

The Caliph's Feudalism and the Sultan's Feudalism: Theory and Practice According to the Orientalist Poliak

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Abstract

This study explains the nature of the relationship between the feudalism (land grant) of the caliph and that of the sultan during the Mamluk era, which reflected a form of political duality in the structure of governance. The caliph retained symbolic status and religious legitimacy, while actual authority and control over resources and lands shifted to the sultan. Whereas in earlier periods caliphs themselves granted *iqṭā'*s, in the Mamluk era the caliph received a fixed *iqṭā'* determined by the sultan. This gradually transformed into a financial allocation, closer to a salary, without conferring administrative influence or direct authority over the management of those lands.

Keywords: *Feudalism, Poliak, Caliph, Sultan.*

Introduction

The issue of feudalism in the Mamluk era is one of the issues that reflect the nature of the political relations between the institutions of the caliphate and the Sultanate, and it has been addressed by a number of contemporary researchers, including the orientalist Poliak, who tried to explain this relationship through the concept of feudal dependency, and the orientalist Poliak showed that the feudal system in the Mamluk state reveals a clear shift in the balance of power, as the caliphate retained its symbolic role in legitimizing it, while the actual power and disposal of resources and lands passed to the sultan, and as a result The Caliph was no longer a giver of fiefdoms, but rather received a specific fiefdom decided by the Sultan, a feudalism that guaranteed him a stable financial resource without granting him political authority or administrative influence, which made his fiefdom part of the system of the sultanic organization rather than an expression of an independent authority of the caliphate.

The Caliph's Feudalism: An Analytical Reading in the Orientalist Proposal

In the establishment stage, al-Mu'izz Aybak (655 AH / 1257 AD) exploited Izz al-Din Aybak ibn Abdullah al-Salihi al-Najmi al-Turkmen al-Jashanker, the first sultan of the Mamluk maritime state in Egypt, originally owned by the righteous Ayyubid sultan Najm al-Din Ayyub, then he rose to become Jashankera after the death of al-Salih and the rule of Shajar al-Durr, the princes unanimously assumed his assumption of the sultanate, so he sat on the throne on the last Saturday of the spring The first was in 648 AH, and he was killed in the mountain fortress in 655 AH) (Ibn Tighri, d.t., 25) The name of the Caliph al-Musta'sim Billah (656 AH / 1258 AD) as a political pressure card to confront the legitimacy of the Ayyubids in the Levant, as the orientalist Poliak (Atef, 1948, 5-103) stated that "the country belongs to the caliph and that the king is his representative only", where Abu al-Fida and Ibn Taghri mentioned Bardi (Ibn Ayyub, d.t., 183; d.t., 23) When Aybak was besieged by his legitimacy, he declared the country's subordination to Baghdad and engraved the road in the name of the Caliph al-Musta'sim Billah, declaring: "The country belongs to the caliph and the king is his deputy" to suggest that the land belongs to the caliph and that he is merely his representative.

The official view of the Mamluk state towards the financial allocations of the Abbasid Caliphate in Cairo varied, and the concept of (the Caliph's livelihood) developed significantly between the era of the Mamluks and the Circassians, since Sultan al-Zahir Baybars revived the caliphate (Abd al-Zahir, 1976, 99; al-Marjani, 2002, 35) in the year (659 AH / 1261 AD), the Mamluk state was keen, as mentioned by Ibn Abd al-Zahir (al-Khuwaitir, 1976, 111). However, this support initially took the form of diwani salaries

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and in-kind expenses from the Sultan's treasury, and did not take the form of the usual fixed (agricultural feudalism) for princes and soldiers, describing this as saying: "His houses became the largest houses, because they were collected of horses, weapons, and deputies. 1990, 55)", which is provided by the Royal Treasury, and did not stem from land ownership or fixed feudalism

The orientalist Pulyak identifies the turning point during the reign of Sultan Barquq (Barquq ibn Anas, Sultan al-Malik al-Zahir Abu Saeed Barquq, a Circassian Mamluk brought by Khwaja Uthman from his country, and his name was Al-Tunbagha, and it was said that Sudun, when the Atabek bought him, Yalbagha al-Omari al-Khasaki, he was named Barquq, he rose in the Mamluks until he assumed the highest positions such as the Emirate of Tabalkhanah, the Emirate of a Hundred and a Thousand Offerings, and the King of the Sultan's Stable, then the Great Umrah, and became the Sultan of the Egyptian lands and the leader of the Circassian Mamluk state) (Al-Self-Made, (1998, 38-39) (d. 801 AH / 1398 AD) "who took the measure of granting the incapacitated caliph land to receive from the original ruler for his own feudal lord" The orientalist Pulyak shows that this procedure transformed the caliph as the custodian of feudalism into a member of the military category with rank and income, likening this situation to what was in force in Iraq since 334 AH / 945 AD during the Buyid era (320 AH - 932 AD / 447 AH - 1055 AD) and in Egypt throughout the Fatimid era (297 AH - 909 AD) 567 AH – 1171 AD), where the caliphs owned the assets, not just the symbols.

