

= Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla =

Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla Abu ' I @-@ Ma 'ali Sharif , more commonly known by his laqab (honorific epithet) , Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla (Arabic : ??? ?????) , was the second ruler of the Hamdanid Emirate of Aleppo , encompassing most of northern Syria . The son of the emirate 's founder , Sayf al @-@ Dawla , he inherited the throne at a young age and in the midst of a major Byzantine offensive that within two years conquered the western portions of his realm and turned Aleppo into a tributary state . Facing a multitude of rebellions and desertions until 977 , Sa 'd was unable even to enter his own capital , which was in the hands of his father 's chief minister , Qarquya . By maintaining close relations with the Buyids , he managed to re @-@ establish his authority in parts of the Jazira , but his rule was soon challenged by the rebellion of his governor Bakjur , who was supported by the Fatimids of Egypt . In turn , Sa 'd came to rely increasingly on Byzantine assistance , although he continued to fluctuate in his allegiance between Byzantium , the Buyids , and the Fatimids .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early years = = =

Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla was the son of Sayf al @-@ Dawla , the first Emir of Aleppo , and Sakhinah , the sister of Sayf al @-@ Dawla 's cousin and court poet , Abu Firas . At the time of his father 's death , in February 967 , he was only fifteen , and resided at the emirate 's Jaziran capital , Mayyafariqin . His succession to the emirate was unopposed , but the state his father had left him was crumbling : the Byzantine emperor Nikephoros II had just conquered Cilicia and was raiding its northern and western provinces , while rebellions of his closest lieutenants had plagued Sayf al @-@ Dawla 's last years .

Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla reached Aleppo , which for years had been governed by Sayf al @-@ Dawla 's chief minister and chamberlain (hajib) , Qarquya , in June / July 967 . Almost immediately he was confronted by a rebellion of his uncle , Abu Firas , at the time governor of Homs , which lasted until the latter 's death in battle in April 968 . At the same time , Aleppo itself was threatened by the Byzantines , and Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla , on the advice of Qarquya , left the city . The Byzantines did not attack the city , but Qarquya and his fellow ghilman (military slaves) seized the moment to claim the city for themselves . Accompanied by 300 faithful followers , Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla was thus reduced to wandering from city to city across the lands that were nominally his , hoping to gain entry : Saruj , Manbij and Harran refused to support him , while at Mayyafariqin his own mother refused to let him in . Finally , he found refuge at Homs . In the meantime , many of his father 's old supporters left to join his cousin Abu Taghlib , Emir of Mosul , who used the opportunity to expand his own territory . Immediately after Sayf al @-@ Dawla 's death , he captured al @-@ Raqqah , and by 971 extended his control over the provinces of Diyar Bakr and Diyar Mudar . Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla , unable to offer any resistance , tacitly accepted these losses as well as his cousin 's suzerainty .

The year 969 was a crucial one in Syrian history , as it marked the climax of the Byzantine advance . In October , the generals Michael Bourtzes and Peter captured Antioch , securing their control over the north Syrian littoral . Soon after , the Byzantines marched against Aleppo itself and forced Qarquya to sign a treaty (December 969 or January 970) making Aleppo a tributary Byzantine protectorate with Qarquya as emir and his deputy , Bakjur , as his designated successor . At the same time , in Egypt , the Fatimids defeated the Ikhshidids and gained control of the country , from where they advanced into southern Syria . The competition between these two powers , Byzantium and the Fatimids , would shape the history of Syria and of Aleppo for the next fifty years .

= = = Recovery of Aleppo , conflicts with Bakjur , the Fatimids and Byzantium = = =

It was not until 977 that Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla managed to regain his capital , which by now was

under the control of Bakjur , who in 975 had deposed and imprisoned Qarquya . Aided by some of his father 's ghilman , and , crucially , the powerful Banu Kilab tribe living around Aleppo , Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla besieged Aleppo and captured it . Qarquya was set free and again entrusted with the affairs of state until his death a few years later , while Bakjur was given the governorship of Homs . Soon after , in 979 , he was able to capitalize upon Abu Taghlib 's conflict with the Buyids of Iraq to recover some of his father 's domains in the Jazira : after acknowledging Buyid suzerainty , he received governorship of the Diyar Mudar , except for al @-@ Raqqah and Rahba . At the same time , he also received from the Abbasid Caliph ? who was a puppet of the Buyids ? the honorific laqab by which he is known .

