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PART I

Mamluk rule and succession

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CHAPTER 1

Literary offerings: a genre of courtly literature

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In *al-Sayf al-muhannad*, a work which will be discussed below, the author, al-‘Aynī, says that ‘it has been customary in ancient and modern times to make an offering to kings and sultans of what God has placed within the power and capacity of everyone’.¹ He therefore makes his offering in the form of a book, presented to the sultan shortly after his accession. Seven such offerings form the subject of this chapter, five of them presented to Mamluk sultans, the sixth to the Ottoman Selim the Grim after the conquest of Syria and Egypt, and the seventh to a neo-Mamluk grandee of the eleventh/seventeenth century.

The first of these works is *al-Tuhfa al-mulūkiyya fī ‘l-dawla al-Turkiyya* by the Mamluk chronicler Baybars al-Manṣūrī (d. 725/1325).² It has generally been regarded as a chronicle of the Turkish Mamluk sultans to 711/1311–12. Ashtor described it as ‘a first-hand report by a high ranking state dignitary . . . Baybars is interested only in political history’,³ and briefly discussed its relationship to Baybars al-Manṣūrī’s chronicle of Islamic history, *Zubdat al-fikra fī ta’rīkh al-hijra*. Little calls it ‘a compilation from the sections of *Zubdat al-fikra* that deal with the Turkish or Baḥrī dynasty’.⁴ These descriptions overlook, however, the specific character of *al-Tuhfa* as indicated by the author’s life history, the time of the work’s production, and its intended destination.

Although the sons and later descendants of Mamluks (*awlād al-nās*) played a very important part in the cultural history of Egypt and Syria, Baybars al-Manṣūrī, a first-generation immigrant, is almost unique among the chroniclers of the period. Ashtor, and still more strongly Wiet,⁵ have emphasized his dependence on secretaries, but whatever their responsibility for the phraseology and style of *al-Tuhfa*, it bears the impress of Baybars al-Manṣūrī’s own personality and experience. He was in the service of Qalāwūn al-Alfī (from

¹ Badr al-dīn Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad al-‘Aynī, *al-Sayf al-muhannad fī sirat al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Cairo, 1387/1967), 6. (Hereafter, *sayf*).

² Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Kitāb al-Tuhfa al-mulūkiyya fī ‘l-dawla al-Turkiyya*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān (Cairo, 1407/1987) (Hereafter *Tuhfa*).

³ E. Ashtor, ‘Some unpublished sources for the Baḥrī period’, in Uriel Heyd (ed.), *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization* (Jerusalem, 1961), 13.

⁴ Donald Presgrave Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 5.

⁵ Ashtor, *u.s.*, at 12 and n. 4.

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whose royal title of al-Malik al-Manṣūr he obtained his *nisba*) by 664/1265–6. After Qalāwūn's death in 689/1290 he remained loyal to his son, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, during whose first two (nominal) reigns he held the great office of *dawādār*. He played a part in the final restoration of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, in 709/1310. When he ended *al-Tuḥfa* with the events of 711/1312 he had been appointed vice regent in Egypt, the highest office in the sultanate. With his master restored, and at last firmly established on the throne, and himself to all appearance the sultan's trusted lieutenant, the work could appropriately be closed, and placed in the royal library, for which (as he tells us in the colophon) it was intended.

Al-Tuḥfa, then, is not simply the abridgment of another chronicle but a deliberate presentation of the history of the early Mamluk sultans to do honour to Baybars al-Manṣūrī's former master, al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, and to Qalāwūn's son, who had at last emerged victorious over his opponents and the usurpers of his throne. After an introduction in which Baybars describes his abridgement of the final bulky part of *Zubdat al-fikra*, and al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's gracious interest in the work, he opens his history with the death of the Ayyubid sultan, al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb, in 647/1249. The Bahriyya rising like lions overthrew his unworthy son, Tūrān Shāh, and then disposed of the king of France and his soldiery. After this, Aybak al-Turkumānī was appointed *atābak al-ʿasākir* before being installed as sultan. In the annal for 650/1252–3 Qalāwūn makes his appearance with Baybars al-Bunduqdārī in command of an expedition against the Arabs of Upper Egypt. He is most significantly mentioned in 656/1258, when he and Baybars al-Bunduqdārī, both at that time exiles, visited a certain Shaykh ʿAlī al-Bakkā living in Hebron, who foretold that both of them would obtain the sultanate. Alleged prophecies of this kind are not unusual as devices of legitimization, and here as in some other instances one may suspect that Baybars alone originally figured in the incident, which was subsequently extended when Qalāwūn usurped the throne.