This Orientalist vision is based in essence on what al-Maqrizi (al-Maqrizi, 1998, 424) confirmed, where he referred to the radical transformation in the life of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allah (787 AH/1385 AD – 791 AH/1389 AD) after the ascension of Barquq, describing this as "exaggerating and exaggerating it, and bestowing blessings on it... He became a fiefdom and a wealthy man, which moved the Caliph from the position of a religious symbol who lives on gifts, to the position of a co-owner of the agricultural land's rents.

In the context of comparative analysis, the orientalist Poliak links this new situation to what happened historically in the year (334 AH / 945 AD) during the Buyids entering Baghdad and controlling the Caliph al-Mustakfi (333 AH - 944 AD / 334 AH - 946 AD), where they confiscated the lands of the state and set a daily fiefdom and salary for the caliph, a decline that was accurately documented by Ibn al-Athir (Al-Jazari, 1997, 160) describing this decline by saying that "the caliph did not have a minister left, but he had a scribe who only managed his feudal and his outputs", while Al-Suyuti adds (Abu Bakr, 2004, 286)A numerical detail shows the small amount of this income, pointing out that Mu'izz al-Dawla Abu al-Husayn Ahmad bin Buwayh al-Daylami: one of the most prominent emirs of the Buyid state, extended his influence over Iraq and entered Baghdad in 334 AH / 945 AD, so the Abbasid caliphate became under Buyid control during his reign, his rule lasted for twenty-five years, and he died in 356 AH / 967 AD, and the matter was entrusted after him to his son Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiar) (Ibn Khalkan, 1900, 174-175) decided for the Caliph a daily allowance "and Mu'izz al-Dawla decided for him every day an expenditure of one hundred dinars only."

The orientalist Pulyak monitors the development of this financial curve, pointing out that in the time of Sultan Yusuf, (Jamal al-Din Abu al-Mahasen Yusuf bin al-Malik al-Ashraf Barsbay, a Mamluk sultan of Circassians, he took over the Sultanate in 841 AH after the death of his father, and he was young, so Atabek Jaqmaq al-Ala'i took over the management of the affairs of the state, and his reign did not last long due to the conflicts between the Mamluks) (Al-Suyuti, 1928, 179) In 841 AH, the feudalism of the Caliph increased, and during the reign of Inal ((Saif al-Din Abu al-Nasr Inal al-Ala'i al-Dhahiri al-Nasiri is a Mamluk sultan of Circassians, he is the thirty-sixth of the kings of the Turks and their sons, and the twelfth of the Circassians, who took over the sultanate in 857 AH after the deposition of King Al-Mansur Othman, he was of Circassian origin, he was bought by Sultan Al-Zahir Barquq, then he was freed during the reign of Sultan Al-Nasir Faraj, and he progressed in positions until he became sultan (Al-Malati, 2014, 113) in 857 AH

His son Ahmad ((al-Mu'ayyad Shihab al-Din Abu al-Fath Ahmad bin Aynal, a Mamluk sultan of Circassians, is the thirty-seventh of the Turkic kings and their sons, and the thirteenth of the Circassians, who took over the Sultanate in 865 AH after his father, Sultan Ashraf Aynal, abdicated the rule to him, and his reign was short) (Ibn Ayas, 2006, 339)", where the caliph was granted another reward in addition, and the narration of Ibn Taghri Bardi agrees with this view, as he confirmed that the caliphs in periods of weakness of the sultans (such as the period of Sultan Yusuf who was as a child) or periods of turmoil (the beginning of the Inal era) they were given increases in salaries and fiefdoms to ensure their legitimate loyalty and the consolidation of the throne

Ibn Taghri Bardi stated that Sultan Inal exaggerated the honor of the Caliph, describing it accurately as "and bestowed upon the Caliph a thousand dinars, and an enormous feud in addition to what he had in his hand", and the orientalist Pulyak determines the size of this possession accurately based on the records of Ibn al-Ji'an (Ibn al-Muqar, 1898, 25-158), pointing out that the feudalism of the Caliph in that period consisted of two complete villages and parts of two other villages, which reflects the enormity of the resources at his disposal "the endowment of Maulana Amir al-Mu'minin and those who associate with him." The administrative description proves that Sultan Inal's increases were not transient gifts, but turned into fixed and recognized endowment assets in the State Office.