Bakjur , in the meantime , had used his new post at Homs to open contacts with the Fatimids , who intended to use him as a pawn to subdue Aleppo and complete their conquest of the entirety of Syria . Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla himself oscillated between the Fatimids and Byzantium : on the one hand he resented Byzantine overlordship and was willing to acknowledge the Fatimid Caliph , but on the other hand he did not want to see his domain become merely another Fatimid province like southern Syria . His first attempt to shake free of the Byzantine protectorate , in 981 , thus ended in failure due to lack of outside support , when a Byzantine army appeared before Aleppo 's walls to enforce compliance . The Fatimids now induced Bakjur to act , and in September 983 , the latter launched an attack on Aleppo with the support of Fatimid troops . Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla was forced to appeal to the Byzantine emperor Basil II for help , and the siege was raised by a Byzantine army under Bardas Phokas the Younger . The Byzantines then proceeded to sack Homs in October . The city was returned to Hamdanid control , while Bakjur fled to Fatimid territory , where he assumed the governorship of Damascus . It is an indication of the strained relations between Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla and his " saviours " that after Bakjur 's flight , there were clashes between Byzantine and Hamdanid troops , which were settled only when the Hamdanid emir agreed to pay twice the usual yearly amount of tribute of 20 @,@ 000 gold dinars .

Hamdanid relations with Byzantium collapsed completely in 985 ? 986 , after the Fatimids took the Byzantine fortress of Balanyas . Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla refused to continue paying tribute . As a result , the Byzantines under Bardas Phokas invaded his territory and sacked Killis before retracing their steps and marching south to an unsuccessful siege of Apamea . In retaliation , Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla sent his troops to raze the famous monastery of Qal 'at Sim 'an . However , soon after that , in May 986 , the prospect of an imminent conclusion of a peace between Byzantium and Egypt forced Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla to return to his earlier allegiance , and he re @-@ affirmed his tributary status on the same terms as before . This did not prevent Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla from supporting the Byzantine general Bardas Skleros in his second rebellion against Basil II , once he was released from Buyid captivity in December 896 , nor of recognizing Fatimid suzerainty in the same month , especially as Byzantium now descended into a civil war that lasted until 989 .

Warfare with the Fatimids once again threatened in 991 , again because of Bakjur . He had governed Damascus until 988 , when he was deposed , and then fled to Raqqah . From there , though with little support from the Fatimids , he tried to attack Aleppo . Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla , with Byzantine assistance in the form of troops under the doux of Antioch , Michael Bourtzes , was able to defeat and capture Bakjur at Na 'ura east of Aleppo in April 991 , and later had him executed . Nevertheless , relations with the Fatimids soured over Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla 's arrest of Bakjur 's children , and it was only his death of hemiplegia in December 991 that stopped him from attacking Fatimid possessions .

Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla was succeeded by his son , Sa 'id Abu ' I @-@ Fada 'il Sa 'id al @-@ Dawla , but real power rested in the hands of Sa 'd al @-@ Dawla 's former chamberlain , Lu 'lu ' . Several of the Hamdanid ghilman , resenting the influence of Lu 'lu ' , went over to the Fatimids , who now launched a sustained offensive against Aleppo under the Turkish general Manjutakin . Only the personal intervention of Basil II in 995 and again in 999 would save the emirate from Fatimid conquest . Warfare lasted until 1000 , when a peace treaty was concluded guaranteeing Aleppo 's continued existence as a buffer state between the two powers . Finally , in 1002 , Lu 'lu ' assassinated Sa 'id al @-@ Dawla and assumed control of Aleppo in his own name .