religion); and given a *kunya*: Abū Tālib, after the Prophet's uncle. When Tughrulbek met the Abbasid caliph in 449/1057, the caliph added to his titles: *malik al-mashriq wa al-maghrib* (King of the East and West) and *yamīn amīr al-mu'minīn* (the Right Hand of the Prince of the Faithful).¹⁴³ The latter title is struck on coinage dated to 455/1063.¹⁴⁴ The Caliph gave further elaborate titles to Tughrulbek upon controlling an upheaval in Baghdad in 451/1059, which imply that he was the saviour of the Abbasid Caliphate:¹⁴⁵

شاهنشاه المعظم ملك المشرق والمغرب محب الإسلام حليف الإمام يمين خليفة الله أمير

المؤمنين

(The Glorified King of Kings, the King of the East and the West, the Lover of Islam, the Ally of the Imam, the Right Hand of Allah's Successor the Prince of the Faithful). The title *shāhinshāh al-mu'azzam*

¹⁴¹ Abū al-Nasr, 135

¹⁴² Abū al-Nasr, 135

¹⁴³ Abū al-Nasr, 135

¹⁴⁴ Abū al-Nasr, 135

¹⁴⁵ Abū al-Nasr, 135-6

appears on several coins of Tughrulbek.¹⁴⁶ Other titles appear on coins of Tughrulbek, e.g. *al-amīr al-ajall* and *al-amīr al-sayyid* Abū Ṭālib.¹⁴⁷

The titles of Alp Arslān went through a similar development process.

Initially, when the Abbasid Caliph approved appointing Alp Arslān sultan, he assigned to him the titles: *al-sultān*; *al-mu'azzam*; *adud al-dawla* (Arm/Supporter of the State); *tāj al-mulk* (the Crown of Kingship); and a *kunya*: Abū Shujā' (the Brave).¹⁴⁸ After winning the battle of Manzikert, the Abbasid Caliph gave Alp Arslān more titles in a letter he sent to congratulate him:¹⁴⁹

"الولد السيد الأجل المؤيد المنصور المظفر السلطان الأعظم مالك العرب والعجم سيد ملوك
الأمم ضياء الدين غياث المسلمين ظهير الإيمان كهف الأنام عضد الدولة القاهرة تاج الملة
الباهرة سلطان ديار المسلمين برهان أمير المؤمنين"

(The Son/Boy, the Master, the Most Respectable, the Supported, the Victorious, the Triumphant, the Greatest Sultan, the Ruler of the Arabs and Non-Arabs, the Master of Kings of Nations, the Light of Religion, the Saviour of Muslims, the Supporter of Belief, the Refuge of Peoples, the Arm/Supporter of the Victorious State, the Crown of the Brilliant

¹⁴⁶ Abū al-Nasr, 136

¹⁴⁷ Abū al-Nasr, 136

¹⁴⁸ Abū al-Nasr, 136

¹⁴⁹ Abū al-Nasr 137

Religion, the Sultan of Muslim lands, the Evidence of the Prince of the Faithful).

Alp Arslān was also given the title *nāṣir amīr al-mu'minīn* (the Supporter of the Prince of the Faithful), which indicated a development in the relationship between Saljuq sultans and the Abbasid Caliphate, for then the Saljuqs considered themselves the warriors of the Abbasid Caliphate and its protectors.¹⁵⁰ Among the titles of Alp Arslān that were struck on coins are: *al-amīr al-ajall* before he became sultan; *al-sultān al-mu'azzam shāhinshāh malik al-islām* (the Greatest Sultan, the King of Kings, the King of Islam); *malik al-mashriq wa al-maghrib* (King of the East and the West); *rukṇ al-dīn* (Corner/Pillar of the Religion); *tāj al-umma* (King of the Nation); *sayf Allah* (the Sword of God); *ṣāḥib al-imām* (the Supporter of the Imam); and his *kunya* Abū Shujā'.¹⁵¹

Historians report that the Abbasid Caliph termed Malik Shāh: *al-sultān mu'izz al-dunya wa al-dīn* (Strengthenener/Helper of the World and the Religion); *al-sultān jalāl al-dawla abū al-fath* (the Sultan, the Greatness/Loftiness of the State, the Father of Conquest, i.e. the

¹⁵⁰ Abū al-Nasr, 137

¹⁵¹ Abū al-Nasr, 138-9

Conqueror); and *al-sultān jalāl al-dunya wa al-dīn abū al-fath*. Malik Shāh b. Alp Arslān *yamīn amīr al-mu'minīn* (the Sultan, the Greatness/Loftiness of the World and the Religion, the Father of Conquest, Malik Shāh Son of Alp Arslān, the Right Hand of the Prince of the Faithful).¹⁵² Al-Rāwandī also referred to Malik Shāh by *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn* (Partner of the Prince of the Faithful).¹⁵³ The titles that are struck on coins of Malik Shāh include: *mu'izz al-dīn rukn al-islām* (Strengthenener/Helper of the Religion, Corner/Pillar of Islam); *al-sultān al-mu'azzam shāhinshāh* (the Glorified Sultan, the King of Kings); *rukn al-dīn* Abū al-'Abbās; and *dhukhr al-dīn* (Keeper/Saver of Religion) *abū al-fath*.¹⁵⁴ On copper coinage from Isfahan dated to 485/1092, Malik Shāh is termed *amīr al-mu'minīn*, which would be considered a serious defiance of the figure of the Abbasid Caliph.¹⁵⁵ However, since this title only appears on copper coinage, it seems that it was a forgery aiming at intensifying the rivalry of Malik Shāh with the Abbasid Caliph, which had reached its peak in the year 1092.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Abū al-Nasr, 139

¹⁵³ Abū al-Nasr, 140

¹⁵⁴ Abū al-Nasr, 140-1

¹⁵⁵ Abū al-Nasr, 141

¹⁵⁶ Abū al-Nasr, 141

In the Great Mosque of Damascus, inscriptions dated to 475/1082-3, record the names of the Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtadī, Sultan Malik Shāh, his brother Abū Saʿīd, and his vizier Nizām al-Mulk, each with his titles. Caliph al-Muqtadī, in the longest version of these inscriptions, is referred to simply by his name, *kunya*, and his title: *amīr al-muʿminīn*.¹⁵⁷ In the same inscriptions Malik Shāh is termed:¹⁵⁸

"السلطان المعظم شاهنشاه الأعظم سيد ملوك الأمم مولى العرب والعجم أبي الفتح ملكشاه بن

محمد بن داود يمين أمير المؤمنين"

(The Glorified Sultan, the Greatest King of Kings, the Master of the Kings of Nations, the Master of the Arabs and non-Arabs, Abū al-Fath, Malik Shāh b. Muhammad b. Dawūd, the Right Arm/Hand of the Prince of the Faithful). It is notable here the titles that divert from other eastern Islamic dynasties. Earlier inscriptions rarely cite titles such as *sayyid mulūk al-umam* (Master of the Kings of Nations) and *mawlā al-ʿarab wa al-ʿajam* (Master of Arabs and non-Arabs). These titles show the place of the Saljuqs as the dominating power of the Islamic east, which functions under absolute blessing of the Abbasid Caliphate, thus assuming superiority over any other Islamic autonomous dynasty. The Marwanids emphasized titles containing, for example, *al-milla*, *al-dawla*, and *al-*

¹⁵⁷ *Répertoire*, Vol. VII, 215-16

¹⁵⁸ *Répertoire*, Vol. VII, 215-16

umma for the ruler, while in the above inscriptions the Saljuqs reduced these titles to lesser levels. However, fashion of the area seems to have contributed to the use of which titles. Malik Shāh's brother, whose name is mentioned in these inscriptions, is referred to in the four recorded inscriptions as:¹⁵⁹

"الملك الأجل المؤيد المنصور تاج الدولة وسراج الملة وشرف الأمة أبي سعيد تتش بن ملك
الإسلام ناصر أمير المؤمنين"

(The King, the Most Respectable, the Supported, the Victorious, the Crown of the State, the Light of the Religious Community, the Honour of the Nation, Abū Sa'īd Tutush, Son of the King of Islam, the Supporter of the Prince of the Faithful). Malik Shāh's brother, being a provincial ruler, would be termed *al-malik* (the King), which confirms that the absolute sovereignty title was the Sultan. Nizām al-Mulk, in these inscriptions is referred to with several titles relevant to his position as vizier. His office is specifically mentioned. So, in these inscriptions, each of the four persons is mentioned with a specific title that shows his office. Al-Muqtadī is *al-imām* and *amīr al-mu'minīn*; Malik Shāh is *al-sultān al-mu'azzam*; Abū Sa'īd Tutush is *al-malik al-ajall*; and Nizām al-Mulk is *al-wazīr al-ajall*.

¹⁵⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 214-19

An inscription at the Citadel of Aleppo, dated to 480/1087-88, mentions additional titles.¹⁶⁰ Malik Shāh is *sultān ard Allah* (Sultan of God's Land); *rukn al-islām wa al-muslimīn* (Pillar of Islam and Muslims); *mu'izz al-dunya wa al-dīn* (Helper of the World and the Religion); *jalāl al-dawla* (Greatness of the State); and *yamīn amīr al-mu'minīn* (Right Arm of the Prince of the Faithful). Thus, this inscription seems to have been executed after the Abbasid Caliph bestowed extra titles on Malik Shāh. This inscription also includes the mention of Malik Shāh's son, Abū Shujā', who is referred to by the title *al-amīr al-ajall*, which would not be enough to indicate that Malik Shāh appointed Abū Shujā' his heir apparent, which he did in that same year.¹⁶¹ However, the addition of the title *qasīm al-dawla* (Partner of the State), would definitely show Abū Shujā''s new office. He is also given the honourific title *nāsir al-milla* (Supporter of the Religious Community). In an inscription at Diyarbekir, dated to 481/1088-9, Malik Shāh is referred to, among other titles, as *sultān ard Allah*; *mālik bilād Allah* (Possessor of the Lands of God); *mu'īn khalifat Allah* (Helper of the Caliph of God); and *jamāl al-milla* (Beauty of the Religious Community).¹⁶² All the titles that reflect Malik Shāh's right to be the Sultan of all lands are to emphasize his right to

¹⁶⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 240

¹⁶¹ Abū al-Nasr, 138 & 183

¹⁶² *Répertoire* VII, 245-6

govern the newly acquired lands. *Jamāl al-milla* rhymes with *jalāl al-dawla*, but seems to be a direct influence of the inscriptions of the Marwanids of Diyarbekir.

Malik Shāh was able to conquer Damascus in 465/1072 and his governor there was his brother, Abū Saʿīd Tutush.¹⁶³ An inscription of Tutush at the Great Mosque of Damascus, dated to 482/1089-90, refers to him as:¹⁶⁴

"...الملك الأجل المظفر المنصور المؤيد عضد الدين تاج الدولة وسراج الملة شرف الأمة أبو سعيد تتش بن ملك الإسلام ناصر أمير المؤمنين ألب أرسلان بن محمد بن داود.."

(The King, the Most Respectable, the Triumphant, the Victorious, the Supported, the Arm of Religion, the Crown of the State, the Light of the Religious Community, the Honour of the Nation, Abū Saʿīd Tutush, Son of the King of Islam, the Supporter of the Prince of the Faithful, Alp Arslān b. Muḥammad b. Dāwūd).

Although these titles have appeared in other inscriptions, what is notable here is the start of the later standard Zangid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk ruler inscription formulae. The successive use of *al-muzaffar*, *al-mansūr*, and *al-muʿayyad*, and/or similar titles, preceding the name of the patron

¹⁶³ Abū al-Nasr, 95-6

¹⁶⁴ *Répertoire* VII, 249-50

becomes the later practice. Some titles, especially formal ones, i.e. the ones chosen for the sultan by the Abbasid Caliph, were more or less standard in the sultan's inscriptions. However, the area where the inscriptions were executed made a difference in the choice of titles. One cannot conclusively determine the factors that led to the use of certain titles more in an area than in another. There is a possibility that the taste of the local artisans of the area, or the fashion of titles in some area at a certain time were determining factors. It also seems that titles indicative of *jihād* that became very common at later times, had their initial appearances in Syria and were more relevant to kings and amirs, rather than the sultan, who kept the grander and loftier titles. A building inscription at a madrasa in Damascus, dated to 1129-30/524, refers to the patron, who is an *amīr kabīr* as:¹⁶⁵

"...الأمير الكبير الإسفهلار معين الدين أنر بن عبد الله عتيق الملك المجاهد الم رابط المغازي
ظغتكين..."

(The Great Amīr, the Isfahsalar/Commander of Soldiers,¹⁶⁶ Mu'īn al-Dīn Anar b. 'Abd-Allah, the Freed Slave of the King, the Struggler/Warrior, the One Stationed to Guard the Territories, the Conqueror, Tughtigīn...). This inscription shows another early example of successive titles related

¹⁶⁵ *Répertoire* VIII, 165

¹⁶⁶ According to al-Qalqashandī (*Subh al-a'shā*, Vol. VI, 7)

to *jihād* used to refer to a king in this area. Tughtigīn (d. 522/1128) was a "Turkish freed man of Tutush" and the "Atabek of Dukāq, son of the Saljuqid Tutush and founder in Damascus of the Atabeg dynasty of Būrids (497-549/1104-54)."¹⁶⁷

Following the same idea, the inscriptions of the Zangids show further development. The inscription of al-Sādāt madrasa at Damascus, dated to 533/1138-9, refers to 'Imād al-Dīn Zankī as:¹⁶⁸

....السلطان؟ العادل المجاهد الغازي المرابط ناصر الملة والدين قانع المشركين مبيد

الملحدین..."

(The Sultan ?, the Just, the Struggler/Warrior, the Conqueror, One Stationed to Guard the Territories, the Supporter of the Religious Community, the Suppressor of the Polytheists, the Exterminator of the Atheists...). All these titles reflect the *jihād* of 'Imād al-Dīn against the Crusaders at that time. It was both the area and the time of crisis and the inscriptions reflect that. Nūr al-Dīn, son of 'Imād al-dīn, was one of the figures that best defended the Muslim lands against the Crusaders. An inscription at the Ḥalawīyya mosque at Aleppo, dated to 543/1148-9, refers to Nūr al-Dīn as:¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Eddé, "Tughtigīn," *El* Vol. X, 600

¹⁶⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 213-14

¹⁶⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 246-7

"...مولانا الأمير الإسفهلار الأجل السيد الكبير الملك العالم العارف العادل المجاهد المؤيد المنصور المظفر الأعز الكامل نور الدين...الإسلام وسيفه صفى الإمام وكنزه؟ قسيم الدولة وعمادها اختيار الأنام ومعزهم رضى الخلافة وآية الملة ومجدها تاج الملوك والسلطين وجلالها حافظ بلاد المسلمين ونفيرها؟ شمس المعالي وفلكها... وإمامها قاهر العتمردين قانع الملحين قاتل الكفرة والمشركين بهلوان جهان شهریار الشام... أبو القسم محمود بن زنكي بن أقي سنقر ناصر أمير المؤمنين تقبل الله منه..."

(Our Lord, the Prince, the Commander of the Soldiers, the Most Respectable, the Great Master, the King, the Knowledgeable, the Informed, the Just, the Struggler/Warrior, the Supporter, the Victorious, the Triumphant, the Most Powerful, the Perfect, Nūr al-din,...Islam and its sword, the chosen one and the treasure (?) of the Imam, the partner and pillar of the state, the choice and supporter of the peoples, the one accepted by the Caliphate, the sign and glory of the religious community, the crown and greatness of kings and sultans, the keeper and caller of the Muslim lands, the sun and orbit of highness....and its imam, the Subduer of the Mutineers, the Suppressor of the Atheists, the Killer of the Infidels and Polytheists, King of the World, Shahrayār of Syria...Abū al-Qasam Maḥmūd b. Zankī b. Aq Sunqur, the Supporter of the Prince of the Faithful, may God accept (his deeds) from him..."

This inscription, reflects the spirit of the time and the crucial role that Nūr al-Dīn was playing. However, it is rather long and exaggerating if compared to later inscriptions of Nūr al-Dīn, which start adopting a specific formula with a somewhat loose frame. Nūr al-Dīn's formula was not as rigid as that of Badr al-Jamālī, but did follow a certain form.

Similar formulae would appear in other areas of the eastern Islamic lands.

A construction inscription at the Great Mosque of Diyarbekir, dated to 550/1155-6, refers to the ruler, Abū al-Muzāffar Maḥmūd, as:¹⁷⁰

مولانا الأمير الإسفهلر الأجل السيد الكبير المؤيد المنصور العالم العادل جمال الدين
والدولة بهاء الإسلام والمسلمين سعد الملة شمس الملوك والسلطين قاتل الكفرة والمشركين
فخر الأمراء والجيوش نصر المجاهدين أمير الثغور.

(Our Lord, the Prince, the Commander of the Soldiers, the Most Respectable, the Great Master, the Supported, the Victorious, the Knowledgeable, the Just, Beauty of Religion and the State, Radiance of Islam and Muslims, Happiness of the Religious Community, Sun of Kings and Sultans, Killer of Infidels and Polytheists, Pride of Princes and Armies. Victory of Strugglers/Warriors, Prince of Borders.)

¹⁷⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 2-3

On the other hand, the construction inscription of Qilij Arslān at 'Ala' al-Dīn mosque at Konya, dated to 551/1156-7, is still highly influenced by the early Great Saljuq formulae, for he is referred to as:¹⁷¹

"السلطان المعظم شاهنشاه الأعظم سيد سلاطين العرب والعجم مالك رقاب الأمم عز الدنيا
والدين ركن الإسلام والمسلمين فخر الملوك والسلاطين نصير الحق بالبراهين قاتل الكفرة
والمشركين غياث المجاهدين حافظ بلاد الله ناصر عباده معين خليفة الله سلطان بلاد الروم
والأرمن والإفرنج والشام أبو الفتح قلج أرسلان بن مسعود بن قلج أرسلان ناصر أمير
المؤمنين أدام الله ملكه وضاعف اقتداره."

"The Glorified Sultan, the Greatest King of Kings, the Master of the
Sultans of the Arabs and non-Arabs, the Owner of the Necks of Nations
(i.e. the dominant over them), the Power of the World and the Religion,
the Pillar of Islam and Muslims, the Pride of Kings and Sultans, the
Supporter of Truth with Evidence, the Killer of Infidels and Polytheists,
the Rescuer of Strugglers/Warriors, the Protector of the Lands of God, the
Supporter of the Servants of God, the Helper of the Caliph of God, the
Sultan of the Lands of the Rūm, Armenians, Europeans, and Syrians, Abū
al-Fath, Qilij Arslān b. Mas'ūd b. Qilij Arslān, the Supporter of the
Prince of the Faithful, may God sustain his kingdom and multiply his
power."