However, this expansion did not last long, as mentioned by the orientalist Poliak, when Sultan Qaitbay (901 AH / 1496 AD) came, the Ashraf King Abu al-Nasr Saif al-Din Qaitbay al-Mahmoudi, the Sultan of the Egyptian lands and one of the most prominent Mamluk sultans of Circassians, was born in 815 AH / 1412 AD, and took over the Sultanate in 872 AH / 1468 AD after the deposition of Al-Zahir Tamrigha, and his rule continued until his death in Cairo in 901 AH / 1496 AD, with the length of his reign and many wars and his military and urban achievements, and his biography is considered one of the longest of the Mamluk sultans. , 2000, 285) to the rule (872 AH / 1467 AD) "cancelled this increase and deducted from the Caliph's property", an important shift documented by Ibn Iyas, who portrayed the Caliph's financial suffering as a result of this austerity policy, explaining that the Sultan "did not send the Caliph an expense and was a base waiting for it... So the Caliph had a great deal of hardship, and a group of princes were persuaded to lend him a sum of interest and entered into a debt that he did not receive."

The orientalist Pulyak discusses a major legal crisis in the Mamluk state, which is the erosion of the land of the Kharaj (it is what has been placed on the necks of the land in terms of rights that are paid for it, God Almighty said: "Or do you ask them to go out, for the output of your Lord is good"), and the Kharaj in the language of the Arabs is a name for rent and yield and it is divided into the tribute of the division and the tribute of the area) (Abu Zakaria, 1965, 51) (owned by the House of the Muslims) in favor of private property, originally, the land of Egypt and the Levant is (the land of Kharaj) that is not sold or inherited, but is benefited by the soldiers (the Muqta'un) In exchange for military service, however, the Mamluk Circassian era witnessed a serious deviation in the sale of these lands to the princes, to turn from a "temporary feudalism" to a "free king" whose owner pays a reduced tax (tithes) for any land on which the people surrendered, which is from the land of the Arabs or the land of al-Ajam, it is theirs, and it is the land of a tenth, as a city when its people surrendered to it, and as Yemen it is the land, and it is called in proportion to the amount of zakat imposed on its production, as the tithe is taken from it if it is irrigated without provisions, such as rainwater and rivers and the eyes, and half of the tithe is taken if it is watered by a machine and the cost of the clearing" (Adnan, 2024, 44-45) instead of the full kharaj, which the jurists considered to be theft of public money, "that this increase was a direct violation of the Islamic law, which forbade the conversion of lands that pay the tribute to owned lands that are not subject to the feudal system and pay only the tithe."

Al-Maqrizi explained this shift clearly, pointing out that the lands of Egypt "have become all the lands of Egypt to the Sultan, his princes and his soldiers.... The jurists justified this measure, as stated by Poliak, on the basis of the right given by Islamic law to the Caliph to grant Muslims usurped lands and unowned lands as private property for which the tithes tax is paid, which was generalized to all state lands, which led to the legitimization of a broad process of owning the lands of the House of Finance.

The Orientalist Pulyak explains the jurisprudential mechanism that was used to justify this violation, as the Mamluk jurists expanded the interpretation of the Caliph's powers, and compared the lands of the state to favorable lands (i.e., the ownership of empty land in which there is no trace of construction or cultivation, and which does not belong to anyone, nor a public facility such as a cemetery, pasture, or al-Muhtat, by reviving it by agriculture or construction). (Whoever revives a land that is favorable, it is his), while Abu Hanifah stipulated the permission of the Imam for the validity of its ownership (Al-Kubaisi, 1991, 42-43) which the Imam may feudal, and that they especially adopted the theory that "every property whose owner dies without leaving an heir after him, his inheritance becomes the property of the Muslim community", and since the Caliph is the guardian of the House of Money (to which the inheritances of those who have no heir are vested),

He gave a general power of attorney to the Sultan to sell what he deemed appropriate for the interest, and thus the Caliph's signature became the legal cover that turned the public money into a commodity to be bought and sold, "The Caliph was represented by the administration of the House of Money delegated by this Sultan, and he had the right, i.e. the Caliph, to sell the lands and dispose of

them as he wished." Feudalism is granted to the prince and his heirs after him, explaining that it is not valid, because it deviates from the rights of the house of money to the inherited property, and because direct inheritance is invalid according to Sharia, as mentioned by al-Qalqshandi, the princes and sultans resorted to the trick of buying mentioned by the orientalist Pulyak.

