



# Safi' Ibn 'Ali's Biography of the Mamluk Sultan Qalawun

*Paulina B. Lewicka, Safi' ibn 'Ali Ibn 'Asakir*

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In the mid-thirteenth century a number of Turkish soldiers, imported as slaves from the Kipchak steppes, took over the power in Egypt. Those military slaves, known as Mamluks, soon appeared to be - to use the words of one of the greatest Arab historians - "a blessing from Divine Providence": before the century was over, they managed to save the Muslim lands from both the invading Mongols and the Crusaders, who had occupied the territories for 200 years. The present book is a contribution to the studies on the Mamluk military institution, Mamluk culture and Mamluk society. It consists of two parts: a critical edition of the Arabic Medieval manuscript constitutes the main body of the work. The manuscript is a biography of al-Mansur Qalawun, one of the Mamluk sultans who ruled Egypt and Syria at the end of 13th century, and who played a decisive part in defeating Mongol and Crusading armies; the edition is preceded by a detailed introduction.

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