¹⁷¹ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 11-12

This inscription shows a keen attempt to present Qillij Arslān as the most powerful ruler of the area. It is an inscription to exhibit his sovereignty. Contemporary inscriptions of Nūr al-Dīn, however, emphasize his personal qualities, the ones that he worked hard to acquire and was proud of. Nūr al-Dīn was a great patron of architecture, which was a public service and an act of piety; he was a sponsor of learning who built several madrasas; he had a genuine interest in the poor and the needy, since he built hospitals, paid alms, and dedicated waqfs for them; he was just, since he built several Courts of Justice (*dūr al-‘adl*) and used to listen personally to people’s complaints; and he fiercely fought the Crusaders.¹⁷² Historians report that Nūr al-Dīn only approved certain adjectives to be attributed to him in the *khutba*.¹⁷³ These were the ones he considered to truly describe him, and they included: “المجاهد في سبيلك” “the one who struggles/fights for You, God” and “الم رابط لأعداء دينك” “the one who is stationed to guard the territories against the enemies of Your religion i.e. God’s religion.”¹⁷⁴ Being a patron of architecture who was probably conscious about the adjectives given to him, it can be assumed that Nūr al-Dīn was somehow involved in the choice of wording for his inscriptions. In several of his inscriptions, emphasis is made on adjectives

¹⁷² Al-Munajjid, *Abniyat dimashq*, 9

¹⁷³ Al-Basha, 453

¹⁷⁴ Al-Basha, 453

that reflect that he is fair, dedicated to fighting for the cause of God, and is also knowledgeable. Several contemporary royal inscriptions at eastern cities like Diyarbekir and Mayafarqin, exhibit the same adjectives as do those of Nūr al-Dīn, but the formulae of Nūr al-Dīn compile more of the adjectives that reflect his wish to be a good ruler, more than a proud one. Examining his surviving inscriptions, only a few refer to him using phrases like: *قسيم الدولة القاهرة* (Partner of the Powerful State) and *عز الملة الزاهرة* (Power of the Bright Religious Community), as seen in his inscription at the Nūrī Mosque at Hama, dated to 558/1162-3.¹⁷⁵

However, almost all inscriptions, whatever the function of the building, use adjectives like: *al-‘ādil* (The Just); *al-‘ālim* (The Knowledgeable); *al-‘ārif* (The Informed); *al-mu‘ayyad* (The Supported); *al-muzaffar* (The Triumphant); *al-mansūr* (The Victorious); *al-zāhid* (The Ascetic); *al-mujāhid* (The Struggler/Warrior); *al-ghāzī* (The Conqueror); *al-murābiṭ* (The One Stationed to Guard the Territories); *al-a‘azz* (The Most Powerful); and *al-kāmil* (The Perfect).¹⁷⁶ Phrases that serve similar meanings and appear on his inscriptions include: *ركن الإسلام والمسلمين* (Pillar of Islam and Muslims); *محيي العدل في العالمين* (Reviver of Justice in All Worlds), which shows a keen attention to justice and relates to his

¹⁷⁵ *Répertoire IX*, 31-2

¹⁷⁶ *Répertoire IX*, 9-78

royal title *al-malik al-'adil* (The Just King); نصير الحق بالبراهين (Supporter of Truth with Evidence); حافظ الثغور (The Protector of Borders); غياث (Rescuer of the Peoples); قاهر المتمردين (Vanquisher/Subduer of the Mutineers); قاتل الكفرة والمشركين (Killer of the Infidels and the Polytheists); منصف المظلومين من الظالمين (the one who obtains the rights of the oppressed from the oppressors), again an emphasis on his being just; عماد الدنيا والدين (Pillar of the World and the Religion); ناصر الإسلام والمسلمين (Supporter of Islam and Muslims); قسيم الدولة (Partner of the State); رضي الخلافة (The Accepted by the Caliphate); and تاج الملوك والسلطين (Crown of the Kings and Sultans).¹⁷⁷ Where it comes to Nūr al-Dīn's relation to the Abbasid Caliph, he is either his *nāsīr* or *nasīr*, both meaning "The Supporter."

In several of his inscriptions, Nūr al-Dīn shows humility and uses phrases like: العبد الفقير إلى رحمة الله (the servant who needs God); الخاضع لهيبته (the submitting to His grace); المرشد لأعداء دينه (the one who guides/reduces the enemies of His religion); المعتمد بقوته (the supported by His power); الشاكر لنعمته (the one thankful for His blessings); المجاهد في سبيله (the struggler/warrior for His

¹⁷⁷ *Répertoire* IX, 9-78

sake); المرابط لأعداء دينه (the one stationed to guard the territories against the enemies of His religion),¹⁷⁸ where the last two being the same phrases Nūr al-Dīn approved for the *khutba*. In one inscription, on Bāb Sharqī at Damascus, dated to 559/1163-4, Nūr al-Dīn is termed: *al-sa'īd* (The Happy/Pleased) and *al-shahīd* (The Witness).¹⁷⁹ Since Nūr al-Dīn was termed *al-shahīd* in his lifetime, this disregards the other literal meaning of the word: the Martyr. Historians report that this title was given to Aqsunqur, Nūr al-Dīn's grandfather, when he entered Mosul, then to Zankī, and then to Nūr al-Dīn.¹⁸⁰ This title again relates to good rule, which definitely implies justice. A relevant Quranic verse (al-Baqara: 143) states that Muslims are a balanced nation that witnesses other peoples, while the Prophet is the witness of Muslims.¹⁸¹ In this case, witnessing is observing that implies keeping one's own balanced state of being, even if surrounding people, or nations, act differently. Although it appears in only one of his recorded inscriptions, it seems that it was one of his common titles, since Ibn Taghrī Birdī refers to him as "al-Malik al-ʿĀdil Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zankī, also known as al-Shahīd."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ *Répertoire* IX, 9-56

¹⁷⁹ *Répertoire* IX, 35

¹⁸⁰ Al-Basha, 363 and S. Heidmann "Zangī" *El* Vol. XI, 451-2

¹⁸¹ Al-Basha, 363

¹⁸² *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 4

A couple of notable aspects of Nūr al-Dīn's inscriptions are: first, he is only once referred to, in the surviving inscriptions, as *nūr al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, which was very common to several rulers of the Islamic east, and was later adopted by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. In a single instance, on the Bāb Sharqī of Damascus (559/1163-4), he is referred to as *'imād al-dunyā wa al-dīn* (Pillar of the World and the Religion), but his name, in inscriptions, remains unchanged: Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd.¹⁸³ Second, is the very rare occurrence of titles that contain *al-dawla* and *al-milla*, which would be relevant to pride and loftiness, since Nūr al-Dīn was more concerned with relating the image of the just ruler who was only concerned with *jihād* and philanthropist acts. Also, only a few of the recorded inscriptions refer to Nūr al-Dīn as *al-sultān*, but he is commonly referred to as *al-malik*. Nūr al-Dīn received the title *al-malik* from the Abbasid caliphate and his role as the primary defender of the caliphate was recognized through bestowing such titles as *nāṣir amīr al-mu'minīn* upon him.¹⁸⁴

The second most important figure at the time was Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn became a Sunni vizier to the Fatimid Caliphate of Egypt, succeeding his late uncle, Shirkūh, but was a deputy of the most powerful

¹⁸³ *Répertoire* IX, 35

¹⁸⁴ Elisséeff, 194

Sunni figure of the time, Nūr al-Dīn.¹⁸⁵ Historians, except Ibn al-Athīr, report that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was completely loyal to the orders of Nūr al-Dīn, who used to send him specific orders concerning crucial issues.¹⁸⁶ Al-Qalqashandī reports that both Shirkūh and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn were given the titles of Fatimid viziers, by the last Fatimid Caliph al-‘Āḍid.¹⁸⁷ These titles were:¹⁸⁸

السيد، الأجل، الملك، المنصور، سلطان الجيوش، ولي الأمة، فخر الدولة، كافل قضاة

المسلمين، هادي دعاة المؤمنين

(The Master, the Most Respectable, the King, the Victorious, the Sultan of Armies, the Friend/Owner of the Nation, the Pride of the State, the Surety of the Judges of the Muslims, the Guide of the Missionaries of the Believers). Both Shirkūh and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn were also termed *al-‘Āḍidī*, with a *yā’* of *nisba* relating them to Caliph al-‘Āḍid.¹⁸⁹ The title “Sultan of the Armies,” was probably chosen instead of “Prince of the Armies” adopted by earlier Fatimid viziers since Badr al-Jamālī. “Sultan of the Armies” was probably used since Shirkūh and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn were heading

¹⁸⁵ A. F. Sayyed, *Tārīkh miṣr al-islāmiyya*, 21

¹⁸⁶ A. F. Sayyed, 21-4

¹⁸⁷ A. F. Sayyed, 50

¹⁸⁸ A. F. Sayyed, 50

¹⁸⁹ A. F. Sayyed, 50

the Fatimid armies as well as the Nūrī armies they brought to Egypt.¹⁹⁰ It is interesting that during this transitional phase, both Shirkūh and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn accepted the titles that bore strong Fatimid connotations like "Surety of the Judges of the Muslims" and "the Guide of the Missionaries of the Believers."

The earliest surviving inscription of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in Egypt, recorded above the mihrāb of the mosque of Aḥr, and dated to 568/1172-3, gives him the title of *al-malik*,¹⁹¹ which was the title of late Fatimid viziers as was the title used by Zangids. He is otherwise termed:¹⁹²

"...الناصر المجاهد صلاح الدنيا والدين أبو المظفر يوسف..."

(Al-Nāṣir [The Supporting], The Struggler/Warrior, Ṣalāḥ al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn [The Goodness/Righteousness of the World and the Religion], Father of Victory, Yūsuf). This inscription is dated one year after the end of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt. It is rather probable that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was reluctant to use any of the titles given to him by the Fatimid caliph in inscriptions, since his loyalty was to Nūr al-Dīn and he had a strong Sunni

¹⁹⁰ A. F. Sayyid, 50

¹⁹¹ *Répertoire IX*, 71

¹⁹² *Répertoire IX*, 71

conviction. It was probably a deliberate decision to stick to the Zangid formula. However, it has to be noted that both al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Taghrī Birdī mention that al-‘Āḍid was the one who gave Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn the title *al-malik al-nāṣir*, which he continued to adopt all his life.¹⁹³ Although this title follows the same form of those used for Fatimid viziers, e.g. *al-malik al-sāliḥ* for Ṭalā’i’, it was also the form used by Nūr al-Dīn, who was termed *al-malik al-‘ādil*.

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn remained loyal to the Zangids, even right after the death of Nūr al-Dīn, when Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn ordered the name of al-Sāliḥ Isma‘īl, son of Nūr al-Dīn, to be mentioned in the *khutba* and in the *sikka*.¹⁹⁴ However, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn had to confront the custodians of al-Sāliḥ Isma‘īl, defeat them, and finally reach an agreement to keep what he controlled of Syria, and only then did Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn stop using the name of Nūr al-Dīn’s son in the *khutba* and on the *sikka*, thus declaring autonomous rule of Egypt and affiliated areas of Syria.¹⁹⁵ Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was in constant battles with the

¹⁹³ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 150 & *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 6

¹⁹⁴ A. F. Sayyed, 28

¹⁹⁵ A. F. Sayyed, 28

Crusaders. On the Citadel of Cairo, in an inscription dated to 576/1180-1, he is referred to as:¹⁹⁶

"...الملك الناصر جامع كلمة الإيمان قامع عبدة الصليبان صلاح الدنيا والدين سلطان الإسلام
والمسلمين أبو المظفر يوسف بن أيوب بن شاذي محيي دولة أمير المؤمنين..."

(*al-malik al-nāṣir*, the Unifier of the Word of Faith, the Vanquisher of the Worshipers of the Cross, *ṣalāḥ al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims, Father of Victory, Yūsuf b. Ayyūb b. Shādhī, the Revivor of the State of the Prince of the Faithful.) The *kunya* of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, Abū al-Muẓaffar, is probably not related to his son, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Khidr, who was not his oldest. It is more probable that it was just to indicate or wish for his victories. Al-Maqrīzī reports that in the year 576/1180-1, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn sent to Caliph al-Nāṣir asking him for authorization, which he received in Damascus.¹⁹⁷ This might explain the use of the title "the Revivor of the State of the Prince of the Faithful," which, in continuation of Sunni *jihād* adopted by Zangids, would be the role of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. Titles like "the Unifier of the Word of Faith" and "the Repressor of the Worshipers of the Cross" are directly related to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's resistance of the Crusaders. Using the title "Sultan of Islam and Muslims." shows the now totally autonomous rule of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn,

¹⁹⁶ *Répertoire IX*, 108

¹⁹⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 183

that no longer pays homage to the Zangid house. Another inscription at Cairo Citadel, dated to 579/1183-4, mentions, after the name and titles of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, the name and titles of his "brother and heir apparent al-Malik al-ʿĀdil Sayf al-Dīn Abū Bakr Muḥammad."¹⁹⁸ In this inscription, while Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn keeps his title as the "Revivor of the State of the Prince of the Faithful," al-ʿĀdil is referred to as *khalīl amīr al-muʾminīn* (the Friend of the Prince of the Faithful). Al-Maqrīzī mentions that al-ʿĀdil was the deputy of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in Cairo, while his son, al-Zāhir Ghāzī, was his deputy in Aleppo.¹⁹⁹ However, it is not specifically mentioned that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn made al-ʿĀdil his heir apparent, as the inscription states. Ibn Taghrī Birdī mentions that in the year 579/1183-4, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn sent his son, Ghāzī, to Aleppo and his brother, al-ʿĀdil, to Egypt.²⁰⁰ This inscription that refers to al-ʿĀdil as the heir apparent was not changed, although, Ibn Taghrī Birdī mentions that in the year 582/1186-7, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn divided lands among his sons, where he gave Egypt to al-ʿAzīz ʿUthmān, Damascus to al-Afdal, and Aleppo to al-Zāhir, while al-ʿĀdil was given many feudal lands in Egypt and was appointed the Atabek of al-ʿAzīz.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ *Répertoire* IX, 123-4

¹⁹⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 190 & 194

²⁰⁰ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 30

²⁰¹ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 103

It is notable that the recorded inscriptions of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, except for one at Mayafarqin dateable to 589/1192, do not adopt the formula of Nūr al-Dīn. In the inscription of Mayafarqin, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is termed.²⁰²

...الملك الناصر العالم العادل المؤيد المظفر المنصور المجاهد الم رابط صلاح الدنيا والدين
سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين باسط العدل في العالمين مجد الأمة مغيث الخلافة صاحب ديار
مصر وزبيد وعدن واليمن والشام وديار بكر أبو المظفر يوسف بن أيوب محيي دولة أمير
المؤمنين..."

(Al-Malik al-Nāṣir, the Knowledgeable, the Just, the Supported, the Triumphant, the Victorious, the Struggler/Warrior, the One Stationed to Guard the Territories, *ṣalāḥ al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, the Sultan of Islam and Muslims, the Extender of Justice to All Worlds, the Glory of the Nation, the Rescuer of the Caliphate, the Owner of the lands of Egypt, Zubayd, Eden, Yemen, Damascus (al-Sham), and Diyarbekir, Abū al-Muzaffar Yūsuf b. Ayyūb, the Reviver of the State of the Prince of the Faithful.) Ibn Taghrī Birdī reports that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn gave Harran, Raha, and Mayafarqin to al-ʿĀdil to keep him away from Damascus and its surrounding areas (al-Sham) and al-ʿĀdil was the governor of Harran until the death of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in 589/1193.²⁰³ It might be that this

²⁰² *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 191

²⁰³ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 31 & 133

inscription was sponsored by al-‘Ādil, who was indicating his subordination to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn by mentioning the lands he controlled.

It is also worth noting that in sacred areas, as was the custom since early Islamic rulers, and, more influentially, as was the custom of Nūr al-Dīn, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn adopts a rather humble tone. A construction text at Medina refers to Nūr al-Dīn as: “the Servant, the One in Need of God, Maḥmūd b. Zankī b. Aq Sunqur, May God forgive him.”²⁰⁴ An inscription on the minbar of al-Aqsa mosque mentions the standard titles of Nūr al-Dīn: “al-Malik al-‘Ādil Nūr al-Dīn,” and “*nāṣir amīr al-mu’minīn*,” with additional honourific phrases and prayers, but the formula does not include the typical list of personal adjectives.²⁰⁵ It rather starts humbly mentioning “the servant in need of His mercy, the thankful of His blessings, the struggler/warrior for His sake, the one stationed to guard the territories against the enemies of His religion.” Similarly, the inscription of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in al-Aqsa refers to him as “the servant of God and His friend, Yūsuf b. Ayyūb Abū al-Muzaffar al-Malik al-Nāṣir, *ṣalāḥ al-dunyā wa al-dīn*.”²⁰⁶ In an inscription dateable to 587/1191-2, at

²⁰⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 33

²⁰⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 56

²⁰⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 159

Qubbat Yūsuf at Jerusalem, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is given the title *khādim al-haramayn al-sharīfayn* (Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries), which seems to be the earliest occurrence of this title.²⁰⁷

Successors of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, sons and brothers, unlike him, almost always adopted versions of Nūr al-Dīn's formula of personal traits. This formula also strongly influenced the inscriptions of the rulers of the eastern Islamic lands, e.g. Mayafarqin, before it fell to the Ayyubids, and Diyarbekir. However, these areas of the east retained the emphasis on grand titles like Honour of Islam; Choice of the Imam; Light and Crown of the State; Brilliance and Beauty of the Religious Community; Pole of the Kings and Sultans; Greatness of the Nation; Pride of Kings and Sultans; Orbit of Highness; Saver of the Caliphate, etc.

²⁰⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 174

Chapter Four: Bahri Mamluk Sultans

To appreciate the importance of propagandizing the aspects of the office of the sultan for Mamluks, it has to be understood that they came to power illegitimately, considering the political rules of their time. The Mamluks were not members of a royal lineage; they were not even freemen, but were slaves in origin.²⁰⁸ The Bahri Mamluks were extremely influenced by the Ayyubids, their masters. Historians cited by Ibn Taghrī Birdī give conflicting opinions on the origin of Ayyubids. According to one story, they were themselves mamluks and according to another they were never slaves.²⁰⁹ Al-Maqrīzī also reports the account that Shādī, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's grandfather, was a mamluk, but then mentions that the correct story was that he was a Kurd with two sons, Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb and Asad al-Dīn Shirkūh, both of whom later ended up in the service of 'Imād al-Dīn Zankī, Nūr al-Dīn's father, which denies the assumption that they were slaves.²¹⁰ After the death of Nūr al-Dīn, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn sent a letter to the Abbasid caliph in which he referred to himself as "the mamluk."²¹¹ However, there is no conclusive proof that the Ayyubids were ever slaves. Ibn Taghrī Birdī reports that Nūr al-Dīn used a

²⁰⁸ Qasim, *Asr salāṭīn al-mamālīk*, 10

²⁰⁹ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 3

²¹⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 149

²¹¹ A. F. Sayyed, 27

respectful tone in his letters to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, in which he would term him “*al-amīr al-isfahsālār*,” a title that does not appear in any of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s inscriptions.²¹² We are also told that Nūr al-Dīn would not use Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s personal name in his letters, which is another gesture of respect, and he would use his mark/sign (‘*alāma*) instead,²¹³ which shows that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn had some sort of an emblem or stamp representing his name.

Since their emergence as a ruling power, it was clear that the motto that governed which of the Mamluks were to become the sultan and the powerful *amirs* was “rulership of the fittest.”²¹⁴ Two other concepts that were strongly rooted in the Mamluk mentality were the obedience and loyalty of the mamluks to their *ustādh* and their group identity, then called *khushdāshiyya*.²¹⁵ The idea of *khushdāshiyya*,²¹⁶ and the fact that all mamluks were slaves in origin, entailed that they were all peers and degree amongst them can be based only on qualifications.²¹⁷ Several events confirm this, for example, al-Maqrīzī relates that one hundred and

²¹² *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 18

²¹³ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 6, 18

²¹⁴ Qasim, 10

²¹⁵ Qasim, 10

²¹⁶ The *khushdāshiyya* were peers who belonged to one group (Qasim, 10 and Levanoni, “The Mamluk Conception of Sultanate,” 375). This group identity might have been a form of Ibn Khaldun’s ‘*asabiyya*.

²¹⁷ Ashour, *Al-Zāhir Baybars*, 138-9

thirty mamluks fled the court of al-Mu'izz Aybak in 652/1254-5, the first Mamluk sultan, to the Sultan of the Rūm Saljuqs, probably 'Alā' al-Dīn Kay Qubād II, but Aybak sent a letter to the Saljuq sultan warning him that they were not to be trusted. Defending himself and his colleagues against this accusation, 'Alam Al-Dīn Sanjar al-Bāshqurdī explained to the Saljuq Sultan that Aybak was not their master (*ustādh*), but merely their *khushdāsh* or colleague, whom they had chosen for a leader.²¹⁸

"...فخاف سلطان الروم منهم، وكانوا مائة وثلاثين فارساً، فاستدعاهم وقال: "يا أمراء ما لكم ولأستاذكم؟"، فتقدم الأمير علم الدين سنجر الباشقردى، وقال: "يا مولانا من هو أستاذنا؟"، قال: "الملك المعز صاحب مصر"، فقال الباشقردى: "يحفظ الله مولانا السلطان! إن كان الملك المعز قال في كتابه أنه أستاذنا فقد أخطأ، إنما هو خوشداشنا ونحن وليناه علينا، وكان فينا من هو أكبر منه سناً وقدرًا وأفرس وأحق بالمملكة، فقتل بعضنا وغرق بعضنا، فمر بنا منه وتشتت في البلاد، ونحن التجأنا إليك" فأعجب سلطان الروم بهم، واستخدمهم عنده."