Regarding the prevalence of these violations, Al-Qalqshandi provides a rare historical testimony that supports the view of Poliak about the violation of Sharia in the Mamluk era, where he concludes his jurisprudential speech by lamenting the reality of his time, saying: "In our time, the situation has been corrupted, the laws have changed, and things have deviated from the rules of Sharia... The matter is an explicit acknowledgment by the clerk of the establishment in the state that the real estate practices of his time (the Circassian era) have gone beyond the established jurisprudential rulings to turn into an organized plundering of the state's resources, and have exploited the powers of the authority (the caliph and the sultan) to turn public feudalism into private property.

The orientalist Pulyak explains the executive step known as "substitution or inn", where the feudal prince formally relinquishes his feudal lordship to the House of Money (the Ummah Fund), and then immediately buys it from the state with a legitimate sale contract and pays a price to the treasury, in this way, the land is transformed from a temporary feudalism (withdrawn from it upon his dismissal or death) to eternal private property (inherited by his children), and the sultans used this method to reward the senior princes (influential people) with fixed properties that guarantee their loyalty, as he stated that "the lands which became private property, not subject to the feudal system, to be purchased by the Nation Fund, became very numerous, and as long as the Sultan bought these lands either to keep them or to give them to the gifts of influential princes."

This phenomenon moves from the realm of historical analysis to the realm of statistical reality in the records of Ibn al-Ji'an, who proved in his book the Sunni masterpiece the existence of vast areas of agricultural lands that were officially taken out of the possession of the state by way of sale, as he repeats in his statistics the administrative phrase that indicates: "Outside of what came out of the house of money by sale", with the mention of specific areas of acres whose ownership was transferred to individuals in this way, and this official documentation proves that the purchase process from the Ummah Fund that he mentioned The Orientalist Poliak was not an isolated incident, but became a fixed clause in the Mamluk Cadillac Code, recognizing the departure of land from state ownership to private ownership through sale.

The orientalist concludes by following the fate of these properties after the fall of the Mamluk state, pointing out that when Caliph al-Mutawakkil was exiled to Istanbul following the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, "his fiefdoms in them remained his property until the reign of Sultan Selim I, who ordered the division of these fiefdoms between the caliph and two exiled Abbasids."

This analytical view acquires a clear evidentiary force when compared to the texts of Ibn Iyas, who revealed the exact details of this transformation during the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (Suleiman bin Sulaym bin Bayezid, one of the greatest sultans of the Ottoman Empire, who took over the Sultanate in 926 AH after the death of his father, Sultan Selim I, was known for his military power, the expansion of conquests, the interest in regulating laws and the care of scholars, and his rule was characterized by the stability and wide influence of the Ottoman Empire) (Al-Ghazi, 1997, 139-140), after a period of turmoil and the imprisonment of the Caliph during the reign of Selim I (Selim I bin Bayazid II bin Muhammad Al-Fatih, the ninth Sultan of the Uthman dynasty, was born in the city of Amaseh in 872 AH, and took over the Sultanate in 918 AH, he grew up in the Ottoman court, received legal and military sciences, and took over the Emirate of Trabzon, and was known for his firmness, strength and knowledge, and his sultanate had a great impact on the expansion of the Ottoman Empire) (Haji, Ibn Iyas cited the text of the royal decree that matches what the orientalist Pulyak mentioned the division of the feuds, where he says: "It was decreed that the feudalism of the caliphate should be divided between them by three thirds of all equally", and this text carries a dangerous political and economic significance, as it means the fragmentation of the unit of the monarchy that used to give the caliph his prestige, and turning it into a mere (family inheritance) distributed. This eliminates any central influence of the caliph in Egypt.

As for the living situation of the Caliph in this new era, Ibn Iyas presents an unexpected figure that shows the huge difference between the extravagance of the Mamluks and the austerity of the Ottomans towards the Caliph, while the Mamluks owned villages and lost lands, we find Sultan Suleiman determines the Caliph's income with a small daily salary, which Ibn Iyas described as saying, "He brought the Caliph from the place where his father had imprisoned him... This meagre salary (60

dirhams) compared to what was the case in the era of Inal and Qaitbay, confirms the correctness of the orientalist Pulyak's conclusion that the Ottoman era did not end the Abbasid Caliphate as a lineage, but ended it as an economic and feudal power, transforming the caliph from a foundation in the Mamluk military system that owns land and men, to a mere retired employee or under the auspices of the state who receives a limited pension, which explains the complete disappearance of the political role of the Abbasids in the following centuries, and their survival. They are just notables who inherit the remnants of those fragmented endowments.

