



The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin or al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa'l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya by Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad (Crusade Texts in Translation)

Baha Al-Din Yusuf Ibn Rafi Ibn Shaddad, Donald S. Richards

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Saladin is perhaps the one and only Muslim ruler who emerges with any clarity in standard tales and histories of the Crusades; this is a translation of Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad's account of his life and career. Ibn Shaddad (1144-1234) was clearly a great admirer of Saladin and was a close associate of his, serving as his qadi al-'askar (judge of the army), from 1188 until Saladin's death in 1193. His position and his access to information make this an authoritative and essential source for Saladin's career, while his personal relationship with the sultan adds a sympathetic and moving element to the account of his final years. Aside from its inherent value as a source for the history of Egypt and the Middle East, it therefore provides a much-needed complement and corrective to the widely-known Latin accounts of the Crusades and the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the 12th century. The present translation is based on a fuller edition of the text than that used in the previous 19th-century translation, and takes into account the translator's readings of the earliest manuscript of the work, dated July 1228.

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