According to Amalia Levanoni, the factionalism of Mamluk society was the main factor in political power.²¹⁹ She concludes that "Mamluk sultans would always be dependent on Mamluk recruits from among their peers (*khushdāshiyya*), their own household, or both."²²⁰

²¹⁸ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. I, 485

²¹⁹ Levanoni, 375

²²⁰ Levanoni, 375

Bahri mamluks murdered Sultan Tūrān Shāh, son of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn, when they were sure that he was intent on eliminating them.²²¹

According to al-Maqrīzī, Baybars al-Bunduqdārī was the first to try to kill Tūrān Shāh, but only wounded him.²²² After Tūrān Shāh's death, Shajar al-Durr became the queen of Egypt in the year 648/1250, with the consent of the Bahri mamluk amirs and the elite.²²³ Only her sultanic signatures were credible and her Commander in Chief was Aybak al-Sāliḥī.²²⁴ She was the mother of Najm al-Dīn's son, Khalīl, who died at a young age during his father's lifetime, so her signature was *wālidat Khalīl* or "Khalīl's Mother."²²⁵ She was a slave and her only legitimate presentation as a ruler was by showing that she was the wife of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn and the mother of his late son. Shajar al-Durr's name was mentioned in the *khutba* and al-Maqrīzī notes that her name was also minted on coins and he gives an example of the format as:²²⁶

"المستعصمة الصالحة ملكة المسلمين والددة الملك المنصور خليل أمير المؤمنين"

(The Preserved, al-Sāliḥīyya, the Queen of the Muslims, Mother of *al-malik al-mansūr* [the Victorious King], Friend of the Prince of the Faithful). The Arabic word translated as "friend" in this formula is *khalīl*,

²²¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 457-8

²²² *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 458

²²³ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 459

²²⁴ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 459

²²⁵ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 459

²²⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 459

which happens to be the personal name of Shajar al-Durr's son. The phrase *khalīl amīr al-mu'minīn* was common in inscriptions prior to the Ayyubids. It appears in Ayyubid inscriptions and in two at the madrasa of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn in Cairo (641/1243).²²⁷ It also appears on a basin made for al-Sāliḥ, dateable to 647/1249-50 and in an inscription of his at the Citadel of Salḥad dated to the same year.²²⁸ It was not an invariable phrase in the inscriptions of al-Sāliḥ, however, for at Bab al-Salam at Damascus, in an inscription dated to 641/1243-4, he is referred to as *nāṣir amīr al-mu'minīn* (Supporter of the Prince of the Faithful).²²⁹

The Ayyubid rulers of Syrian provinces did not accept the new condition of Egypt and moved to seize Syrian cities that were under the control of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn.²³⁰ In addition, the Abbasid Caliph at the time, al-Musta'sim, objected to the rule of a woman in Egypt.²³¹ Due to the chaos of the situation, Shajar al-Durr married her *atābek al-'asākir* (Commander in Chief), amīr 'Izz al-Dīn Aybak al-Sāliḥī and gave up her sultanate to him.²³² Originally a mamluk of al-Sāliḥ, Aybak was made a prince and a *jāshankīr* by his *ustādh*, which led him to use the *rank* of a

²²⁷ *Répertoire* XI, 144-46

²²⁸ *Répertoire* XI, 199 & 202-3

²²⁹ *Répertoire* XI, 148-9

²³⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 462-3

²³¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 463-4

²³² *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 463

khawānjā (table).²³³ Ibn Taghrī Birdī reports that Aybak was not a high amīr, but more like a middle-level one, who was known for his religiousity and leniency, which led the powerful amirs of the Bahri mamluks to choose him for their sultan.²³⁴ However, only five days after declaring him a sultan in the usual procession, several Bahri amīrs objected and insisted on having a sultan from the Ayyubid house that they must all obey.²³⁵ For that they chose al-Malik al-Ashraf Muẓaffar al-Dīn, grandson of al-Kamil, who was about ten years of age.²³⁶ Among the Bahri amirs who imposed this situation was amīr Rukn al-Dīn Baybars al-Bunduqdārī, later to become a sultan.²³⁷ Ibn Taghrī Birdī does not give a reason for the insistence of Bahri amirs to have an Ayyubid sultan, but al-Maqrīzī reports that even after Aybak was made sultan, Ayyubid rulers kept acquiring Syrian areas previously controlled by al-Sālih, and for that reason there was a need for an Ayyubid prince in Cairo.²³⁸ During this odd transitional period, Egypt had two sultans in whose names official papers were signed, but, al-Ashraf was only a façade.²³⁹

²³³ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 7, 4

²³⁴ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 7, 4

²³⁵ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 7, 5

²³⁶ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 7, 5

²³⁷ *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 7, 5

²³⁸ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 464

²³⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 464 & *Al-Nujūm* Vol. 7, 6

According to al-Maqrīzī, the mausoleum of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn was built, right after his death, by his wife, Shajar al-Durr.²⁴⁰ Al-Sāliḥ's casket was kept in the Citadel of Rawḍa until state authorities decided to transfer him to his mausoleum in Rajab of 648/1250.²⁴¹ An inscription at the mausoleum of al-Sāliḥ, dated to 647/1249-50, refers to him as:²⁴²

"...مولانا السلطان الملك الصالح السيد العالم العادل المجاهد الم رابط المئاغر نجم الدنيا والدين

سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين سيد الملوك المجاهدين وارث الملك عن آبائه الأكرمين أبي الفتح

أيوب بن السلطان الملك الكامل ناصر الدين أبي المعالي محمد بن أبي بكر بن أيوب...."

(...Our Lord the Sultan, the King, al-Sāliḥ, the Master, the

Knowledgeable, the Just, the Struggler/Warrior, the One Stationed to

Guard Territories, the Fighter at the Borders, *najm al-dunyā wa al-dīn*

[Star of the World and the Religion], Sultan of Islam and Muslims,

Master of the Struggler/Warrior Kings, Inheritor of kingdom from his

respectable fathers, *abū al-fath*. [Father of Conquests], Ayyūb, son of the

Sultan, the King, al-Kāmil, Supporter of the Religion, *abū al-ma'ālī*

[Father of Loftiness], Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr b. Ayyūb).

This inscription shows the typical Ayyubid formula of personal qualities, carried-on from the Zangids. It is significant, however, that among the

²⁴⁰ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat*, Vol. 3, 466

²⁴¹ *Khīṭat*, Vol. 3, 466 & *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 465

²⁴² *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 196

titles given to al-Sāliḥ is وارث الملك عن آبائه الأكرمين (inheritor of kingdom from his respectable fathers). Recorded Zangid and Ayyubid inscriptions do not refer to any of the sultans of both eras with such titles. Rivalry of Ayyubid sultans was apparent in the persistent use of honorific titles reflecting power, piety, and victorious accomplishments.

Sometimes, they would acquire more honour by mentioning the accomplishments of their fathers. In the tomb of al-Zāhir Ghāzī, son of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, at Aleppo, dateable to 620/1223-4, an inscription refers to him as "son of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, the Rescuer of the Sacred House from the Hands of the Infidels."²⁴³ A similar reference is made by al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad, grandson of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in an inscription at al-Zāhiriyya madrasa at Aleppo, dated to 620/1223-4.²⁴⁴ However, the idea of an inherited kingdom does not appear in the recorded inscriptions, probably because it was not important. The Princes of the Ayyubid house suffered no legitimacy crises.

The case was different with the Mamluks. Shajar al-Durr, who built the mausoleum for her late husband, was a slave who had legitimacy to

²⁴³ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 198

²⁴⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 200-1

become sultan because she was a sultan's widow and mother of his late son. The statement that al-Sāliḥ inherited his kingdom emphasizes that none of the mamluk amirs, aspiring for power, should think themselves legitimate, for they were slaves. The expression آبائه الأكرمين (his respectable fathers) can be construed as a Fatimid influence.

Like earlier Muslim rulers, Mamluk sultanic inscriptions would mainly include the elements of an Islamic name. Annemarie Schimmel mentions that Islamic names may consist of:²⁴⁵

- 1- *kunya*: the name *Abū x* (father of so-and-so), or *Umm x* (mother of so-and so)
- 2- *ism*: the personal name
- 3- *laqab*: the additional part of a name being associated with *al-dīn*, and/or the nickname, which may be a proper name, a family or a clan name that may also be "an honourific designation"
- 4- *nisba*: "pointing to one's native place, national or religious allegiance and the like."
- 5- *nasab*: "the relation to one's forefathers"

²⁴⁵ A. Schimmel, *Islamic Names*, 1

However, mamluks being slaves, did not use the names of their fathers. Episodes reported by historians about mamluk recruitment do not imply that mamluks were so young when bought so as to forget the names of their fathers. It is more probable that in their new societies, the names of their fathers were irrelevant and what was important was their relation to their *ustādh*. A *ya'* of property would be added to the name of the *ustādh* to indicate the original owner/s of the mamluk. Because the name of the mamluk was normally mentioned in association with the name or office of the *ustādh*, confusion arose in interpretations of the offices of some mamluks. This confusion sometimes led to assuming that a certain figure held some post that was actually the post of his *ustādh*, rather than his own. A good example of such confusion would be al-Zāhir Baybars al-Bunduqdārī, often referred to as the crossbow man. Actually, Baybars, before becoming a sultan, was a mamluk of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyub. Al-Sāliḥ bought him from his original master 'Alā' al-Dīn Aydaḳīn al-Bunduqdār. So, in his full stated name and titles as a sultan, Baybars would be called: Al-Malik al-Zāhir Abū al-Fath Rukn-al-Dīn Baybars al-Bunduqdārī al-Sāliḥī al-Najmī. According to Schimmel's classification, Baybars's *kunya* was "Abū al-Fath," and his *ism* was "Baybars." He had more than one *laqab*: "Rukn al-Dīn" and "al-Zāhir." His *nisba* was reference to his two masters: al-Bunduqdārī and al-Sāliḥī al-Najmī.

Baybars al-Bunduqdārī is the first Mamluk sultan from whose reign a large number of inscriptions are recorded in Egypt and Syria. Baybars rose to power after he assassinated his predecessor, Qutuz. The incident of the assassination is an example of the mamluk idea of power, authority, and sultanate. When Qutuz was facing the Mongols, he sent Baybars as the leader of the first regiment to battle at ‘Aīn Jālūt,²⁴⁶ which meant that he trusted the military abilities that Baybars had proved since his early career. However, after the victory, Baybars and a group of other amirs assassinated the sultan.²⁴⁷ Historians gave several reasons for the assassination: one was that Baybars was not granted the *niyāba* of Aleppo as promised by Qutuz, second was that Baybars and other amirs feared that Qutuz planned to kill them, and third was that “there was a clash of interests between the Bahri Mamluks, to which Baybars belonged, and al-Mu‘izziyya, Qutuz’s faction.”²⁴⁸ Baybars had been among those who assassinated Tūrān Shāh and was the leader of the group who assassinated Qutuz, but this did not deny him the right to sultanate, on the contrary, it made him the most eligible. Al-‘Aīnī cites Baybars al-Mansūrī, who reported that “Mamluks regarded the outstanding amīr among the

²⁴⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 516

²⁴⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 519

²⁴⁸ Levanoni, 376-7

participants in the sultan's assassination as the more suitable for the sultanate."²⁴⁹ It was the relentless courage and the exceptionally strong personality of Baybars that gained him power to become the first Mamluk sultan to remain long in power, with no significant attempts at objection or rebellion from his amirs.

Like previous Islamic dynasties, Mamluks had special interest in titles. Evidence for that can be cited in the biographies Al-'Aīnī wrote for two Burji sultans: Shaykh and Tatar, which show how titles were viewed or presented at the time. In his biography of Shaykh (r. 815/1412-824/1421), Al-'Aīnī informs us that the *kunya* of al-Mu'ayyad was Abū al-Nasr, which was used for being a good omen for victory.²⁵⁰ Al-'Aīnī adds in his book about Shaykh that his *laqab*, al-Mu'ayyad, was mentioned by scholars to have been one of the names of the Prophet, since one of the Quranic verses says:²⁵¹

"هو الذي أيدك بنصره"

Al-'Aīnī also notes that the *alqāb* were a divine choice, thus they carry a certain reverence and blessing.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Levanoni, 377

²⁵⁰ Al-'Aīnī, *Al-sayf al-muhammad*, 59

²⁵¹ *Al-Sayf al-muhammad*, 91 (citing Quran – al-Anfal: 62)

²⁵² *Al-Sayf al-muhammad*, 94-95

A similar account is given in Al-‘Aīnī’s biography of Ṭaṭar (r. 824/1421).

Al-‘Aīnī explains that Ṭaṭar’s *kunya* was Abū al-Fath, which indicates a wish and a good omen that this sultan would be a victorious conqueror.²⁵³

In reference to Ṭaṭar’s *laqab*, Al-‘Aīnī again notes that the *alqāb* were a divine choice.²⁵⁴ Both accounts reflect the importance of titles in the Mamluk society, that continued during the Burji period.

²⁵³ Al-‘Aīnī, *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir*, 11

²⁵⁴ *Al-Rawḍ al-zāhir*, 13

Chapter Five: Al-Zāhir Baybars (658-76/1260-77) and His Line

Historical reports about al-Zāhir Baybars show that he was a very powerful figure. As an amīr, he was a warrior and a leader of army regiments that fought against Crusaders and Mongols. Al-ʿAīnī lists the virtues of Baybars pointing out his courage, his continuous ability to fight his enemies, conquer lands, and conduct building activities.²⁵⁵ Al-Maqrīzī reports that after the amirs had sworn allegiance to Baybars, he was termed *al-malik al-qāhir* (the Conqueror/Victorious King).²⁵⁶ After he resided in the Citadel of Cairo, he was advised by the vizier Zayn al-Dīn Yaʿqūb b. al-Zubayr to change this title since none of the kings who adopted it was successful.²⁵⁷ Al-Maqrīzī then says that Baybars's *laqab* became *al-malik al-zāhir* (the Victorious King), but he does not mention how it was chosen.²⁵⁸ Although commonly referred to in historical sources as Baybars al-Bunduqdārī, this *nisba* to his original master never appears in any of Baybars's recorded inscriptions. Al-ʿAīnī reports that Baybars' name mentioned in the *khutba* and used on the *sikka* was Baybars al-Sāliḥī.²⁵⁹

"وكان يخطب له، وينقش على الدنانير والدرهم ببيرس الصالحي"

²⁵⁵ Al-ʿAīnī, *Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 176-8

²⁵⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 520

²⁵⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 520

²⁵⁸ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 520

²⁵⁹ *Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 175

It is understandable that Baybars chose al-Sāliḥī to be the title stated in the *khutba* and on the *sikka*, since this would refer to his being a mamluk of the late sultan of Egypt, thus giving him more legitimacy. The use of al-Bunduqdārī rather than al-Sāliḥī in the historical reports of Baybars as an amīr and later as a sultan shows that the original *nisba* of the mamluk was probably the one that stayed more vividly in the minds of the people, although inscriptions give a different message. This seems to have been a common occurrence, for the case was the same with Badr al-Jamālī, who was thus called in the chronicles, while referred to only, in all his inscriptions, as Badr al-Mustansirī.

The earliest recorded royal inscription of Baybars is on a medallion at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to 659/1260-1, where he is referred to as:²⁶⁰

...مولانا السلطان الملك الظاهر العالم العادل المجاهد الم رابط المثار الغاري المؤيد المظفر
المنصور ركن الدنيا والدين سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين سيد الملوك والسلطين صاحب القبلتين
خادم الحرمين الشريفين قسيم أمير المؤمنين ببيرس الصالحي النجمي خلد الله سلطانه وأدام
أيامه وأعلا شأنه..."

(Our Lord, the Sultan, *al-malik al-zāhir*, the Knowledgeable, the Just, the Struggler/Warrior, the One Stationed to Guard Territories, the Fighter at the Borders, the Conqueror, the Supported, the Triumphant, the

²⁶⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 56-7

Victorious, *rukn al-dunyā wa al-dīn* (the Pillar of the World and the Religion), the Sultan of Islam and Muslims, the Lord of Kings and Sultans, the One in charge of the Two Sanctuaries, the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, the Partner of the Prince of the Faithful, Baybars al-Sāliḥī al-Najmī, may Allah perpetuate his sultanate and keep his days eternal and his place high...)

Baybars adopts the typical Zangid and Ayyubid formulae of personal adjectives that are mostly related to *jihād*. Also typically, his *laqab*: *rukn al-dīn* is expanded to *rukn al-dunyā wa al-dīn* when used in inscriptions. When Baybars first came to the throne of Egypt, he sent to kings and deputies affiliated to the Egyptian sultan asking for their acknowledgement and all approved except for Sanjar al-Ḥalabī, the *nā'ib* (deputy) of Damascus who resented the assassination of Qutuz.²⁶¹ Sanjar declared himself king, had his amirs swear allegiance, and adopted the title *al-malik al-mujāhid* (the Struggler/Warrior King).²⁶² Despite Sanjar's rebellious actions, initially, his *khutba* mentioned the name of Baybars first, then Sanjar, and coins were minted in both their names.²⁶³ However, Sanjar stopped that, had a sultanic procession, and quickly started

²⁶¹ *Al-Sulūk* vol. 1, 521

²⁶² *Al-Sulūk* vol. 1, 521

²⁶³ *Al-Sulūk* vol. 1, 521

building the citadel of Damascus.²⁶⁴ In the year 659/1260-1, Baybars's original *ustādh*, Aydakīn al-Bunduqdār, was able to capture Damascus and control its citadel in the name of the sultan of Egypt and al-Maqrīzī reports that in that year Baybars restored the Citadel of Damascus.²⁶⁵ It is therefore rather appropriate for Baybars to describe himself in this inscription as "the Sultan of Islam and Muslims" as well as the "Lord of Kings and Sultans," although both phrases were not new to Islamic inscriptions, they best befit the situation of the new sultan who is fighting to consolidate his rule. Baybars is also referred to as: "the one in charge of the Two Sanctuaries" and "the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries." Al-Maqrīzī reported that in the same year Baybars sent money and materials to restore the Mosque of the Prophet in Madina as well as sending craftsmen to restore the Dome of the Rock.²⁶⁶ These acts of piety, as well as the honour of controlling these shrines, earned him these titles. Again, titles associating a ruler to the honour of serving the holy shrines were not new. The earliest recorded inscription with the title خادم الحرمين (Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries) is one of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn at Qubbat Yūsuf at Jerusalem, dateable to 587/1191-2.²⁶⁷ Al-ʿĀdil Abū Bakr, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's brother, employed similar titles but not the same. At

²⁶⁴ *Al-Sulūk* vol. 1, 521

²⁶⁵ *Al-Sulūk* vol. 1, 526-7

²⁶⁶ *Al-Sulūk* vol. 1, 526

²⁶⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 174

the Citadel of Bosra, in an inscription dated to 610/1213-14, he is termed:

مالك الحرمين الشريفين (The one in charge of the Two Holy Sanctuaries) and

in another at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to the same year, he is

termed: مالك الحرمين الشريفين والبيت المقدس (The one in charge of the Two

Holy Sanctuaries and the Revered House i.e. the *ḥaram* of Jerusalem).²⁶⁸

It is notable that al-ʿĀdil employs words of ownership rather than service.

According to al-Maqrīzī, al-ʿĀdil became the sultan of Egypt and Syria in

1200.²⁶⁹ Neither al-Maqrīzī nor Ibn Taghrī Birdī report that al-ʿĀdil

undertook any construction or restoration works in any of the holy

sanctuaries from 1200 to 1213-14, which suggests that the term “servant

of the sanctuaries” was only claimed then when one did an actual service,

otherwise, he would only be “in charge” of these holy places. In an

inscription at the Citadel of Bosra, dated to 647/1249-50, al-Sāliḥ Najm

al-Dīn Ayyūb is termed: "صاحب الحرمين الشريفين" (The one in charge of the

Two Holy Sanctuaries), in addition to mentioning him as the king of

several lands including India and Yemen.²⁷⁰ Again, neither al-Maqrīzī nor

Ibn Taghrī Birdī report that al-Sāliḥ did any construction or restoration

works in Mecca or Madina, therefore, he is only “in charge” but not a

“servant.” The claim that he was in charge of the sanctuaries was an

²⁶⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 87 & 89

²⁶⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. I, 265

²⁷⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 203-4

exaggeration extended to even India and Yemen. According to al-Maqrīzī, Umar b. Rasūl, the first of the Rasūlids, was in strong control of Yemen and was able to expel the army of al-Sāliḥ out of Mecca when they tried to control it.²⁷¹ So, up to his death in 646/1248-9, Umar b. Rasūl was the one in control of the most holy of Muslim sanctuaries, although Medina was still under the control of its own amīr, who was an ally of al-Sāliḥ.²⁷² The situation did not change in the next year (647/1249-50), when al-Sāliḥ died, and Mecca remained under the control of the Rasūlids.