The Feudalism of the Sultan: Between Theory and Practice in the Orientalist Poliak

The orientalist Poliak begins his historical trace of the Sultan's possession by referring to the traditional structure that preceded the major reforms, explaining that the lands of Egypt were divided before the Rock (the process of surveying agricultural lands, releasing the reins and modifying the abscission, which is from the verb Rak, and this process was carried out in Islamic Egypt more than once, the most famous of which was in the Mamluk Bahri era, which was known as the Hussami Rock after Sultan Hussam al-Din Lajin, and the Nasserite Rock after Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun) (Abdul Hafez Al-Hossami, 128-148) Al-Hossami to twenty-four carats (a measure of the area of agricultural land in Egypt, which is 124 acres or 35, 1750 square meters⁴) (Walter, D.T., 98), distributed as follows: "Four carats were allocated to the Sultan, ten to the princes, and ten to the soldiers."

With the advent of the year (697 AH / 1298 AD) during the Hussami Rock, the orientalist Pulyak pointed out a change in the balance of power in favor of the Sultanate Mamluks, as he redistributes the lineage, saying that "it became at the disposal of the Sultan alone, except for the Melkite Mamluks, four carats, which is his own land known as (private), and the Melkite Mamluks have nine carats, and the princes and the knights of the ring together have eleven carats."

However, this equation was definitively reformed in the Nasserite Rock (715 AH / 1315 AD), so that wealth became a tool in the hands of the Sultan to consolidate his authority and direct the management of the economy, and the vision of the orientalist Pulyak is identical to the official statements documented by al-Maqrizi (Mubarak, 2004, 136), who described the final result of this rock by saying, "The Sultan's private was separated from the land of Egypt in several ways... This amounted to ten carats of the territory, and the estates of princes, soldiers, and others became fourteen carats."

The orientalist Pulyak elaborates on the financial mechanisms introduced by the Circassian sultans, pointing to a dangerous shift in the granting of feudalism, as it was subject to the logic of the market (supply and demand), and he asserts that the fiefdoms "were bought with money in cash", revealing a strange political paradox, which is that the seller of these feudal lords was not always their former owner, but the sultan himself, which turned the head of the state into a merchant who sold the state lands to those who paid more.

In the context of deepening this analysis, the orientalist Pulyak highlights the emergence of a network of intermediaries, saying that "what is necessary is the intervention of some influential people as a mediator between the sultan and the feudal lord in order to give him some charm."

This picture finds its accurate documentation in Ibn Taghri Bardi, where he observed the growth and rooting of this phenomenon, describing the Sultan as saying: "He was a lover of collecting money, and ... People used to speak out about bribes, and the word is not from the words of the Arabs, but its origin is from the Nabataean language, and from it the proverb "Baratil" (Al-Husayni, 1965, 75), so hardly anyone was given a job or a job except with money.

Ibn Taghri Bardi (Al-Areini, d.t., 82) follows with sadness that explains that what the orientalist Pulyak said about the sale of feudalism has turned into a social catastrophe that has turned the scales upside down, saying, "This scourge has now multiplied until it has gone beyond the limit, and the owners of the houses have become standardized in our time", and this text proves the correctness of the Orientalist Poliak's analysis that money (bribery) has become the only criterion for ascension, which led to the displacement of the traditional military elites in favor of new groups that rose through the purchase of influence.

From a purely economic perspective, the orientalist Pulyak analyzes the phenomenon of the transformation of the sultan's fiefdoms into endowments as a process of restructuring public finances, as instead of the state's reliance on the central treasury (Bait al-Mal), which was suffering from a continuous deficit, the endowment was used as a parallel financial institution to finance infrastructure and security expenditures.