In the above inscription of Baybars at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to 659/1260-1, he is referred to with the later very common phrase in his inscriptions: *قسيم أمير المؤمنين* or "Partner of the Prince of the Faithful." Again, this title was not new, but Baybars was only able to use it because he revived the Abbasid Caliphate, which was eliminated when the Mongols took over Baghdad in 1258. Al-Suyūṭī mentions that Qutuz, right after his victory at 'Aīn Jālūt, knew of the arrival of a prince of the Abbasid house, whom he ordered to be sent to Cairo so that he can restore the Abbasid caliphate at Baghdad.²⁷³ However, Qutuz was assassinated

²⁷¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 416

²⁷² *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 416

²⁷³ Ashour, 51-2

before this could happen and the sultan who could implement this idea was Baybars, who was informed by 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Bunduqdār, his deputy at Damascus, that a prince of the Abbasid house arrived there.²⁷⁴ Baybars immediately took action to receive the Abbasid prince in Cairo and declare him the new Caliph, who acquired the title "al-Mustansir bi-Allah."²⁷⁵ The new Sultan paid allegiance to the new Caliph, and in return, the Caliph declared the Sultan a legitimate ruler of Islamic lands.²⁷⁶ Baybars was no longer considered to have taken what was not rightfully his, since now he was acknowledged by the restored Abbasid Caliphate, then ruling from Cairo.²⁷⁷ The earliest recorded inscription with this title is one of Abū Shujā', son of Malik Shāh, at the northern portico of the Great Mosque of Damascus, dated to 503/1109-10.²⁷⁸ Abū Shujā' adopted the same title at Qazvin in an inscription dated to 508/1114-15; at the Great Mosque of Diyarbekir in an inscription dated to 511/1117-18; and in another at the Great Mosque of Gulpaigan, dateable to 521/1127-8.²⁷⁹ The title reappears with the Rūm Saljuqs when it was adopted by Abū al-Fath, Muhammad b. Mas'ūd in the construction text of

²⁷⁴ Ashour, 52

²⁷⁵ Ashour, 54

²⁷⁶ Ashour, 54

²⁷⁷ Ashour, 54

²⁷⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 81-2

²⁷⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 99-101, 117-8, & 118-9

Dār al-Siyāda at Mashhad, dated to 577/1181-2.²⁸⁰ It is also found at Qutb Minār at Delhi in an inscription dateable to 602/1205-6.²⁸¹ Several Rūm Saljuq sultans adopted this title in their inscriptions, e.g.: Abū al-Fath Kaykāūs (inscription dateable to 607/1210-11); 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād (inscription dated to 628/1228-9); and Abū al-Fath Kay Khusraw (inscriptions dated to 635/1237-8, 636/1238-9, 640/1242-3, and others).²⁸² In adopting this title, Baybars strangely followed the Saljuq and Rūm Saljuq formulae, rather than the Zangid and Ayyubid formulae that were so popular with the Mamluks and that do not have recorded use of this title.

A related title that appears in later inscriptions of Baybars is:

الأمير ببيعة الخلفيتين

(the one who ordered allegiance to two Caliphs). This title first appears at the mosque of Baybars in Cairo, in an inscription dated to 665/1267.²⁸³ It also appears again in the inscriptions at the mausoleum of Khālid b. al-Walīd at Homs, dated to 666/1267, and the shrine of Prophet Moses near Jericho, dated to 668/1269-70.²⁸⁴ Al-Maqrīzī relates that after the death of

²⁸⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 117

²⁸¹ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 12

²⁸² *Répertoire* Vol. X, 47-8; XI, 5-6; XI, 97, 106-7, 143

²⁸³ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 110-11

²⁸⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 128-29 & 141-2

Caliph al-Mustansir bi-Allah in 660/1261, in battle against the Mongols, Baybars paid allegiance to another prince of the Abbasid house, namely, Caliph al-Hākim bi-Amr Allah, who was recognized as a caliph in 661/1262.²⁸⁵ It is not clear why such a title does not appear in any of the surviving inscriptions in the four years in between the time of allegiance of the second caliph till the construction of the mosque of Baybars in Cairo. This title is not common in the inscriptions of Baybars and only appears three times in the period from 1267 to 1269-70. In the three instances where this title is found, it is mentioned rhyming with:

"خادم الحرمين الشريفين"

(Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries), and

"صاحب القبلتين" or "مالك القبلتين"

(The one in charge of the Two *qiblas* i.e. Mecca and Jerusalem).

Appropriately chosen, the rhyming phrases are ones relating Baybars to the holy places of Islam, either by service or control. In addition to being the protector of the Caliphate, he is also propagandized as the protector of the holy places. Later surviving inscriptions of Baybars do not refer to the Abbasid Caliphs except on two towers at Karak, dated to 676/1277-8, where he is termed: "محيي الخلافة المعظمة" (Reviver of the Glorified

²⁸⁵ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 541 & 547

Caliphate).²⁸⁶ This suggests that, although Baybars was able to restore the Abbasid Caliphate, which definitely gave him better legitimacy during his early years of rule, there was not much need to propagandize his relationship to the Caliphate with titles better than the standard one appearing in most of his inscriptions, namely, *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn* (Partner of the Prince of the Faithful).

Some Zangid, Ayyibid, and Rūm Saljuq inscriptions show similar wishful prayers to the inscription of Baybars at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to 659/1260-1. However, Nūr al-Dīn's inscriptions only occasionally include prayers to perpetuate his kingdom or extend his days, and more commonly ask for forgiveness and reward. The same occurs with the inscriptions of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. Such phrases wishing for the kingdom's perpetuation are more common with later Ayyubids like al-Zāhir Ghāzī, son of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn; al-'Adil Abū Bakr and his son al-Mu'azzam 'Isā; and al-'Azīz Muhammad b. al-Zāhir Ghāzī and his son al-Nāṣir Yūsuf. It is possible that such prayers were more common when rivalry increased among the rulers of the Ayyubid house.

²⁸⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 222-4

Another inscription at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to 659/1260-1, adopts the same Zangid and Ayyubid formula of personal adjectives.²⁸⁷ In this case the reference to the sultan starts with: عز لمولانا السلطان (Power to our Lord, the Sultan). The original version of this prayer appears with Abbasid Caliphs, like Abū Ja'far al-Muqtadir, who has several tissue fragments with: "عز من الله" (Power from God) preceding his name and titles.²⁸⁸ This practice of using "Power from God," "Blessings from God," "Victory from God," and the like was carried on by later Abbasid and Fatimid caliphs. The Phrase "عز لمولانا الملك" appears on the Maristan of Nūr al-Dīn at Damascus in an inscription dateable to 569/1173-4,²⁸⁹ while the phrase: "عز لمولانا السلطان" appears on a Quran chair of Abū al-Fath Kaykāūs b. Kaykhusraw, dateable to 616/1219-20.²⁹⁰ It seems that this phrase was not commonly used in Ayyubid inscriptions. The few inscriptions that employ it include one from Hama dateable to 617/1220-1 that belongs to al-Mansūr Abū al-Ma'ālī Muḥammad; one from Diyarbekir dated to 634/1236-7 that belongs to al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn; one on a basin from Egypt, dateable to 637/1239-40, made for al-'Ādil Abū Bakr b. al-Kāmil; another two on basins made for al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn,

²⁸⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 58

²⁸⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. III, 58-9, 137, & 173

²⁸⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 76

²⁹⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 165

dateable to 647/1249-50; and the construction inscription of the Citadel of Bosra, dated¹ to 647/1249-50, that also belongs to al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn.²⁹¹ Some Rūm Saljuq inscriptions and some inscriptions of al-Malik al-Raḥīm Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu' also include this phrase. This prayer was not frequently used by Ayyubids, it was adopted occasionally by al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn, and rarely appears on the inscriptions of Baybars on buildings.

In the building inscription at his madrasa in Cairo, dated to 660/1261-2, Baybars is referred to as "*al-sayyid al-ajall*," which appeared with the Ghaznavids and Marwanids and was taken up by the Fatimids. Nūr al-Dīn and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn are rarely referred to by this phrase that was very common in Fatimid inscriptions. Later Ayyubids also use it only occasionally, mainly in the line of al-'Adil Abū Bakr. A few of al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn's inscriptions on buildings and objects show this phrase, however, they are dated or dateable to the year of his death, 647/1249. Inscriptions of Baybars that include this phrase are also very few compared to the recorded inscriptions from his era. In addition to the inscription at his madrasa in Cairo, the phrase appears again in the *waqf* inscription of the mausoleum of Khālīd b. al-Walīd at Homs, dated to

²⁹¹ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 171; XI, 88, XI, 199 & 200

666/1267; the inscription at the shrine of Prophet Moses near Jericho, dated to 668/1269-70; and on a tower at al-Karak, dateable to 676/1277-8.²⁹² This phrase does not seem to have had the same popularity with Ayyubids and Mamluks as it did with the Fatimids who used it as an element of the standard formula employed by Badr al-Jamālī and the successive viziers. The involvement of the patron in the building stages of his construction and choice of words on his inscriptions is disputable. The above-mentioned inscriptions only mention Baybars, except for the one at the shrine of Prophet Moses, which mentions that it was built during the *niyaba* of *al-amīr al-kabīr* Jamāl al-Dīn Aqush al-Najībī.²⁹³ This does not even suggest to us that Jamāl al-Dīn was the one responsible for the choice of words, for the inscription then mentions that it was executed under the supervision of (*bi-wilayat* بولاية) a Muhammad b. Rahḥāl.²⁹⁴ Although, Ibn Rahḥāl must have had the approval of Jamāl al-Dīn before the inscription was executed, it cannot be known who chose the wording in the first place. The inscription explains that Baybars gave the building order on his way coming back from pilgrimage to visit Jerusalem. It might be that he gave the order to Jamāl al-Dīn hastily in between his travels and probably did not have time to examine the phrasing of the

²⁹² *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 128-9; 141-2; 223-4

²⁹³ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 141-2

²⁹⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 141-2

inscription. However, in the case of the madrasa in Cairo, al-Maqrīzī informs us that its building did not start until Baybars, who was in Syria at the time, sent its *waqf* to Amīr Jamāl al-Dīn b. Yaghmur.²⁹⁵ Again, it cannot be concluded for sure whether such message included specific building inscriptions. Be it the decision of the patron, his amirs, or his craftsmen, the phrase *al-sayyid al-ajall*, was rarely used by Baybars, possibly just because it fell out of the fashion of the time.

Other phrases used in the inscription of the madrasa of Baybars in Cairo include: "مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم"²⁹⁶ (Possessor of the Necks of Nations – Master of the Kings of Arabs and non-Arabs). These statements are not found on any of the surviving Fatimid inscriptions, which mainly concentrate on the religious status or services of the patron. Similar statements appear in the inscriptions of Malik Shāh at the Great Mosque of Damascus, dated to 475/1082-3, where he is referred to as:²⁹⁷

"سيد ملوك الأمم مولى العرب والعجم"

(Master of the Kings of Nations, Possessor/Patron of Arabs and non-Arabs). Several inscriptions of Malik Shāh at the Citadel of Aleppo, the Great Mosque of Aleppo, and the Great Mosque of Diyarbekir include

²⁹⁵ *Khitat*, Vol. III, 476

²⁹⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 63

²⁹⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 215-16

similar phrases.²⁹⁸ Abū Shujā' Muhammad, son of Malik Shāh, uses similar statements to those of his father, but he is, in some instances, referred to as:²⁹⁹

"مولى الأمم مالك رقاب العرب والعجم"

(Possessor/Patron of Nations, Possessor of the Necks of Arabs and non-Arabs). As was the case with his father, similar statements appear on several of the inscriptions of Abū Shujā'. Also, Maḥmūd, son of Abū Shujā', is referred to in an inscription at the Great Mosque of Diyarbekir, dated to 518/1124-5, as:³⁰⁰

"مالك رقاب الأمم مولى العرب والعجم"

(The Possessor of the Necks of Nations, the Possessor/Patron of Arabs and non-Arabs).

The Ghaznavid minaret of Mas'ūd, dateable to 1114-15, has an inscription that refers to him as:³⁰¹

"مالك رقاب الأمم....مولى ملوك العرب والعجم"

²⁹⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 240, 253-4, 264

²⁹⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 81-2 & 117-18

³⁰⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 142-3

³⁰¹ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 102

(The Possessor of the Necks of Nations, the Possessor/Patron of the Kings of Arabs and non-Arabs), which is the closest version to the one used by Baybars.

Similar statements later appear on several of the inscriptions of the Rūm Saljuqs. An inscription of Qilij Arslān at the Mosque of 'Ala' al-Dīn at Konya, dateable to 551/1156-7, refers to him as:³⁰²

سید سلاطین العرب والعجم مالک رقاب الأمم

(Master of the Sultans of Arabs and non-Arabs, Possessor of the Necks of Nations). Abū al-Fath Kaykāūs has three inscriptions at the citadels of Antalia and Sinope that refer to him by very similar phrases.³⁰³ 'Ala' al-Dīn Kayqubād and his son, Kaykhusraw, also follow their predecessors and uses similar statements in their inscriptions. The case was different with the Zangids and Ayyubids who have rarely used versions of these phrases, although other statements of sovereignty over kings and nations were employed. For example, Nūr al-Dīn, in the inscription at the Ḥalawīyya Mosque at Aleppo, dated to 543/1148-9, is referred to as:

³⁰² *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 11-12

³⁰³ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 109-11, 114, 118

"تاج الملوك والسلطين ومجدها" (The Crown and Greatness of the Kings and Sultans.)³⁰⁴ He is also referred to as "The Crown of Kings and Sultans" in an inscription at the Nūrī Maristan at Aleppo, dateable to 569/1173-4.³⁰⁵ Surviving inscriptions of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn do not show similar phrases, but rather the more common ones, such as "Sultan of Islam and Muslims," that appears in his inscription at Qubbat Yūsuf at Jerusalem, dateable to 587/1191-2, and in the inscription at the madrasa al-Ṣalāḥiyya at Jerusalem, dated to 588/1192-3.³⁰⁶ This was probably due to the more modest tone of Zangids and early Ayyubids that concentrated more on concepts such as *jihād* and Justice. However, the use of versions of the statement employed by Baybars was not common even with later Ayyubids. Surviving inscriptions of later Ayyubids that show such phrases include: an inscription of al-Ashraf Mūsā on a minaret at Mayafārqin, dated to 609/1212-13, where he is referred to as:³⁰⁷

"سيد الأمم ملك العرب والعجم"

(Master of Nations, King of Arabs and non-Arabs); an inscription of al-Ṣālīḥ Najm al-Dīn at the Citadel of Bosra dated to 647/1249-50, where he

³⁰⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 246-7

³⁰⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 77-8

³⁰⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 174, 179

³⁰⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 76

is referred to as "The Sultan of Arabs and non-Arabs,"³⁰⁸ an inscription of Abū al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf at the mosque of al-Karimiyya at Aleppo, dated to 654/1256-7, where he is referred to by the exact phrase used by Baybars.³⁰⁹

"مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم"

(Possessor of the Necks of Nations, Master of the Kings of Arabs and non-Arabs); and another inscription by the same king at al-ʿUmarī Mosque at Aleppo, dated to 655/1257-8, where he is referred to as:³¹⁰

"مالك رقاب الأمم سيد العرب والعجم"

(Possessor of the Necks of Nations, Master of Arabs and non-Arabs).

Variants of the phrase used by Baybars clearly originated with the Saljuqs and were taken up by the Rūm Saljuqs. It seems that such variants were only employed by the Ayyubids in areas that were close to Rūm Saljuq rule e.g. Aleppo and Mayafarqin. It cannot be concluded decisively whether this was due to the use of the same craftsmanship or schools of craftsmen, or the influence and rivalry of nearby territories. The phrase seems to appear in Egypt for the first time at the madrasa of Baybars. When he was an amīr and had to flee the court of Aybak, after Aqtay, the

³⁰⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 203-04

³⁰⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 11

³¹⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 18

head of Bahri Mamluks at the time, was murdered, Baybars went to the court of al-Malik al-Nāṣir at Damascus.³¹¹ At that time Baybars may have been exposed to the inscriptions of Malik Shāh at the Great Mosque of Damascus and may have seen or heard of similar inscriptions at Aleppo, thus decided to use it on his madrasa. However, this phrase was not common in later inscriptions of Baybars for its versions only appear in provincial inscriptions. Of the surviving recorded inscriptions of Baybars, three include versions of this statement. The first is an inscription at Mazār Abū 'Ubayda, near Naples, dated to 675/1277, that mentions

"سيد ملوك العرب والعجم"

(Master of the Kings of Arabs and non-Arabs);

the second is at Qasr al-'Umayd, near Alexandria, dateable to 676/1277-8, where he is termed:

"ملك العرب (والعجم) مالك رقاب الأمم"

(King of Arabs [and non-Arabs], Possessor of the Necks of Nations);

and the third is at Damra, near Gaza, also dateable to 676/1277-8, where he is referred to in the exact phrase on his madrasa in Cairo.³¹²

³¹¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 1, 483-5

³¹² *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 208-9, 214, 222 and *Index géographique*, 12, 103, and 52

More frequently, the inscriptions of Baybars include another sovereignty statement, namely:

"وارث الملك سلطان العرب والعجم والترك"

(Inheritor of the Kingdom, Sultan of Arabs, non-Arabs, and Turks). The word '*ajam*' literally means "non-Arab."³¹³ It may also be used to refer to Persians. It seems redundant to add the Turks to this formula since they are non-Arabs, but the word is probably only added to rhyme with *al-mulk* as was the fashion of the time to rhyme each two consecutive phrases in royal inscriptions. The earliest of the inscriptions of Baybars that shows this statement is that at the mosque of Kara (located between Homs and Damascus), dated to 664/1266.³¹⁴ It later appears in a couple of inscriptions at the mausoleum of Khālid b. al-Walīd at Homs, dated to the same year and month as the one at Kara; a *waqf* inscription on a marble panel also at the mausoleum of Khālid, dated to 666/1267; an inscription at the Shrine of Prophet Moses, dated to 668/1269-70; and an inscription at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to 676/1277-8.³¹⁵ A very similar version, dated to 673/1275, is also found at the Citadel of Damascus, where Baybars is termed:³¹⁶

³¹³ *Al-Mu'jam al-wajīz*, 408

³¹⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 103

³¹⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 104-5; 128-9; 141-2; 226

³¹⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 195

(Inheritor of the Kingdom, Sultan of Arabs, non-Arabs, and Rūm).

Although similar statements of sovereignty were found in earlier Islamic inscriptions, this particular phrase seems to be an invention of Baybars or his craftsmen. Prior to the inscription of Baybars, the phrase "inheritor of..." appears in a couple of inscriptions of Abū al-Muzaffar Iltatmush, one at the mosque of Sīdī Wārā, Bilgrām, India, dated to 627/1229-30, and the other is at Sultan Gharī, Malikpur, dated to 629/1231-2, where in both he is termed: "وارث ملك سليمان" (Inheritor of the Kingdom of Solomon).³¹⁷ An inscription of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir at Ḥarbā, dated to 629/1231-2, refers to him as: "وارث الأنبياء والمرسلين" (Inheritor of Prophets and Messengers).³¹⁸ However, the closest inscription that most probably influenced that of Baybars is the inscription at the mausoleum of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb in his madrasa in Cairo, dated to 647/1249-50, in which he is referred to as: "وارث الملك عن آبائه الأكرمين" (Inheritor of Kingdom from His Respectable Forefathers), previously discussed in Chapter Four.³¹⁹ Baybars could not mention his "noble forefathers" for he was originally a slave and has not inherited his kingdom legitimately in a family line. The verb *waratha* (to inherit) in Arabic also bears the

³¹⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 13-14, 30

³¹⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 27-8

³¹⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 196 & current study, Chapter Four, 87-89

meaning of transfer of something from someone to another to be responsible for it, or occurrence of something as a result of a cause.³²⁰ It does not necessarily mean family inheritance. Baybars reached authority only by his qualifications and power. So, the first part of the statement had to stop at *wārith al-mulk* (Inheritor of the Kingdom). The second part had to rhyme, then was added *sultān al-'arab wa al-'ajam wa al-turk* (Sultan of Arabs, non-Arabs, and Turks). Glory and sovereignty now come from sheer power and competence, with no possible reference to forefathers. The use of the version *sultān al-'arab wa al-'ajam wa al-rūm*, although not rhyming, was probably used to refer to the victories of Baybars over the Rūm Saljuqs. At the time, the Rūm Saljuqs were allied with the Mongols against the Mamluks.³²¹ In Sha'bān of the year 673/1275, al-'Aīnī mentions that Baybars and his army successfully raided Sīs, in present day Turkey, then under the rule of the Rūm Saljuqs.³²² The inscription at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to Dhū al-Hijja of the same year, mentioning the Rūm instead of the Turks, was probably a commemoration of this event, which resulted in the non-rhyming version.

³²⁰ *Al-Mu'jam al-wajīz*, 664

³²¹ Ashour, 104

³²² *Iqd al-jumān* Vol.2, 132

Another sovereignty statement that seems to be a novelty that appeared with Baybars is:

إسكندر الزمان صاحب القرآن

(Alexander of Time, Follower of the Quran). This phrase is found in the inscription of 664/1266 at the Mosque of Kara; the two inscriptions of the same month and year at the Mausoleum of Khālid b. al-Walīd at Homs; and the 668/1260-70 inscription at the Shrine of Prophet Moses, which all, as mentioned above, contained the phrase *wārith al-mulk sultān al-'arab wa al-'ajam wa al-turk*.³²³ The proximity of dates, the nearby locations, and the use of similar phrases suggest that these inscriptions might have been executed by the same team of craftsmen. The mention of Alexander in inscriptions earlier than the era of Baybars occurs in an inscription at Qutb Minār, Delhi, of Abū al-Muzaffar Muḥammad b. Sām, dateable to 602/1205-6, and two inscriptions of Abū al-Fath Kaykhusraw b. Kayqubād, one at Tash Mederse at Egherdir, dated to 635/1237-8, and the other at Injir Khān, dated to 636/1238-9.³²⁴ The inscriptions at Qutb Minār and at Tash Mederse refer to the patrons as: *iskandar al-thānī* (The Second Alexander). The one at Injir Khān refers to the patron as: *dhū al-qarnayn al-zamān iskandar al-thānī* (The Two-horned of Time, the

³²³ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 103-105 & 141-2

³²⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 12; Vol. XI, 97, 106-7

Second Alexander), where the "two-horned" or *dhū al-qarnayn* is traditionally understood as the Quranic term used to refer to Alexander the Great.³²⁵ The innovation of Baybars or his craftsmen is in the phrasing of the short statement, which suggests, in rhyming, that he possess military prowess, has religious knowledge, and abides by religious regulations.

Of importance is the inscription of Baybars at the Citadel of Safad, reported by al-Maqrīzī. Al-Maqrīzī informs us that in the year 665/1267, Baybars, upon knowing about an upcoming Mongol threat to Syria, he ordered the restoration of the Citadel of Safad.³²⁶ Baybars divided the work among his amirs, while keeping a good part of the restoration work for himself, where he was personally involved in moving building materials and other construction works.³²⁷ Such an involvement in the building suggests Baybars might have been well aware of the inscription that al-Maqrīzī mentions was executed on the walls of the Citadel after its completion in 666/1267. The inscription at Safad is rather different than the standard ones: its tone is very pious, as opposed to proud, and stresses the military victories of Baybars over the Crusaders as well as his

³²⁵ Watt, "Iskandar," 125

³²⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 43

³²⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 43

personal involvement in the restoration works and ends up with a touching prayer. The inscription states:³²⁸

"...أمر بتجديد هذه القلعة وتحسينها وتكميل عمارتها وتحسينها بعد ما خلصها من أيدي الفرنج الملاحين وردّها إلى يد المسلمين ونقلها من حوزة الديوية إلى حوزة المؤمنين وأعادها إلى الإيمان كما بدأ بها أول مرة وجعلها للكفار خسارة وحسرة واجتهد وجاهد حتى بدل الكفر بالإيمان والناقوس بالأذان والإنجيل بالقرآن ووقف بنفسه حتى حمل تراب خنادقها وحجارتها فيه بنفسه وخواصه على الرؤوس السلطان الملك الظاهر أبو الفتح بيبرس فمن صارت إليه هذه القلعة من ملوك الإسلام ومن سكنها من المجاهدين فليجعل له نصيبا من أجره فلا يخله من الترحم في سره وجهره فقد صار يقال عمر الله صرحها بعد ما كان يقال عجل الله فتحها والعاقبة للمتقين إلى يوم الدين."

(...the renovation of this citadel, its fortification, the completion of its restoration/building, and its improvement was ordered after (he) rescued it from the hands of the cursed Crusaders; restored it to the hands of the Muslims; transferred it from the ownership of the Christians (?) to the ownership of the believers; brought it back to belief as it was at first; made it a loss and a regret to infidels; strove and worked hard to replace infidelity with faith, the bell with the *adhān*, and the Bible with the Quran; stood himself to carry the dust of its trenches and its stones, along with his entourage, on their heads, the Sultan, the King, al-Zāhir Abū al-

³²⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 125-6

Fath Baybars. And whoever later controls this citadel of Muslim Kings, and whoever resides in it of the strugglers/warriors, is asked to give him (Baybars) a share of his reward, so may he pray for blessings upon him (Baybars) in his secret and overt prayers, for now (people) say: May Allah keep its edifice restored after (they) used to say: May Allah help (us) conquer it soon. May Allah reward the pious till the Resurrection Day).

This inscription related by al-Maqrīzī, is not typical, even among the military architecture inscriptions of Baybars. It does not contain the typical Zangid and Ayyubid formulae of consecutive personal adjectives that appear on other military buildings, such as several of those at the Citadel of Damascus, one at Hīṣn al-Akrād, and two on the towers of Karak. Although standard statements, phrases, or adjectives that are used in other military inscriptions bear similar meanings to those of the passage at Safad, it seems that when Baybars was directly involved in the building and was probably also involved with the choice of wordings for the inscription, he preferred the use of a more pious tone that concentrates more on the accomplishment rather than his own personal qualities. In that Baybars was probably following earlier practices of Nūr al-Dīn and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, each of whom had examples of rather pious inscriptions that

do not follow standard formulae. For example the inscription of Nūr al-Dīn at the mosque of Hama, dated to 559/1163-4, does not mention any of his titles except *nāṣir amīr al-mu'minīn*, otherwise he is "the servant of God in need of His mercy, the submitting to His grace, the one who guides/reduces the enemies of His religion."³²⁹ Another example is an inscription of Nūr al-Dīn on two of the towers of Damascus walls, dated to 568/1172-3, where Nūr al-Dīn's name is mentioned with no titles and he is only referred to as "the one in need of his God's mercy."³³⁰ An example of such inscriptions of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is his inscription at al-Aqsa mosque previously mentioned in Chapter Three.³³¹

Most of the surviving recorded inscriptions of al-Zāhir Baybars contain the typical Zangid and Ayyubid formulae of personal adjectives. Frequently, the inscriptions of Baybars also use phrases common in earlier Islamic inscriptions, such as "Sultan of Islam and Muslims" and "Master of Kings and Sultans." Roughly, through the first half of his rule, there is more reference to Baybars in his inscriptions as "Abū al-Fath. Baybars al-Ṣāliḥī *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn*." There is less use of his *nisba* to his Ayyubid master in the second half of his rule, where al-Ṣāliḥī

³²⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 36

³³⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 75

³³¹ Current study, Chapter Three, 79

almost disappears, and his name rather appears as "Abū al-Fath Baybars *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn*," and sometimes he is referred to by "Baybars b. 'Abd Allah," as an alternative *nisba*. 'Abd Allah (the servant of God) serves as an alternative to mentioning the name of Baybars's father, who was not royalty, thus was not important to mention. He is denoted by being the servant of God, since, according to Islam, every human should be. Titles that appear on almost all long version inscriptions of Baybars are Abū al-Fath, "*rukṇ al-dunyā wa al-dīn*," and "*qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn*," the first, his *kunya*, and the second, his *laqab*, where both indicate his service and support to the religion. The third is his key to legitimate rule, at least in his early years as a sultan. Although following many several standard phrases, statements, and ideas, there were some instances where the inscriptions of Baybars were innovative. Although the level of involvement of the sultan in such innovations cannot be measured, it can safely be concluded that he at least approved some of them. The innovation of Baybars were mostly within the spirit of the Ayyubids, stressing piety as well as power. Inscriptions of Baybars, being the earliest of Mamluk sultans, from whose era several are recorded, show the smooth transition of the style of inscriptions from Ayyubid to Mamluk. No major changes or innovations appear in the era of Baybars.

Al-Sa'īd Baraka Khān (676-8/1277-9)

During his lifetime, Baybars nominated his son as his successor. In the year 662/1264, Baybars had the typical procession declaring his son a sultan.³³² However, the earliest surviving inscription that records the name of Baraka Khān next to his father's is dated to 669/1271. This inscription at Hīṣn al-Akrād mentions that the restoration of the building was ordered by "Our Lord, the Sultan, al-Malik al-Zāhir *rukn al-dunyā wa al-dīn* Abū al-Fath, Baybars *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn* and his son al-Malik al-Sa'īd *nāṣir al-dīn*."³³³ Another inscription at the same place and dated to the same year refers to Baraka Khān as "his heir apparent (i.e. Baybars's) the Sultan al-Malik al-Sa'īd *nāṣir al-dunyā wa al-dīn*."³³⁴ The few inscriptions that survive from the era of Baybars and include the name or titles of Baraka Khān indicated that he had the *alqab*: al-Malik al-Sa'īd and *nāṣir al-dunyā wa al-dīn*.

In the year 678/1279, after some problems with powerful Bahri amirs, Baraka Khān was deposed as a sultan and sent to al-Karak, where he was positioned as its ruler.³³⁵ Very few inscriptions survive from the time of Baraka Khān as a sultan. In one, at Baalbak, dated to 677/1278-9, Baraka

³³² *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 10-11

³³³ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 149

³³⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 150

³³⁵ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 118-19

Khān is termed "*qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn*," a title he directly inherits from his father. A restoration text at Hīṣn al-Akrād mentions the *kunya* of Baraka Khān, namely, Abū al-Ma'ālī (Father of Loftiness), which indicates honour rather than accomplishment, although his father's *kunya*, Abū al-Fath, indicated the greatest accomplishment of a successful sultan at the time of war, namely, conquest. Finally, in an inscription at the Citadel of al-Bīra, dated to 677/1278-9, Baraka Khān is given a brief version of the Ayyubid personal qualities, namely, *al-'ālim*, *al-'ādil*, and *al-mujāhid*.³³⁶ He is also referred to as "the one who obtains the rights of the oppressed from the oppressors" and "the repressor/restrainer of the outcasts and mutineers." Clearly, Baraka Khān had not had enough time to accomplish much and deserve such titles, nevertheless, he was the new sultan and the son of rather powerful late figure, thus could be given honourific titles. This was no Mamluk innovation, for the same occurred with new Ayyubid kings whose only merit at their early days of rule was that they were royalties. Had Baraka Khān been given more time to stay in power, he probably would have adopted the same phrases and statements of his father.

³³⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 242

Chapter Six: Al-Mansūr Qalāwūn (678-89/1279-90)

Al-Maqrīzī informs us that Qalāwūn was brought to Egypt when young and bought by al-Amīr 'Alā' al-Dīn Aqsunqur al-Sāqī al-'Ādilī, one of the mamluks of al-Malik al-'Ādil Abū Bakr b. Ayyūb.³³⁷ He was termed *al-alfī*, later to become the title he was known by, because Aqsunqur bought him with one thousand dinars.³³⁸ When Aqsunqur died, Qalāwūn and his *khushdāshiyya*, then termed al-'Alā'iyya, were taken by al-Sālih Najm al-Dīn, who included Qalāwūn in his Bahri mamluks.³³⁹ Several incidents related by al-Maqrīzī and other historians show that Qalāwūn was a close colleague of Baybars, when both were amirs. During the reign of Baybars, Qalāwūn was one of the most powerful high amirs. During the problems Baraka Khān had with the Bahri mamluks, Qalāwūn appears as one of the most powerful figures. When the amirs insisted on deposing him, Baraka Khān sent to Qalāwūn and Badr al-Dīn Baysarā requesting to be given al-Karak, which they approved and promised not to harm him.³⁴⁰ Al-'Aīnī relates that after the deposition of Baraka Khān, the amirs offered Qalāwūn the sultanate because they thought he was best qualified for it, but he refused.³⁴¹ Qalāwūn's reply to the offer indicates how big a

³³⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 122

³³⁸ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 122

³³⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 122

³⁴⁰ *'Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 221

³⁴¹ *'Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 223

role he played in deposing Baraka Khān, for he said that he did not depose Baraka Khān to become the new sultan, but to maintain the system.³⁴² So, instead of becoming a sultan himself, Qalāwūn placed the seven year old al-‘Ādil Salāmish, son of Baybars, because, according to his own words, it was more proper for the sultanate to remain in the line of Baybars.³⁴³ However, Qalāwūn became his Atabek, thus the actual figure in power. Al-Maqrīzī and al-‘Aīnī give different accounts on how Qalāwūn became sultan. Al-Maqrīzī reports that Qalāwūn gathered the amirs and talked to them about how young Salāmish was, and that the sultanate should be given to a grown-up man.³⁴⁴ Upon that, Salāmish was sent to his brother in al-Karak.³⁴⁵ Al-‘Aīnī, on the other hand, mentions that due to Qalāwūn’s good abilities as a ruler, the amirs gathered and decided that there was no use for Salāmish and that Qalāwūn should become the sultan.³⁴⁶

Al-Maqrīzī informs us that after the amirs and other heads of state swore allegiance to Qalāwūn, he was given the title “al-Malik al-Mansūr” (the

³⁴² *‘Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 223

³⁴³ *‘Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 223

³⁴⁴ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 121

³⁴⁵ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 121

³⁴⁶ *‘Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 2, 225

Victorious King).³⁴⁷ Like Baybars, most appropriately, he ordered that the title “al-Sāliḥī” became his formal *nisba* for he ordered it to be used in all his correspondence.³⁴⁸ Among the *alqāb* of Qalāwūn, mentioned by al-Maqrīzī, are “Sayf al-Dīn,” which was his *laqab* as an amīr; “al-Alfī,” which was a very early *laqab* given to him upon being bought; “al-Sāliḥī al-Najmī,” referring to his later *ustādh* al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn; and “al-‘Alā’ī,” referring to his original master, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Aqsunqur. An inscription recorded early in the era of Qalāwūn - a building inscription of the Ribat al-Mansūrī at Hebron, dated to 679/1280-81 -³⁴⁹ mentions his *kunya*: Abū al-Ma‘ālī (Father of Loftiness), which was the same *kunya* of Baraka Khān.

Typically, Qalāwūn’s inscriptions use the expanded form of his *laqab* Sayf al-Dīn (Sword of the Religion) to become *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn* (Sword of the World and the Religion). In none of his surviving inscriptions is Qalāwūn referred to by his original titles before he became a mamluk of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn, namely: al-Alfī and al-‘Alā’ī. Just like Baybars, who had no use for “al-Bunduqdārī” after he became sultan, Qalāwūn is always referred to as “al-Sāliḥī.”

³⁴⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 122

³⁴⁸ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 122

³⁴⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 256-7

Early inscriptions of Qalāwūn mainly refer to him in versions of the simple format:

"مولانا السلطان الملك المنصور أبو المعالي سيف الدنيا والدين قلاوون الصالحي"

(Our Lord, the Sultan, *al-malik al-mansūr* [the Victorious King] *abū al-al-ma'ālī* (Father of Loftiness), *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn* Qalāwūn al-Sālihī). It is not until the year 681/1282 that an expanded inscription of Qalāwūn appears on the walls of Baalbak.³⁵⁰ This inscription, however, does not imply that Qalāwūn was much involved with it. It mentions that the restoration works were done "in the days of" Qalāwūn by the *mutawallī* at the time. The inscription does not mention that this restoration was ordered by Qalāwūn, thus, he probably had nothing to do with it. Three inscriptions recorded at Baalbak are important because they shed some light on the level of involvement of the sultan in the choice of their wording. The first is the one of 681/1282 on the walls of Baalbak, the second is at al-Ḥanbalī mosque, dated to 682/1283, and the third is at the Great Mosque at Baalbak, dated to 682/1283-4.³⁵¹ The three inscriptions mention that they were executed "in the days of" Qalāwūn, not the usual reference to the sultan's order of construction or restoration.

³⁵⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 9

³⁵¹ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 9; 15-16; 16-17

The first, as mentioned above, was executed by the *mutawallī*, the second mentions the responsibility of Amīr Najm al-Dīn Hasen, the *na'ib* of the city of Baalbak, and its *qādī*, and the third only mentions the name of the same *na'ib*. In the first inscription, Qalāwūn is referred to as.³⁵²

"مولانا السلطان الأعظم شاهنشاه المعظم مالك رقاب الأمم سلطان العرب والعجم المؤيد من
السماء المنصور على الأعداء الملك المنصور سيف الدنيا والدين غياث الإسلام والمسلمين
مبيد الطغاة والملحدين قاهر الخوارج والم(ت)مر(د)ين ملك البحرين خاد(م) حرمين قلاوون
قسيم أمير المؤمنين خلد الله ملكه"

(Our Lord, the Greatest Sultan, the Glorified King of Kings, the Possessor of the Necks of Nations, the Sultan of Arabs and non-Arabs, the Supported by Heavens, the Victorious over Enemies, *al-malik al-mansūr sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, the Rescuer/Saviour of Islam and Muslims, the Exterminator of Oppressors and Atheists, the Conqueror of Deviators and Mutineers; the King of the Two Seas, the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, Qalāwūn, the Partner of the Prince of the Faithful, may God perpetuate his kingdom).

³⁵² Répertoire Vol. XIII, 9

In the second inscription, Qalāwūn is referred to as:³⁵³

"مولانا السلطان الأعظم شاهنشاه المعظم مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم والترك
والديلم الملك المنصور سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين قامع الكفرة والمشركين محيي العدل في
تعاليم ملك البحرين خادم الحرمين الشريفين أبي المعالي قلاوون قسيم أمير المؤمنين خلد الله
سلطانه وشد أزره ببقاء ولده ولي عهده مولانا السلطان الملك العالم علاء الدين وأدام ملكهما
وجعل البسيطة ملكهما"

(Our Lord, the Greatest Sultan, the Glorified King of Kings, the Possessor
of the Necks of Nations, the Master of the Kings of Arabs, non-Arabs,
Turks, and Daylamis,³⁵⁴ *al-malik al-mansūr*, the Sultan of Islam and
Muslims, the Oppressor of Infidels and Polytheists, the Reviver of Justice
in All Worlds, the King of the Two Seas, the Servant of the Two Holy
Sanctuaries; *abu al-ma'ālī* Qalāwūn, the Partner of the Prince of the
Faithful, May God perpetuate his sultanate and strengthen him with the
existence/presence of his son and heir apparent our Lord the Sultan *al-*
malik al-'ālim (the Knowledgeable King) 'Alā' al-Dīn, and (may God)
perpetuate their kingdom and make the earth theirs).

³⁵³ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 15-16

³⁵⁴ *daylam* (Daylamis) is a word used to refer to the highlands of Gīlān in present day Iran (Minorsky.

"Daylam" *EI*, Vol. II, 189).

In the third inscription, he is referred to as:³⁵⁵

"مولانا السلطان الأعظم شاه نشاه (sic) مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم والترك
والديلم مولانا الملك المنصور سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين قانع الكفرة والمشركين محيي العدل
في العالمين ملك البحرين خادم الحرمين الشريفين أبي المعالي قلاوون قسيم أمير المؤمنين خلد
الله سلطانه وشد أزره ببقاء ولده وولي عهده مولانا السلطان ابن السلطان الملك الصالح علاء
الدين وأدام ملكهما"

(Our Lord, the Glorified Sultan, the King of Kings, the Possessor of the
Necks of Nations, the Master of the Kings of the Arabs, non-Arabs,
Turks, and Daylamis, Our Lord *al-malik al-mansūr*, the Sultan of Islam
and Muslims, the Oppressor of Infidels and Polytheists, the Reviver of
Justice in All Worlds, the King of the Two Seas, the Servant of the Two
Holy Sanctuaries, *abu al-ma'ālī Qalāwūn*, the Partner of the Prince of the
Faithful, May God perpetuate his sultanate and strengthen him with the
existence/presence of his son and heir apparent, Our Lord, the Sultan, the
Son of the Sultan, *al-malik al-sā'ih* (the Righteous King), 'Alā' al-Dīn,
and (may God) perpetuate their kingdom).