The orientalist Pulyak identifies the economic banks of these endowments, pointing out that their proceeds were directed to cover exorbitant costs that were previously a burden on the military budget, such as: defending the beaches, paying the ransom of prisoners, and building water tanks and hospitals. Endowments"

In the military aspect (defending the beaches), Ibn Yahya (Ibn Yahya, 1927, 42) quoted a text about Sultan Barquq to fortify the Tombs of the Levant, stating: "In the days of Sultan al-Malik al-Zahir Barquq, the age of the great tower in Beirut on the base of one of the towers of the ruined castle, and the mujahideen decided to use it." (Ibn Ayas, 2024, 435) In his detailed presentation of Sultan Qaitbay's facilities, he enumerated the huge commercial projects established by the Sultan to maximize resources, saying: "He established it from the buildings in the Egyptian lands, namely: the great school next to Al-Waraqeen... and the age of the quarter and the agency ... Omar is an agency towards his school... and Omar several shops He has many buildings in different places."

Taken together, these texts confirm the accuracy of the analysis of the orientalist Pulyak, as it proves that the Sultanate lands in Egypt and the Levant underwent a functional transformation, as they were integrated into an investment endowment system (which included agencies and shops) to become the main financier of service establishments and the mujahideen in al-Thughur, as a practical alternative to the traditional military feudal system, whose role has declined.

Despite the defensive goals that these endowments have been targeted, the orientalist Pulyak observes a serious deviation in their field administration, as the prestige of the central authority has eroded and the sultan has turned from a censor of the endowment to a partner in its exploitation.

The orientalist Pulyak explains the mechanisms of this transformation, pointing out that these agents violated the conditions of the endowments and exceeded their powers, saying: "These agents have always acted according to their whims with the income of the endowments... So that the system customarily followed with regard to the right of disposition was similar to the system of feudal possession in the presence of hands."

The matter did not stop at mismanagement, but went beyond it to consolidate the principle of heredity, which was forbidden in military feudalism, and here the role of the sultan emerges, who allowed this transgression to be passed, perhaps out of greed for the fees of the guardianship or out of incapacity, as the orientalist Pulyak adds: "They also violated this system by allowing themselves the right to abdicate (descent), and they transferred their powers to their children or friends." from the military).

The Sultan's practices in consolidating religious feudalism are most clearly illustrated in the writings of al-Maqrizi (Al-Mubarak, d.t., 375), who documented the economic catastrophe that befell the endowments in Egypt and the Levant as a result of this behavior, where the rulers (from the people of the state) turned into actual owners who prevented the rents from those who deserved it, describing this as saying: "The people of the state seized all the lands that were endowed in Egypt and the Moles, and the best of them became the ones who paid to those who deserved their rents one-tenth of what they received from them, otherwise many of them would not pay anything at all... So he was the worst off... Jurists, for the destruction of the detainee and the seizure of lands by the people of the state."

We conclude from the above that the fiefdom of the Sultan witnessed a structural deviation, as the land was transformed from a military trust for the state to a private investment asset, the sultans resorted to commoditizing it and then turning it into endowments to finance defense and protect wealth from confiscation, and thus the orientalist Pulyak believes that the Mamluk military feudalism has reached a stage of maturity that is very similar to the French feudalism in the Middle Ages.

Conclusion

1. The Mamluk state revived the Abbasid Caliphate in Cairo in 659 AH / 1261 AD during the reign of al-Zahir Baybars, but kept the role of the caliph in a symbolic framework, while providing him with maintenance from the sultan's treasury without granting him fixed fiefdoms at first.
2. The reign of al-Zahir Barquq represented an important turning point, as the caliph was granted a permanent fiefdom, which transferred him from a mere religious symbol based on donations to an income holder tied to agricultural land.

3. Historical sources indicate that this transformation made the Caliph part of the economic structure of the state, although his actual power remained limited to the military power of the Sultan.
4. The period of Inal's reign saw an expansion of the Caliph's resources, granting fiefdoms and additional funds that in some cases turned into fixed assets recognized in the records of the diwans.
5. This expansion did not last long, as Sultan Qaitbay adopted an austerity policy that led to the reduction of the Caliph's resources and the abolition of some of his fiefdoms, which reflected negatively on his financial situation.
6. Historical testimonies reveal the use of legal and administrative mechanisms to convert temporary fiefdoms into private property, through sale or exchange from the House of Finance, which allowed princes and sultans to establish their control over the lands.
7. These practices led to the expansion of private (private) royal properties at the expense of the House of Wealth, especially after the reforms of land distribution in the Hossami Rock and then the Nasserite Rock.
8. The feudal system in the Mamluk era gradually transformed from a tool for regulating military resources to a means of consolidating the sultanate power and strengthening the influence of the military class.
9. This development ended up in a political and economic reality in which the actual control of wealth and land was concentrated in the hands of the sultan and the princes, while the caliphate remained the nominal legitimacy without having real power.

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