The three inscriptions bear many similarities. In the three of them, the
term *shāhinshāh* is employed. This term is a Persian term that was

³⁵⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 16-17

employed by the kings of Iran prior to Islam.³⁵⁶ *Shāhinshāh* was employed as an honourific title in the early days of the Abbasid Caliphate, when the Muslims of Persian origin were given prominence.³⁵⁷ This title was later employed on the coins of the Buwayhids, probably as a way of relating themselves to a Sassanid origin.³⁵⁸ It is possible that the Buwayhids used this title in its Persian version because the *‘ulamā*, during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph al-Qa’im bi-Amr Allah, objected to the employment of its Arabic translation: “*malik al-mulūk*.”³⁵⁹ This objection of the *ulama* was based on the traditions of the Prophet, which mention that the title “King of Kings” should not be used by humans, since it is a divine title.³⁶⁰ *Shāhinshāh* appears as a title of the Buwayhid ‘Adud al-Dawla on wooden panels dated to 363/973-4.³⁶¹ Later, it appears on several inscriptions of the Saljuq Malik Shāh, e.g. the inscription at the mosque of Anī, dateable 466/1073-4; inscriptions at the Great Mosque of Damascus, dated to 475/1082-3; inscription at the Citadel of Aleppo, dated to 480/1087-8; inscription at the Great Mosque of Isfahan, dateable to 481/1088-9; and the inscription on the minaret of the Great Mosque of

³⁵⁶ Abū al-Nasr, 118

³⁵⁷ Abū al-Nasr, 118

³⁵⁸ Abū al-Nasr, 118

³⁵⁹ Al-Basha, 354

³⁶⁰ Al-Basha, 354 & Abū al-Nasr, 118

³⁶¹ *Répertoire* Vol. V. 101-4

Aleppo, dated to 483/1090-1.³⁶² *Shāhinshāh* also appears in several inscriptions of the Fatimid vizier al-Afdāl, but in this case it is not a title, but part of his personal name: *Abū al-Qāsim Shāhinshāh*. The term remains in use as a title in Saljuq inscriptions of Muhammad Abū Shujāʿ, son of Malik Shāh, and his son Abū al-Qasam Maḥmūd. The title was taken up by the Rūm Saljuqs and appears in many of their inscriptions e.g. several of the inscriptions of 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād.³⁶³ Al-Maqrīzī reports that when the Abbasid Caliph al-Nāṣir sent the letter of investiture to the Ayyubid sultan al-ʿĀdil, he referred to him as *shāhinshāh malik al-mulūk*, which is the Persian and Arabic versions of the same phrase: King of Kings.³⁶⁴ However, the title seems not to have enjoyed any popularity in the inscriptions of the Zangids and Ayyubids, neither does it appear on any of the recorded inscriptions of al-Zāhir Baybars. Of the recorded inscriptions of Qalāwūn, the title only appears in the mentioned inscriptions at Baalbak, ones that were executed in his days, not by his order, and were supervised by his subordinates. This shows that the title was probably not ordered by Qalāwūn either.

³⁶² *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 193; 214-19; 240; 247-8; and 253-4

³⁶³ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 203; 217; 226; 226-7; & 230-1

³⁶⁴ Al-Basha, 354

declared their sons their heirs apparent, inscriptions were used to declare even further recognition of this fact, and allegiance to the new sultans.

This seems to have been a Mamluk invention, because they were most conscious of legitimacy, especially when their sultanate was not inherited, but rather gained. The reference to descent in the inscriptions of Ayyubid house, for example, does not emphasize the inheritance of power during the life of the sultan, but rather the line of descent of each of them.

Inscriptions of the lines of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and al-ʿĀdil, for example, mostly mention the name of the sultan along with his father's and sometimes his grandfather's, as "the son of...". It is possible that with the Ayyubids, it was a statement of pride and honour, more than it was of emphasizing legitimacy, as was mainly the concern of the Mamluks. The Mamluk prayer wishing more strength for the sultan through his son might have been influenced by the standard Fatimid prayer for powerful viziers:

"عضد الله به الدين وأمتع بطول بقائه أمير المؤمنين"

(May God use him to support the religion and give him a long life to please the Prince of the Faithful).

In the three inscriptions of Baalbak, Qalāwūn is referred to by versions of the statement previously used by Baybars, namely:

"مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم"

(Possessor of the Necks of Nations, Master of the Kings of Arabs and non-Arabs).

On the walls of Baalbak, Qalāwūn is referred to as:

"مالك رقاب الأمم سلطان العرب والعجم"

(Possessor of the Necks of Nations, Sultan of Arabs and non-Arabs).

At al-Hanbalī mosque and the Great Mosque of Baalbak, he is referred to as:

"مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم والترك والديلم"

(Possessor of the Necks of Nations, Master of the Kings of Arabs, non-Arabs, Turks, and Daylamis). The first version does not show much innovation but the second is a development of Baybars's statement. In all cases, it was quite important to maintain the rhyme, when a new statement was developed. In the statements of Baybars, the Turks were mentioned to rhyme the phrase *wārith al-mulk* (Inheritor of the Kingdom), and the statement *wārith al-mulk sultān al-'arab wa al-'ajam wa al-turk* (Inheritor of the Kingdom, Sultan of the Arabs, non-Arabs, and Turks) appears frequently in his inscriptions. Qalāwūn's surviving inscriptions mention "*wārith al-mulk*" in a single case, namely, the large inscription band circulating the walls of his madrasa in Cairo, dated to

684/1285-6.³⁶⁷ The statement at the two mosques at Baalbak seems to have been a clever version of listing as many peoples as the rhyming allows, to be under Qalāwūn's rule, while not mentioning the phrase "wārith al-mulk." So, to rhyme with "al-umam" and "al-'ajam," and to add "al-turk" in the formula, most appropriately "al-daylam" was put at the end.

The inscriptions of Qalāwūn's complex in Cairo are of great importance, since this was his most prominent building activity. Al-Maqrīzī informs us that after buying the land, Qalāwūn appointed his amīr, 'Alam al-Dīn Sanjar al-Shujā'ī, to be responsible for building the complex, to which Sanjar showed an unprecedented dedication.³⁶⁸ Qalāwūn ordered the construction of a mausoleum, a *madrasa*, a *bimaristan*, a *maktab*, and a *sabīl*.³⁶⁹ Al-Maqrīzī also reports that after the building was finished, Qalāwūn went to see it.³⁷⁰ It is probable, according to al-Maqrīzī's account, that Qalāwūn's involvement in the building activities was not major. He might not have supervised the choice of any of the inscriptions of the complex, however, he probably had to approve them at some stage.

³⁶⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 35-6

³⁶⁸ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 175-177

³⁶⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 175

³⁷⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 175

In the inscriptions of the complex at Cairo, as was the case in the inscription of the Great Mosque of Baalbak, Qalāwūn is termed "*qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn*."³⁷¹ This is a title that he has directly inherited from Baybars. The inscriptions used around the walls and the windows of the complex are mostly in a simple format, in which Qalāwūn is mainly referred to as:³⁷²

"السلطان الأعظم الملك المنصور العالم العادل سيف الدنيا والدين قلاوون الصالحى قسيم أمير المؤمنين"

(The Greatest Sultan, al-Malik al-Mansūr [the Victorious King], the Knowledgeable, the Just, *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn* Qalāwūn al-Sālīhī, Partner of the Prince of the Faithful).

The inscription that lists honourific titles and sovereignty statements in detail is the large inscription band circulating the madrasa, dated to 684/1285-6, in which Qalāwūn is referred to as:³⁷³

"سیدنا ومولانا السلطان الأعظم الملك المنصور العالم العادل المؤید المظفر المجاهد المنصور سيف الدنيا والدين سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين سيد الملوك والسلطين سلطان الأرض ذات الطول والعرض ملك البسيطة سلطان العراقين والمصريين ملك البرين والبحرين وارث الملك ملك ملوك العرب والعجم صاحب القبلتين خادم الحرمين الشريفين قلاوون الصالحى قسيم أمير"

³⁷¹ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 16-17; 30; 31; 32; 33; 34; 35-6

³⁷² *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 31; 32; 33; & 34

³⁷³ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 35-6

المؤمنين أدام الله نصره وأعز أنصاره وأعلا منزه وضاعف اقتداره وعمر أمصاره أوحده

الملوك العصرية صاحب الديار (المصرية)... الأملين كنز العناة والمنقطعين منصف

المظلومين من الظالمين قاتل الكفرة والمشركين قاهر الخوارج والمتمردين سيف الدنيا والدين

قلاوون الصالحي قسيم أمير المؤمنين أدام الله أيامه"

(Our Master and Lord, the Greatest Sultan, al-Malik al-Mansūr, the Knowledgeable, the Just, the Supported, the Triumphant, the Struggler/Warrior, *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, the Sultan of Islām and Muslims, the Master of Kings and Sultans, the Sultan of the earth so vast in its length and width, the King of the Earth, the Sultan of the Two Iraqs and the Two Egypts, the King of the Two Shores/Lands and the Two Seas, the Inheritor of the Kingdom, the King of the Kings of the Arabs and non-Arabs, the One in Charge of the Two Sanctuaries [Mecca and Jerusalem], the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries [Mecca and Madina], Qalāwūn al-Sāliḥī, the Partner of the Prince of the Faithful. May God perpetuate his victory, strengthen his supporters, heighten his illumination, multiply his power/capabilities, and give prosperity to his lands. The One of His Kind of the Kings of the Time, the Owner of the Lands of Egypt,....of the Hopeful, the Treasure of the Suffering and the Needy, the Obtainer of the Rights of the Oppressed from the Oppressors, the Killer of the Infidels and Polytheists, the Conqueror Over the Outcasts

and the Mutineers, *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, Qalāwūn al-Sāliḥī, the Partner of the Prince of the Faithful, May God perpetuate his days).

The inscription starts with the typical Zangid and Ayyubid formulae of personal adjectives, which was also adopted by Baybars. The sovereignty statements given to Qalāwūn in this inscription are of an impressive variety. He is given the typical titles employed by previous rulers, namely, "Sultan of Islam and Muslims" and "Master of Kings and Sultans." However, several new statements appear here. Qalāwūn is termed *sultān al-ard dhāt al-tūl wa al-'ard* (Sultan of the earth so vast in its length and width), a statement of supreme sovereignty over the whole earth. The closest statement to this one used by Qalāwūn is: *sultān ard Allah* (Sultan of the Earth of God), employed by Malik Shāh and his son, Abū Shujā' in several inscriptions.³⁷⁴ No similar statements are found in Zangid and Ayyubid inscriptions, although, of course, other statements of sovereignty were common. Thus, this statement appears to be an innovation of Sanjar or the craftsmen working on this project. However, several Achaemenid inscriptions use a sovereignty statement with the exact same meaning.³⁷⁵ Qalāwūn is also given the new title: *malik al-*

³⁷⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 240, 245-6; 251; 253-4; VIII, 81-2

³⁷⁵ Herzfeld, *Corpus inscriptionum Arabicarum - Aleppo*, 155

basīta (King of the Earth). Al-Qalqashandī mentions that the term *sultān al-basīta* (Sultan of the Earth) was among the titles employed by the Mamluk sultans of Egypt.³⁷⁶ The term, however, also does not appear in the inscriptions of the Zangids, Ayyubids, or Mamluks prior to Qalāwūn. The word "*al-basīta*" appears in two Fatimid provincial inscriptions in Egypt, as a part of wishful prayers to have control over the earth: the first is an inscription of al-Afdāl at the mosque of al-Ghamrī at al-Mahalla al-Kubrā, dateable to 515/1121-22, and the second is an inscription, from Sohag, of Sulaymān, the son of Caliph al-Hāfiẓ li-Dīn Allah, dated to 529/1134-5.³⁷⁷ It is possible that the exact term mentioned by al-Qalqashandī to have been employed by the Mamluk sultan, namely *sultān al-basīta*, was substituted by another of closest meaning: *malik al-basīta*, to avoid redundancy in using "the sultan." It would not have been eloquent to refer to Qalāwūn as *sultān al-ard*, then *sultān al-basīta*, and then *sultān al-'iraqayn wa al-misrayn*.

"*Sultān al-'iraqayn wa al-misrayn*," (Sultan of the Two Iraqs and the Two Egypts), is one of the sovereignty statements employed in the inscriptions of Qalāwūn on his madrasa, where the "Two Iraqs" meant the Arab and Persian parts of Iraq, while the "Two Egypts" meant Upper and

³⁷⁶ *Subh al-a'shā*, Vol. 6, 124 & Al-Basha, 334

³⁷⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 128-9

Lower Egypt.³⁷⁸ Several inscriptions of Muslim rulers prior to Qalāwūn mention the names of the areas supposedly controlled by the ruler. Of these, two, at the mausoleum of Shaykh Muḥassin at Aleppo, can be cited that mention the "Two Iraqs," where one is an amirial inscription, dated to 537/1142-3, and the other is dated to 541/1146-7, but the name of its patron is missing.³⁷⁹ Other than these instances, it seems that the mention of the "Two Iraqs" was not common. As for the "Two Egypts," there seems to be no recorded inscription mentioning it. Therefore, the statement "*sultān al-iraqayn wa al-misrayn*" appears to be another innovation of the construction team of the madrasa of Qalāwūn. This title does not appear again on Mamluk buildings in Cairo.³⁸⁰

Other than the above sovereignty statements, Qalāwūn's inscription mostly follows the phrases employed by Baybars, although sometimes altered. Qalāwūn is referred to as *malik al-barrayn wa al-bahrayn* (King of the Two Shores/Lands and the Two Seas), where possibly the two shores are those of Africa and Asia and the two seas are the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.³⁸¹ Several inscriptions of previous rulers mention the phrase "*sultān al-barr wa al-bahr*" (Sultan of the

³⁷⁸ Al-Basha, 337

³⁷⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 229 & 241

³⁸⁰ O'Kane, Documentation of the Inscriptions in the Historic Zone in Cairo

³⁸¹ Al-Basha, 503

Shore/Land and the Sea) e.g. inscription of Abū al-Muẓaffar Muḥammad b. Sām at Qutb Minār at Delhi, dateable 602/1205-6; inscription of Abū al-Fath Kaykāwūs at al-Shafi'iyya at Siwas, dated 614/1217-18; and an inscription of 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād at the Citadel of Antalia, dated to 622/1225-6.³⁸² Another version of this phrase that appears frequently in inscriptions prior to Qalāwūn is "*sultān al-barr wa al-baḥrayn*" (Sultan of the Shore/Land and the Two Seas). Examples of inscriptions with this phrase include: an inscription of Abū al-Fath Kaykāwūs at the mosque of 'Alā' al-Dīn at Konya, dated to 616/1219-20 and two inscriptions of 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād at the Citadel of Antalia, dated to 622/1225-6.³⁸³ The version employed in the inscription of Qalāwūn's madrasa: "*malik al-barrayn wa al-baḥrayn*" has similar precedents. The phrase "*sultān al-barrayn wa al-baḥrayn*" (Sultan of the Two Shores/Lands and the Two Seas) was used by 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād at the Citadel of 'Alā'iyya in an inscription dateable to 634/1236-7.³⁸⁴ More importantly, the exact same phrase in the inscriptions of Qalāwūn's madrasa appears in the building inscription of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn at the Citadel of Bosrā, dated to 647/1249-50.³⁸⁵ Similar phrases appear in the inscriptions of Baybars.

³⁸² *Répertoire* Vol. X, 12; 146-7; & 230-1

³⁸³ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 163, 226-7

³⁸⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 84

³⁸⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 203-4

At the mausoleum of Khālīd b. al-Walīd at Homs, in an inscription dated to 684/1266, Baybars is referred to as "*mālik al-baḥrayn*" (Possessor of the Two Seas).³⁸⁶ Two other inscription at the same mausoleum, one dated to the same year and one dated to 666/1267, as well as the inscription at the mausoleum of Prophet Moses, dated to 668/1269-70, and two inscriptions at al-Karak, dated to 676/1277-8, refer to Baybars as "*malik al-baḥrayn*" (King of the Two Seas).³⁸⁷ An inscription at the Citadel of Damascus, dated to 673/1274, refers to Baybars as "*sāhib al-barrayn*" (Possessor of the Two Lands/Shores).³⁸⁸ It seems that versions of the phrase employed by Qalāwūn was transferred from the Rūm Saljuqs to the Ayyubids and the Mamluks. It is interesting, however, to note that versions of this phrase seem not to have been popular with the Ayyubids, but appear in the inscriptions of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn in one instance. Versions of the phrase appear more frequently in the inscriptions of Baybars, but the version adopted in the inscription of Qalāwūn is the exact same phrase used in the inscription of al-Sāliḥ Najm al-Dīn.

³⁸⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 104

³⁸⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 105, 141-2, 222-4

³⁸⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 193

In the inscription at his madrasa, Qalāwūn is also referred to as *wārith al-mulk malik mulūk al-‘arab wa al-‘ajam* (Inheritor of the Kingdom, the King of Kings of Arabs and non-Arabs). Although this is a sovereignty statement directly carried over from the inscriptions of Baybars, the rhyming observed in most cases in the inscriptions of Baybars, is not evident here. Qalāwūn’s inscription also follows other titles used by Baybars e.g. *sāhib al-qiblatayn* (The One in Charge of the Two *qiblas* i.e. Mecca and Jerusalem), and *khādim al-haramayn al-sharīfayn* (Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries i.e. Mecca and Madina). Two of the phrases used to describe Qalāwūn in this inscription are traceable back to the Zangid and Ayyubid inscriptions as well as inscriptions of Baybars, namely, *qāṭil al-kafara wa al-mushrikīn* (Killer of the Infidels and the Polytheists) and *qāhir al-khawārij wa al-mutamarridīn* (Conqueror of the Outcasts and the Mutineers). As for “*munsif al-maẓlūmīn min al-zālimīn*” (the one who obtains the rights of the oppressed from the oppressors), although not found in the recorded inscriptions of Baybars, it was frequently used by the Ayyubids and Zangids, and it appears on a recorded inscription of Baraka Khān.³⁸⁹ However, the phrase “*kanz al-‘un-āt wa al-munqatī‘īn*” (Treasure of the Suffering and the Needy)

³⁸⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 242

seems to be a new phrase, for it is not found in previous recorded inscriptions.

Just like his predecessor, the typical Zangid and Ayyubid formulae of personal adjectives frequently appear in the inscriptions of Qalāwūn, along with other standard phrases like "the Greatest Sultan," "Sultan of Islam and Muslims," and "Master of Kings and Sultans." It was Qalāwūn's choice, it seems, as it was Baybars's, to adopt the title *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn*, which, also like Baybars, appears in most of his inscriptions. None of the recorded inscriptions of Qalāwūn refers to him with this popular *laqab*, namely, al-Alfī, but he is always referred to with the *laqab*, relating him to his Ayyubid master, namely, al-Sāliḥī, a practice also following Baybars. None of the recorded inscriptions of Qalāwūn, however, follow the occasional addition of "b. 'Abd-Allah" to his name, as was the practice with Baybars. Just like Baybars, apart from a few innovations, the inscriptions of Qalāwūn followed the inherited norm of the time. Although no definite conclusions on the level of involvement of Qalāwūn in the choice of the wording of his inscriptions can be made, it is interesting to note that al-Maqrīzī mentions that in the year 686/1287-8, Qalāwūn sent two thousand dinars to Qarm to build a

mosque there.³⁹⁰ According to al-Maqrīzī, Qalāwūn ordered the titles of the sultan (*alqāb al-sultān*) were to be written on this mosque and a stonemason (*ḥajjār*) was sent to execute the stonework of the inscription and colour it.³⁹¹ It is probable that, in this case, Qalāwūn personally chose the titles to be executed on the building. Whatever the level of involvement of the sultan in the choice of wording of other inscriptions, it can be assumed that, at least in major building activities, the sultan had to approve the suggested formula.

³⁹⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 200

³⁹¹ *Al-Sulūk*, Vol. 2, 200

Chapter Seven: The Line of al-Mansūr Qalāwūn (689-792/1290-1390, with interruptions)

a) Al-Ashraf Khalīl (689-693/1290-1293)

Al-Ashraf Khalīl came to power after his father died of illness.³⁹² Al-Maqrīzī's account of the years of the sultanate of al-Ashraf shows that he made many enemies among the powerful amirs of the time. Among those were al-Amīr Badr al-Dīn Baydarā and his *khushdāsh*, Ḥusām al-Dīn Lājīn al-Saghīr, who among others of their *khushdāshiyya* conspired to kill the sultan, which they managed to accomplish in the year 693/1293.³⁹³ Several incidents reported by al-Maqrīzī and al-‘Aīnī, in addition of al-‘Aīnī's account of al-Ashraf's personality, show that he was rash and insolent to some of the high amirs.³⁹⁴ However, al-Maqrīzī also informs us that al-Ashraf was an intellectual who had an interest in literature and who would not sign any document before he read it thoroughly.³⁹⁵

In the year 687/1288, Qalāwūn's first heir apparent, al-Sāliḥ ‘Alī, died of illness and he appointed his son, al-Ashraf Khalīl as his next heir

³⁹² *Al-Sulūk*, Vol. 2, 217-18

³⁹³ *Al-Sulūk*, Vol. 2, 235 & 245

³⁹⁴ *‘Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 3, 208

³⁹⁵ *Al-Sulūk*, Vol. 2, 247

apparent.³⁹⁶ A recorded inscription that is dated to that same year is the inscription of both al-Ashraf Khalīl and Qalāwūn at al-Ashrafiyya madrasa in Cairo.³⁹⁷ In this inscription, al-Ashraf Khalīl and Qalāwūn are referred to as:³⁹⁸

"مولانا وسيدنا السلطان الملك الأشرف العالم العادل المجاهد الم رابط المثار المؤيد المظفر المنصور (صلاً) ح الدنيا والدين... قاتل الكفرة والمشركين قاهر الخوارج والمتمردين مبيد الطغاة والمارقين محيي العدل في العالمين منصف المظلومين من الظالمين كنز الفقراء والمساكين كهف الضعفاء والمنقطعين ناصر (?) الحق بالبراهين محيي ملة سيد المرسلين حامى حوزة الدين أبو الفتح خليل بن مولانا وسيدنا السلطان الأعظم الملك المنصور العالم العادل المجاهد الم رابط المثار المؤيد المظفر المنصور سلطان العرب والعجم مالك رقاب الأمم سلطان الشام واليمن ملك البحرين خادم الحرمين الشريفين صاحب القبلتين ملك الديار المصرية والجهات الحجازية والبلاد الشامية والأعمال الفراتية والديار بكرية أوحد الملوك العصرية بهلوان جهان... سيف الدنيا والدين سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين قاتل الكفرة والمشركين قاهر الخوارج والمتمردين قلاون الصالحى ق (سيم أمير المؤمنين) ن"

(Our Lord and Master, the Sultan, al-Malik al-Ashraf [the Most Honourable], the Knowledgeable, the Just, the Warrior/Struggler, the One Stationed to Guard the Territories, the Fighter at the borders, the Supported, the Triumphant, the Victorious, *ṣalāḥ al-dunyā wa al-ʿāla* ...Killer of the Infidels and the Polytheists, Conqueror of the Outcasts and

³⁹⁶ *Al-Sulūk*, Vol. 2, 207

³⁹⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 65-66

³⁹⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 65-66

Mutineers, Exterminator of the Despots/Oppressors and the
 Dissenters/Mutineers, Reviver of justice in all worlds, the one who
 obtains the rights of the oppressed from the oppressors, the Treasure of
 the Poor and the Needy, the Refuge of the Weak and the Needy, the
 Supporter of the Right/Truth with Evidence, the Reviver of the Religion
 of the Master of Prophets, the Defender of the Borders/Lands of the
 Religion, Abū al-Fath, Khalīl, son of our Lord and Master, the Greatest
 Sultan, al-Malik al-Mansūr, the Knowledgeable, the Just, the
 Warrior/Struggler, the One Stationed to Guard Territories, the Fighter at
 the Borders, the Supported, the Triumphant, the Victorious, Sultan of
 Arabs and non-Arabs, Possessor of the Necks of Nations, Sultan of the
 Levant and the Yemen, King of the Two Seas, Servant of the Two Holy
 Sanctuaries [Mecca and Madina], the One in Charge of the Two
 Sanctuaries [Mecca and Jerusalem], King of the Egyptian Homelands; the
 Lands of Hijaz; the Lands of the Levant; the Lands around the Euphrates;
 and the Lands of Diyarbekir, the One of his kind of the kings of his time,
 the King of the World...*sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, Sultan of Islam and the
 Muslims, Killer of the Infidels and Polytheists, Conqueror of the Outcasts
 and the Mutineers, Qalāwūn al-Sāliḥī, P[artner of the Prince of the
 Faithful]"

It is notable that the personal adjectives derived from the Zangid and Ayyubid formulae are exactly the same for the heir apparent and the sultan. Mamluk examples of inscriptions including the name of the heir apparent prior to al-Ashrafiyya, namely those including the names of Baraka Khān and al-Sāliḥ 'Alī, referred to the heir apparent in a rather simple tone, compared to the sultan. The case of al-Ashrafiyya is different for its patron was the heir apparent himself. Al-Ashraf's inscription reflects an emphasis on many of the best qualities of the Muslim ruler of the time, however, the inscription spares the exaggerated sovereignty statements over many parts of Muslim lands only for the sultan. Al-Ashraf's inscription seems to be rather influenced by the tone of Nūr al-Dīn's inscriptions. Some of the phrases employed in the inscription of al-Ashraf appear in several of the inscriptions of Nūr al-Dīn, e.g. *qātil al-kafara wa al-mushrikīn* (Killer of the Infidels and the Polytheists); *muḥyi al-'adl fī al-'ālamīn* (Reviver of Justice in all Worlds); and *munsif al-mazlūmīn min al-zālimīn* (the one who obtains the rights of the oppressed from the oppressors). Other titles used in the inscription of al-Ashraf are close versions to those employed frequently in the inscriptions of Nūr al-Dīn, e.g. *nāṣir al-ḥaqq bi al-barāhīn*, which frequently appears in the inscriptions of Nūr al-Dīn as *nāṣir al-ḥaqq bi al-barāhīn*, both meaning "the Supporter of Truth/Right with Evidence." In several of his

inscriptions, Nūr al-Dīn is also referred to as *qāhir al-mutamarridīn* (Conqueror of the Mutineers), a shorter version of the title used in al-Ashrafiyya: *qāhir al-khawārij wa al-mutamarridīn* (Conqueror of the Outcasts and the Mutineers). Although all these phrases, either literally or in spirit, appear on several earlier Ayyubid and Mamluk inscriptions, their compiled appearance on al-Ashrafiyya seems to reflect the character of al-Ashraf, who probably looked up to a figure like Nūr al-Dīn, in particular. Al-Maqrīzī informs us that only a few months after he became sultan, al-Ashraf was intent on conquering Akka, which he managed to successfully accomplish, and was able to seize other cities without fighting.³⁹⁹ Al-‘Aīnī reports that al-Ashraf was also intent on conquering lands in the direction of the Euphrates.⁴⁰⁰ It is possible that al-Ashraf intended to spend much of his time as a sultan in war and that this wish was clear in his mind even as an heir apparent.

A couple of phrases that appear in the inscription at al-Ashrafiyya seem to be new in their wordings, but not in their meanings. Al-Ashraf is referred to as *kānz al-fuqarā’ wa al-masākīn* (Treasure of the Poor and the Needy) and *kahf al-dū‘afā’ wa al-munqatī‘īn* (Refuge of the Weak and the

³⁹⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 223-5

⁴⁰⁰ *‘Iqd al-jumān* Vol. 3, 208

Needy). Both phrases are close in meaning to a phrase employed in the inscription of Qalāwūn's madrasa: *kanz al-ʿun-āt wa al-munqatīʿīn*⁴⁰¹ (Treasure of the Suffering and the Needy). The words "*kahf*" (refuge) and "*kanz*" (treasure) seldom appear in earlier inscriptions. An inscription of the Marwanid Nizām al-Dawla, recorded on the walls of Mayafarqin, dated to 464/1071-2, refers to him as *kahf al-milla* (Refuge of the Religious Community).⁴⁰² Another inscription of the Rūm Saljuq Abū al-Muzaffar Qutlugh at the mausoleum of Sitt Melik at Divriği, dated to 592/1195-6, refers to him as *kahf al-ghuz-āt al-muwahhidīn* (Refuge of the Monotheist Conquerors).⁴⁰³ In the inscription of Nūr al-Dīn at the Ḥalawīyya mosque at Aleppo, dated to 543/1148-9, he is referred to as *safī al-imām wa kanzuhu* (the treasure of the Imam and the one chosen by him).⁴⁰⁴ The phrases used by both Qalāwūn and al-Ashraf were probably innovations.

The phrases used to describe al-Ashraf on his madrasa end with the rather pious statements that further emphasize a strong wish for serving the religion by confronting the enemies: *muhyī millat sayyid al-mursalīn* (Reviver of the Religion of the Master of the Prophets) and *hāmī ḥāwzat*

⁴⁰¹ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 35-6

⁴⁰² *Répertoire* Vol. VII, 177

⁴⁰³ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 205

⁴⁰⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 246-7

al-dīn (Defender of the Borders/Lands of the Religion), where the former seems to be new too. A phrase that appears in earlier inscriptions is *muhyī dawlat amīr al-mu'minīn* (Reviver of the State of the Prince of the Faithful). This phrase appears twice referring to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn: once on the foundation inscription of the Cairo Citadel, dated to 579/1183-4, which was supervised by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's brother, al-ʿĀdil, and his vizier, Qarāqūsh.⁴⁰⁵ The second time this phrase appears is in the inscription of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn on the madrasa al-Ṣalāḥiyya at Jerusalem, dated to 588/1192-3.⁴⁰⁶ However, the phrase employed in the inscription of al-Ashraf seems not to have been used before. This may suggest that in addition to Nūr al-Dīn, al-Ashraf was also aspiring to follow the footsteps of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. Descriptive statements including the word *ḥāwzat* (Borders/Lands) also seldom appear in earlier inscriptions. In an amirial inscription at the mausoleum of Shaykh Muḥassin at Aleppo, dated to 537/1142-3, the patron is termed *ḥāfiẓ ḥāwzat al-muslimīn* (Protector of the Borders/Lands of Muslims).⁴⁰⁷ The phrase employed by al-Ashraf, *ḥāmī ḥāwzat al-dīn*, appears in an inscription of Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu' at the mausoleum of ʿAwn al-Dīn at Mosul, dated to 646/1248-9.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 123-4

⁴⁰⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 179

⁴⁰⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 229

⁴⁰⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. XI, 189

Other inscriptions of al-Ashraf give further evidence of his zeal to become another important figure recorded by history as a defender of Islam and Muslims. This evidence also suggests that al-Ashraf was to some extent involved in the choice of the wording of inscriptions executed in his name. In an inscription at the Citadel of Baalbak, dated to 690/1291, a few months after al-Ashraf conquered Akka, he is termed:⁴⁰⁹

"...رافع الإيمان قاعم عبدة الصليبان فاتح الثغور الساحلية محيي الدولة العباسية أبو الفتح خليل..."

(...the Upholder of Faith, the Oppressor of the Worshippers of the Cross, the Conqueror of the Coastal Borders, the Reviver of the Abbasid State, Abū al-Faḥ Khalīl...). An imitation of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn inscriptions appears here in the use of *rāfi' al-imān qāmi' 'abadat al-sulbān* (the Upholder of Faith, the Oppressor of the Worshippers of the Cross). In an inscription at the Citadel of Cairo, dated to 690/1180-1, and in a text recorded on two stone blocks from Alexandria, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is termed *jāmi' kalimat al-imān qāmi' 'abadat al-sulbān* (the Unifier of the Word of Faith, the Oppressor of the Worshippers of the Cross),⁴¹⁰ which is quite similar to the statement made by al-Ashraf. Similar phrases were employed by other Ayyubid sultans. At the Citadel of Damascus, in an inscription dated to

⁴⁰⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 100

⁴¹⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 108, 156

605/1208-9, al-Ādil is termed *jāmi' kalimat al-imān qāmi' 'abadat al-awthān* (the Unifier of the Word of Faith, the Oppressor of the Worshippers of Idols).⁴¹¹ The foundation inscription of al-Zāhir Ghāzī at the mosque of Lattakieh, dated to 607/1210-11, refers to him by the same statement employed by his father, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.⁴¹² However, this statement, that is not recorded in earlier Mamluk inscriptions, has enjoyed much less popularity with the Ayyubids than other similar ones, such as, "the Oppressor or Killer of Infidels and Polytheists," which were rather frequent. It seems to be a direct influence of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's inscription on al-Ashraf. It is worth noting that the inscription of al-Ashraf at the Citadel of Baalbak refers to him, although with a spelling mistake, as "*shahinshah*," and just like his father's inscriptions, the case at Baalbak is the only recorded inscription referring to him using this title. This suggests the possibility that the use of the same school of craftsmen, in the same area, played a role in the content of royal inscriptions.

A phrase that appears frequently in the inscriptions of al-Ashraf is *muhyī al-dawla al-'abbasiyya* (Reviver of the Abbasid State) or *muhyī al-dawla al-sharīfa al-'abbasiyya* (Reviver of the Honourable Abbasid State),

⁴¹¹ *Répertoire* Vol. X, 27

⁴¹² *Répertoire* Vol. X, 46-7

which is in some cases coupled with the rhyming *nāṣir al-milla al-muḥammadiyya* (Supporter of the Religious Community of Muḥammad).⁴¹³ The latter seems to be an innovation, but the earlier is probably influenced by earlier phrases, such as *muhyī al-khilafa al-mu'azzama* employed in the inscriptions of Baybars on the towers of al-Karak.⁴¹⁴

b) Al-Nāṣir Muhammad (693-4/1293-4, 698-708/1299-1309, and 709-741/1310-1341)

Al-Nāṣir Muhammad was first made sultan at the age of nine after the assassination of his brother, al-Ashraf Khalīl, by the powerful amirs of the time.⁴¹⁵ After one year of a nominal sultanate, al-Nāṣir Muhammad was deposed.⁴¹⁶ After the amirs killed Sultan Lājīn in 689/1298-9, al-Nāṣir Muhammad was summoned from al-Karak and made a sultan once again, at the age of fourteen.⁴¹⁷ Near the end of the year 708/1309, al-Nāṣir Muhammad gave up the sultanate after he was fed up with the absolute control of the amirs Sayf al-Dīn Salār, the *nā'ib* of the sultanate in Egypt,

⁴¹³ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 100; 105-6; 107-8; & 108-9

⁴¹⁴ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 222-4

⁴¹⁵ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 249

⁴¹⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 259

⁴¹⁷ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 310-11

and Baybars al-Jāshankīr, the *ustadār*⁴¹⁸ of the sultan, over all matters of the state.⁴¹⁹ Due to that, Baybars al-Jāshankīr became the Mamluk sultan for almost a year, during which al-Nāṣir Muhammad rallied power and troops and was able to regain the sultanate, after Baybars al-Jāshankīr deposed himself.⁴²⁰

Al-Maqrīzī informs us that no previous sultan spent as much as al-Nāṣir did on building.⁴²¹ Although known for his patronage of building activities, inscriptions of al-Nāṣir Muhammad recorded on buildings do not exhibit much innovation. In an inscription on one of the towers of Cairo Citadel, dated to 713/1313-14, al-Nāṣir is referred to as:⁴²²

"مولانا وسيدنا السلطان الملك الناصر الخازي في سبيل الله الحاج إلى بيت الله الزائر قبر رسول الله ناصر الدنيا والدين محمد بن مولانا السلطان الشهيد الملك المنصور..."

(Our Lord and Master, the Sultan, al-Malik al-Nāṣir, the one who fights/conquers for the sake of God, the pilgrim to the house of God, the visitor of the mausoleum of the Prophet of God, *nāṣir al-dunyā wa al-dīn*)

⁴¹⁸ According to al-Qalqashandī, the *ustadār* was the amīr responsible for supervising all the sultan's warehouses like the *matbakh* and the *sharab khanah*, in addition to supervising the entourage (*hashiyya*) and the *ghilman*.⁴¹⁸ *Al-Ustadariyya* also involves supervising the *jashankiriyya*, except that the Jashankir, i.e. the prince, is of the same rank as the Ustadar, or at least a similar one.⁴¹⁹ The Ustadar is totally free to make decisions about the expense and clothing needs of the sultan's warehouses, for the sultan's own house as well as his mamluks. (*Subh al-A'sha* Vol. 4, 20). Several incidents of Ayyubid and Mamluk history, however, show that the holder of this office was also a very powerful amīr and his responsibilities extended beyond the ones mentioned by al-Qalqashandī.

⁴¹⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 421-23

⁴²⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 432-442

⁴²¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 3, 313

⁴²² *Répertoire* Vol. XIV, 74

[the supporter of the world and the religion], Muhammad, son of our lord, the martyr sultan *al-malik al-mansūr*).

This inscription shows the influence of the inscription of al-Zāhir Baybars at his mausoleum in Damascus, dated to 676/1277, where he is termed *al-mujāhid fī sabīl Allah, al-hājj ilā bayt Allah* (the Struggler/Warrior for the sake of God, the pilgrim to the house of God).⁴²³ Al-Maqrīzī informs us that al-Nāṣir Muhammad went on pilgrimage in the year 712/1313.⁴²⁴ Therefore, it was appropriate to refer to his pilgrimage, which shows him as an obedient servant of God, in an inscription executed a few months later.

Another inscription at the Citadel of Cairo, dateable to 713/1313-14, refers to al-Nāṣir as *hāmī ḥāwzat al-dīn*,⁴²⁵ the same phrase employed by al-Ashraf Khalīl before him. On the walls of Baalbak, in an inscription dated to 717/1317-8, al-Nāṣir is termed *shāhinshāh*.⁴²⁶ Just as with Qalāwūn and al-Ashraf Khalīl, it is only in an inscription at Baalbak that he is given this title, which is yet further evidence of the influence of the place where the inscription was executed on its phrasing.

⁴²³ *Répertoire* Vol. XII, 227

⁴²⁴ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 482

⁴²⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. XIV, 75

⁴²⁶ *Répertoire* Vol. XIV, 118-19

In an inscription on the minaret of the Great Mosque at Ḥiṣn al-Akrād, dated to 734/1333-4, al-Nāṣir Muhammad is termed *sayf madhhab Abū Ḥanīfa* (the Sword of the *madhhab* of Abū Ḥanīfa).⁴²⁷ The inscription of Nūr al-Dīn at the Ḥalawiyya mosque at Aleppo, dated to 543/1148-9, mentions that the building includes a madrasa for the *madhhab* of Abū Ḥanīfa.⁴²⁸ However, reference to the *madhhab* seems not to have been that common. Al-Nāṣir Muhammad was originally an advocate of the *shāf'ī madhhab*, for al-Maqrīzī reports that in the year 712/1312-13, the *qādī al-quḍāt* was a *shāf'ī*.⁴²⁹ However, in the year 717/1317, the *qādī al-quḍāt* was a *ḥanafī*,⁴³⁰ which indicates that al-Nāṣir Muhammad had some change of heart that was reflected, and possibly intentionally advertised, in the above inscription.

Later members of the line of Qalāwūn have generally abided by the inheritance of earlier phrases of inscriptions on Mamluk buildings. In many cases, the sultan did not stay long enough in power to build enough buildings that would exhibit a certain inclination for some titles more than others.

⁴²⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XV, 38

⁴²⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 246-7

⁴²⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 480

⁴³⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 524

Chapter Eight: Other Sultans and A Representative Amīr

a) Other Sultans

Other sultans of the Bahri period did not last long enough to leave behind enough inscriptions for thorough investigation. Of those, two sultans who have recorded inscriptions are al-‘Adil Kitbughā and al-Mansūr Lājīn.

According to the account of al-Maqrīzī, Kitbughā was the amīr who managed to kill Baydarā, the assassin of al-Ashraf Khalīl, who was the *nā’ib* of his sultanate.⁴³¹ The amirs then appointed al-Nāṣir Muhammad as the new sultan at the age of nine and Kitbughā the new *nā’ib* of the sultanate.⁴³² After getting rid of his rivals, Kitbughā managed to become the sultan in the year 694/1294 and lasted till the year 696/1296.⁴³³ After a period of turmoil the high amirs conspired against Kitbughā, who managed to flee, and Lājīn became the new sultan in the period from 696/1296 to 698/1299, when he was assassinated.⁴³⁴

⁴³¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 248

⁴³² *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 249

⁴³³ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 259 & 274

⁴³⁴ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 274 & 300

One inscription is recorded from the period of Kitbughā: a foundation inscription of the mosque at Jusiya, Syria, dated to 695/1295-6.⁴³⁵ This inscription refers to Kitbughā as:

"مولانا السلطان الأعظم الملك النادل الغازي المجاهد الم رابط سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين قانع
الخوارج والمتمردين صاحب القبلتين خادم الحرمين الشريفين زين الدنيا والدين كتبغا بن عبد
الله المنصوري"

(Our Lord, the Greatest Sultan, al-Malik al-‘Ādil [the Just King], the Conqueror, the Warrior/Struggler, the One Stationed to Guard the Territories, Sultan of Islam and Muslims, the Oppressor of Outcasts and Mutineers, the One in Charge of the Two Sanctuaries [Mecca and Jerusalem], the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries [Mecca and Madina], *zayn al-dunyā wa al-dīn* [Ornament of the World and the Religion], Kitbughā b. ‘Abd-Allah al-Mansūrī).

Kitbughā's inscription on this mosque he ordered to be built follows the Zangid and Ayyubid formulae of personal adjectives, later taken up by the Mamluks. The inscription also follows other typical titles. It is worth noting that by this time, titles such as *sāhib al-qiblatayn* (the one in charge of the two sanctuaries, Mecca and Jerusalem) and *khādim al-haramayn al-sharīfayn* (the Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, Mecca

⁴³⁵ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 148

and Madina), seem to have lost some of their value. Al-Maqrīzī, in his account of the sultanate of Kitbughā, does not report any services done by that sultan to the Holy Sanctuaries, and indeed, his short time of turmoil and calamities, would not have allowed for such activities.⁴³⁶

This inscription shows an influence of Baybars since it employs the title *ibn 'Abd-Allah* (son of the servant of God), which appears on some of the inscriptions of Baybars and does not seem to have been employed in any of the inscriptions of Qalāwūn. In this inscription of Kitbughā and several of the inscriptions of Lājīn, both sultans are referred to as "*al-mansūrī*."⁴³⁷ Kitbughā was a mamluk of Qalāwūn, whom he (Qalāwūn) bought as a sultan.⁴³⁸ Lājīn, on the other hand, was originally a mamluk of al-Mansūr 'Alī, the son of al-Nū'izz Aybak.⁴³⁹ Qalāwūn, when he was still an amīr, bought the young Lājīn, who grew up in Qalāwūn's court, and was called "*al-saghīr*" (the little or the young), and later ascended to become one of his important mamluks.⁴⁴⁰ Lājīn was the *nā'ib* of Qalāwūn's sultanate at Damascus, but had problems with al-Ashraf

⁴³⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 259-274

⁴³⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 154-6

⁴³⁸ *Al-Khitāt*, Vol. 3, 128

⁴³⁹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 274

⁴⁴⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 274

Khalīl, who removed him from the *niyāba* and imprisoned him.⁴⁴¹ The inscriptions of both sultans, Kitbughā and Lājīn, who seized power from the house of Qalāwūn, emphasize their mamluk *nisba* that still relates them to that sultan, and gives them some legitimacy, since they were among his mamluks.

An inscription of Lājīn at the Great Mosque of Gaza, dated to 697/1297-8, is worth noting because its phrasing is not that typical. In this inscription, Lājīn is referred to as:⁴⁴²

"مولانا وسيدنا السلطان الملك المنصور حسام الدنيا والدين أبو الفتح لاجين المنصوري رضي
 أمير المؤمنين أدام الله أيامه ونشر في الخافقين بالنصر ألويته وأعلامه وأعر أنصاره وأعوانه
 وأمراءه وحكامه وجنده وخدامه وحكم في مهج المشركين سهامه وسنانه وحسامه وأوزعه
 شكر ما أنعم عليه وأحسن في الدنيا والآخرة إليه"

(Our Lord and Master, the Sultan, al-Malik al-Mansūr, *ḥusām al-dunyā wa al-dīn* [Sword of the World and the Religion], Abū al-Fath Lājīn al-Mansūrī, the one accepted by the Prince of the Faithful/the one who gives contentment to the Prince of the Faithful, may God perpetuate his days and make his flags and banners victorious in the East and West, and may God make his supporters, his helpers, his viziers, his amirs, his governors,

⁴⁴¹ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 274

⁴⁴² *Répertoire* Vol. XIII,

his soldiers, and his servants, strong. May God make his arrows, the blades of his spears, and his sword victorious over the hearts/souls of the polytheists, and may God make him thankful for the blessings He gave him and may God be good to him in his life and afterlife).

The inscription starts with the usual style but does not refer to Lājīn as *qasīm amīr al-mu'minīn* (Partner of the Prince of the Faithful), which was the title employed by earlier Bahri sultans, including Kitbughā and Lājīn himself in earlier inscriptions.⁴⁴³ Instead, Lājīn is termed, *radī amīr al-mu'minīn* (the one who contents the Prince of the Faithful), which is more towards wishing for the Caliph's satisfaction, than sharing his power. Al-Maqrīzī reports that in the year 696/1296-7, one year prior to the foundation inscription of the mosque at Gaza, Lājīn transferred the Abbasid Caliph of the time, al-Hākīm bi-Amr Allah, from one of the towers of Cairo Citadel, where he was kept, to one of the houses at *manāẓir al-kabsh*, the prestigious area known to house the high amirs of the time.⁴⁴⁴ Lājīn allocated a good sum of money as a periodical salary to the Caliph and also sent him another good sum of money.⁴⁴⁵ The Caliph was also made to ride along the sultan in processions.⁴⁴⁶ All these good actions would have indeed made the Caliph pleased with Lājīn and would

⁴⁴³ *Répertoire* Vol. XIII, 161-2

⁴⁴⁴ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 279

⁴⁴⁵ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 279

⁴⁴⁶ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 2, 279

have made his new title, *radī amīr al-mu'minīn*, a well-deserved one. A close title appears in the inscription of Nūr al-Dīn at the mosque of Ḥalawīyya, Aleppo, dated to 543/1148-9, where Nūr al-Dīn is termed *radī al-khilāfa* (the one accepted/approved by the Caliphate).⁴⁴⁷

The wishful prayers of this inscription of Lājīn are also atypical. The prayer "may God perpetuate his days and make his flags and banners victorious in the East and West" was repeated in several earlier Ayyubid and Mamluk sultanic inscriptions. Also the prayer to God to strengthen his supporters was common as early as the eras of early Abbasids.

However, the prayer is extended to give strength to all of his entourage, as high as his viziers, amirs, and governors, and as low as his soldiers and servants, a phrasing that is new and innovative. The prayer of victory over the polytheists, although not new in spirit, is rather new in its phrasing.

The inscription of Lājīn then is influenced by one of the prayers of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in one of the most conspicuous visited areas of Islam, al-Aqsa mosque.⁴⁴⁸ Lājīn's inscription, like Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's, piously wishes that God makes him thankful of blessings, a prayer that is encouraged by the Quran for one of its verses records it being said by Solomon, the

⁴⁴⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. VIII, 96

⁴⁴⁸ *Répertoire* Vol. IX, 159

exemplary king mentioned by the Quran to have been given miraculous endowments.⁴⁴⁹

b) A Representative Amīr – Amīr Qūṣūn

It is useful for the purpose of the current study to examine the inscriptions of one of the powerful amirs and see how they differed from sultanic inscriptions. Amīr Qūṣūn was the son in law of al-Nāṣir Muhammad. He married al-Nāṣir's daughter in 727/1327.⁴⁵⁰ Amirial inscriptions are of a much lower tone than sultanic one and there is great emphasis on modesty. An inscription on the minbar of the mosque of Qūṣūn, dated to 729/1328-9, reads in part:⁴⁵¹

"مما أمر بعمله بالأمر الشريف السلطاني الملكي الناصري ناصر الدنيا والدين محمد عز الله
أنصاره المقر العالي الأميري السيفي قوصون الناصري..."

(made upon the honourable sultanic order of al-Malik al-Nāṣir, *nāṣir al-dunyā wa al-dīn* [Supporter of the World and Religion], Muḥammad, may God give strength to his supporters, the high amirial *maqarr* [his excellency], Saif al-Dīn Qūṣūn *al-nāṣirī*).⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁹ Quran (al-Naml: 19)

⁴⁵⁰ *Al-Sulūk* Vol. 3, 97

⁴⁵¹ *Répertoire* Vol. XIV, 251

Al-Qalqashandī reports that the term the "His Excellency" (*al-maqarr al-
'ālī*) was among the titles of the amirs of the time.⁴⁵³ Qūṣūn was a high
amīr of al-Nāṣir Muhammad, in addition to being his son-in-law, and the
sultan promoted him to highest levels and even married his sister.⁴⁵⁴ *Al-
sayfī* is used to mean Qūṣūn's name: Saif al-Dīn.⁴⁵⁵ *Al-nāṣirī* is used
because he was a mamluk of al-Nāṣir Muhammad.⁴⁵⁶

The foundation inscription of the mosque of Qūṣūn, dated to 730/1329-
30, starts with:⁴⁵⁷

"أمر بإنشاء هذا الجامع المبارك بكرم الله تع العبد الفقير إلى الله قوصون الساقى الملكي
الناصرى..."

(This order to build this blessed mosque, by the grace of God Almighty,
was given by the slave in need of God, Qūṣūn *al-sāqī* [the Cupbearer], *al-
malikī al-nāṣirī* [the Officer of al-Malik al-Nāṣir]).

The pious tone of this inscription was not employed in Ayyubid and
Mamluk sultanic inscriptions on most of their buildings, but was
employed in some cases on sacred Islamic buildings where the sultan

⁴⁵³ *Subh al-a'shā*, Vol. 6, 130

⁴⁵⁴ *Al-Khitat*, Vol. 3, 298

⁴⁵⁵ Van Berchem, *Corpus inscriptionum Arabicarum* (CIA) Vol. 19, 387

⁴⁵⁶ *Al-Khitat*, Vol. 3, 298

⁴⁵⁷ *Répertoire* Vol. XIV, 258-9

cared to use a modest tone. Although this was not the common tone of the sultans, it was the prevailing tone of the amirs. Qūṣūn in this case is referred to as *al-sāqī al-malikī al-nāṣirī*, because he was one of the cupbearers of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.⁴⁵⁸

A foundation inscription of a *ḥawḍ* recorded at Qalansuah, in present day Israel, dated to 737/1336-7, mentions that it was built upon the order of Qūṣūn and refers to him as:⁴⁵⁹

"العبد الفقير إلى الله تع المقر الأشرف السيفي عون الأمة كهف الملة ضوء الدولة قوصون

الناصرى الساقى أعز الله تع أنصاره وختم بالصالحات أعماله ابتغاء لوجه الله تع..."

(the servant in need of God, the honourable seat [*al-maqarr al-ashraf*], *al-sayfī*, the aid of the nation, the refuge of the religious community, the light of the state, Qūṣūn *al-nāṣirī al-sāqī*, may God strengthen his supporters and end his worldly deeds with good deeds, wishing to see God...).

This inscription is not in the prevailing line of amirial inscriptions for it bestows more honorific titles than the usual. It is, however, notable that the phrases employed in the inscription of Qūṣūn are quite different from

⁴⁵⁸ *Al-Khitat*, Vol. 3, 298

⁴⁵⁹ *Répertoire* Vol. XV, 74

sultanic titles. He is first referred to as *'awn al-umma* (Aid of the Nation), which he was, since he was among the closest high amirs of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. A similar title is *daw' al-dawla* (Light of the State), which also reflects Qūṣūn's closeness to the sultan. Al-Qaiqashandī reports that both the titles *'awn al-umma* and *kahf al-milla* (Refuge of the Religious Community) were among the titles of the amirs of the time.⁴⁶⁰

Several examples of other amirial inscriptions reflect the same modest tone of the mosque of Qūṣūn. The inscription of the madrasa al-Malikiyya at Jerusalem, dated to 741/1340-41, refers to its patron, al-Malik al-Jūkandār, as:⁴⁶¹

تَقَرَّبَ بِعِمَارَةِ هَذَا الْمَكَانِ الْمُبَارَكِ الْعَبْدُ الْفَقِيرُ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى الْحَاجُّ الْمَلِكُ الْجُوكَنْدَارُ الْمَلِكِيُّ
الْناصِرِيُّ غُفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ حَيًّا وَمَيِّتًا وَلَمَنْ دَعَا لَهُ بِالرَّحْمَةِ وَالْمَغْفَرَةِ

(this blessed place was built as a gesture of coming close to God by the servant in need of God, *al-hajj* [the Pilgrim] al-Malik al-Jūkandār *al-malikī al-nāṣirī*, may God forgive him during his life and after his death and forgive those who pray to God to forgive him).

⁴⁶⁰ *Subh al-a'shā*, Vol. 6, 130 & 137

⁴⁶¹ *Répertoire* Vol. XV, 199

This inscription reflects the modest tone referring to the patron as the servant who is in need of God, the same phrase employed at the mosque of Qūṣūn. This phrase also appears in two inscriptions on the mosque of Aslam al-Silāḥdār.⁴⁶²

It is interesting to note that amirs used the *nisba* of the sultans to prove loyalty, just as the sultans used it to prove legitimacy. Bahri amirs used "the *nisba* of the reigning sultan on their foundation inscriptions."⁴⁶³

Although al-Malik al-Jūkandār was an amīr of Qalāwūn, he used the *nisba* "*al-nāṣirī*," in his inscription since the building was constructed during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muhammad.⁴⁶⁴ Aslam al-Silāḥdār followed the same practice when he used the *nisba* "*al-malikī al-sāliḥī*" in his foundation inscription to refer to al-Sāliḥ Ismā'īl, the sultan at the time of the inauguration of his mosque.⁴⁶⁵

A relevant case that is interesting to note is the foundation inscription of the *khanqāh* of al-Muzaffar Baybars, which he started building in 706/1306-7, as an amīr, and finished in 709/1309-10, after he became the

⁴⁶² *Répertoire* Vol. XV, 244-5 & 247

⁴⁶³ Karim, *Mosque of Aslam al-Silāḥdār*, 38

⁴⁶⁴ Karim, 38

⁴⁶⁵ Karim, 38

sultan in 708/1309.⁴⁶⁶ The inscription was mutilated by al-Nāṣir Muhammad who erased the titles of Baybars after he managed to regain the throne.⁴⁶⁷ The remaining part of the inscription refers to Baybars as “the Servant in Need of God,” as was the practice of amirial inscriptions.⁴⁶⁸ The name of Baybars that is recorded on the inscription is: Rukn al-Dīn Baybars al-Mansūrī.⁴⁶⁹ Baybars adopted the *nisba* of his original master, Qalāwūn, and, of course, not of sultan al-Nāṣir Muhammad, who was deposed. The titles that provoked al-Nāṣir enough to remove them were probably sultanic rather than amirial. Although al-Maqrīzī mentions that Baybars’s “name” was removed from the *ṭirāz* band, it was actually the titles that were removed. Al-Nāṣir did not remove the name of the patron because he was not permitted to do that due to the strict *waqf* regulations of the time. However, he was rather intent on erasing the message that this inscription probably originally carried: that al-Muzaffar Baybars was once the sultan.

In general, amirial inscriptions of the Bahri Mamluks show a more modest and pious tone than sultanic inscriptions. A reason for this tone

⁴⁶⁶ *Khitat*, Vol. 3, 574-6

⁴⁶⁷ *Khitat*, Vol. 3, 574-5

⁴⁶⁸ Van Berchem, *CIA* Vol. 19, 162

⁴⁶⁹ Van Berchem, *CIA* Vol. 19, 162

could be that the amirs tried to avoid any conflict or rivalry with the sultan.

Conclusion

Bahri Mamluk sultans employed inscriptions to decorate a building and send a message to the public, like earlier Muslim rulers. It is most probable that inscriptions of new buildings, throughout the construction phase and after a building was completed, were thoroughly examined by literate passers-by, who would communicate the content to many others of the population by word-of-mouth. Bahri Mamluk inscription formulae mostly followed the general order of the Zangid and Ayyubid fashion, where the construction order is first mentioned; then the list of personal adjectives of the sultan; his *kunya*, name, and *nisba*; other honourific titles that are almost always presented as rhyming phrases; and finally the wishful prayers and the date. Bahri Mamluk sultans used inscriptions to record and propagandize certain stages or events, e.g., when a sultan appointed one of his sons as his heir-apparent, the sultan's inscriptions would include the name and the new status of his son. Ayyubid and Zangid inscriptions were rather influential on the phrasing of Bahri Mamluk sultanic inscriptions and it is worth noting that the development of the styles of architectural decoration and execution of inscriptions from the Ayyubid days seems not to have been paralleled in the choice of words, which remained for the most part, typical.

Due to the common heritage of the Great Saljuqs, the interaction and, sometimes, the rivalry, Bahri Mamluk sultanate inscriptions show much resemblance to the inscriptions of the Rūm Saljuqs.

The Mamluks sultans were warrior kings who had to confront exterior as well as interior dangers to their lands and thrones. The inherited emphasis on war, confrontation, victory over infidels, and similar ideas, is rather understandable. The transfer of the power from the Bahris to the Burjis, who were of the same culture and were controlled by the same factors, would not imply an expected change of the phrasing of sultanate inscriptions. A couple of inscriptions at the madrasa of Barqūq in Cairo are most relevant. In the first, dated to 788/1386-7, Barqūq is referred to as:⁴⁷⁰

"مولانا السلطان الملك الظاهر سيف الدنيا والدين أبو سعيد برقوق سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين
نصرة الغزاة والمجاهدين حامي حوزة الدين ذخيرة الأيتام والمساكين كنز الطالبيين"

(Our Lord, the Sultan, al-Malik al-Zāhir *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, Abū Saʿīd Barqūq, Sultan of Islam and Muslims, Supporter of Conquerors and Warriors/Strugglers, Protector of the Lands/Borders of the Religion,

⁴⁷⁰ *Répertoire* Vol. XVIII, 80

Succour⁴⁷¹ of the Orphants and the Needy, the Treasure of the Requesters).

This inscription bears a strong resemblance to the inscription of al-Ashraf Sha'bān at the madrasa he built for his mother.⁴⁷² The second inscription is in the same spirit, but is adorned with some new phrases, a practice that is a reminder of the inscriptions of Qalāwūn on his complex. The second inscription refers to Barqūq as:⁴⁷³

"مولانا السلطان المالك الملك الظاهر سيف الدنيا والدين أبو سعيد برقوق العالم العادل المجاهد
المرابط المؤيد الغازي الحاكم بأمر الله والتالي لكتاب الله سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين نصره
الغزاة والمجاهدين حامي حوزة الدين نخر الأيتام والمساكين صاحب الصدقات وأنعمروف
والغياث لكل مظلوم وملئوف"

(Our Lord, the Sultan, the Possessor, al-Malik al-Zāhir *sayf al-dunyā wa al-dīn*, Abū Sa'īd Barqūq, the Knowledgeable, the Just, the Warrior/Struggler, the One Stationed to Guard the Territories, the Supported, the Conqueror, the one who governs by the will/order of God, the one who recites the book of God, the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims, the Supporter of the Conquerors and Warriors/Strugglers, the Protector of the Land/Borders of the Religion, the Succour of the Orphants

⁴⁷¹ Translation after Leonor Fernandes, *The madrasa of Umm al-Sultān Sha'bān*, 3

⁴⁷² Ibid, 3

⁴⁷³ *Répertoire* Vol. XVIII, 82

and the Needy, the one who gives out alms and does good, the rescuer of every oppressed and sorrowful).

The use of *al-tālī li-kitāb Allah* (the one who recites the book of God) is a reminder of the use of *sāhib al-qurān* (the Follower of the Quran), that appears on the inscriptions of Baybars. It is interesting that the sultan, in addition to the previously employed phrases of serving the needy of his community, is referred to as "one who gives out alms and does good, the rescuer of every oppressed and sorrowed," for further emphasis on being good and religious, of course, in the normal rhyming fashion.

Barqūq, the new sultan of the new era, did not use a *nisba* of his master in the inscriptions of his madrasa. Al-Maqrīzī reports that Barqūq was originally a mamluk of the amīr Yalbughā al-Khāṣṣakī, but was known as Barqūq al-ʿUthmānī, after the merchant who first sold him.⁴⁷⁴ Barqūq ended-up in the court of al-Ashraf Shaʿbān where he became among the mamluks of his sons ʿAlī and Ḥajjī.⁴⁷⁵ Barqūq became a prince at a time of turmoil. The sultans were puppets and the powerful amirs fought to seize the throne. It was a time where the mamluk concepts of *ustādhiyya*

⁴⁷⁴ *Khitat*, Vol. 3, 132

⁴⁷⁵ *Khitat*, Vol. 3, 132

and *khushdāshiyya* were losing their strength and coherence. Since he reached the sultanate, Barqūq no longer needed a legitimacy statement through mentioning the *nisba* to his *ustādh*. Unlike Baybars, the early Bahri, the earliest Burji seems to have suffered no legitimacy crisis. It seems that the keen Bahri allegiance to the previous legitimate sultan, was by the time of the early Burjis no longer needed.

The rule of the Mamluk war for the throne has always been the survival of the fittest. The inscriptions of the Bahri Mamluks emphasized their piety and their strength, the two major factors they wished to comprise their characters, based on their learning and up-bringing. There was always a stress on the relevance of this particular mamluk to the throne. He might not have inherited it, but he was among the trusted mamluks of a sultan, which would be reflected in his inscriptions through the mention of the *nisba*. Bahri Mamluk sultans, like earlier and contemporary Muslim rulers, used inscriptions, the most conspicuous element of their building to give a message to the public. The message was that of power, piety, and legitimacy, the factors that would grant any of them the right to remain on the throne.

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