The presentation of Baybars al-Bunduqdārī as champion of Islam and sultan was in the circumstances a somewhat delicate operation. His importance in the history of the Mamluk sultanate could not be ignored; on the other hand he could not be allowed to overshadow Qalāwūn, whose usurpation equally required careful handling. A crucial episode was the battle of ʿAyn Jālūt in 658/1260, where credit for the victory over the Mongols is given to Baybars by his biographer and encomiast, Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir.⁶ In *al-Tuḥfa*, however, Baybars is shown merely as being sent to pursue the fugitives from the battlefield, when (in an incident not mentioned by Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir) he is surprised by a relieving force of Mongols, who are defeated by the Mamluks. The subsequent annals to 676/1277–8, twenty-two folios in the original man-

⁶ Muḥyī al-dīn b. ʿAbd al-Zāhir, *al-Rawḍ al-zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz [b. ʿAbdallāh] al-Khuwayṭir, (Riyadh, 1396/1976), 64.

uscript, cover the reign of Baybars, and give a fair and straightforward account of his achievements. One may compare with this the less sympathetic revisionist biography of Baybars, completed a few years later (716/1316) by Shāfi‘ b. ‘Alī.⁷ Baybars’ death is ascribed to his accidentally drinking from a poisoned cup intended for an Ayyubid prince – a story which is not mentioned by Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir or Shāfi‘, and which may be a romantic legend although it is found in other sources.⁸

Since usurpation and restoration form in a sense the central theme of *al-Tuhfa*, it is instructive to compare Baybars al-Manṣūrī’s treatment of two usurpations. The first is that of Qalāwūn, who in 678/1279 brought about the deposition of Baybars’ son, Baraka Khān, and the installation of his infant brother, Salāmish, only to dethrone Salāmish three months later, and take the sultanate himself. In Baybars al-Manṣūrī’s account of the course of events leading to the usurpation, he makes it clear that Qalāwūn exploited a power struggle between Baraka Khān’s Mamluk household and his father’s veterans, the Zāhiriyya, to secure the ascendancy of his own comrades, the Bahriyya. Baybars al-Manṣūrī justifies this usurpation in a significant passage:

Al-Zāhir [Baybars] was confident that the command would pass to him [Qalāwūn], and this was a reason for his establishing a connection by marriage with him.⁹ The pious Shaykh ‘Alī al-Bakkā foretold his sultanate, as we have mentioned. Then after that one of his retinue had a dream of him, as if an unseen speaker said, ‘This Qalāwūn will break Halāwūn [Hülegü].’ When he was told of the dream, being yet an amir, he said, ‘These are confused dreams.’ But the matter was [divinely] recorded, and the dream was a foretelling; and the story of the dream spread in the talk of the people.¹⁰

So not only was the sultanate of Qalāwūn foretold by Shaykh ‘Alī al-Bakkā, and foreseen by Baybars, but he was promised in a dream that he would be the victor at ‘Ayn Jālūt.

Very different is the presentation of the usurpation by Kitbughā al-Manṣūrī, who served as vice regent (*nā’ib al-salṭana*) to the infant al-Nāṣir Muḥammad at his first accession, then desposed him, and became sultan in Muḥarram 694/December 1294. Baybars al-Manṣūrī represents Kitbughā as being incited by conspirators seeking to obtain assignments (*iqṭā‘āt*) and promotion, and he comments: ‘He thought that kingly rule was by way of being seated on the throne, and he did not know that it was by the coincidence of good fortune and the coming of good luck’.¹¹ He goes on to demonstrate that these tokens of legitimate kingship were lacking to Kitbughā, whose short and

⁷ Shāfi‘ b. ‘Alī al-‘Asqalānī, *Husn al-manāqib al-sirriyya al-muntaza‘a min al-sira al-Zāhiriyya*, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Abdallāh al-Khuwayṭir, (Riyadh, 1396/1976). The *nisba* ‘al-‘Asqalānī’ may be found in the notice of Shāfi‘ b. ‘Alī in al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi‘ bi’l-wafayāt*, ed. Wadād al-Qāḍī (Beirut/Stuttgart, 1982), 29 vols., vol. XVI, 77 (no. 97).

⁸ Peter Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt* (London, 1992), 241–3.

⁹ Baybars’ son and immediate successor, Baraka Khān, was married to Ghāziya Khātūn, Qalāwūn’s daughter; cf. *Tuhfa*, 83.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 91. ‘The people’ (*al-nās*) probably signifies the Mamluks rather than the people generally.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 144.

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luckless reign (694–6/1294–6) saw the dreaded traditional cycle of a low Nile, dearth, pestilence and high mortality; and who was himself ousted by another usurper, Lājīn al-Manṣūrī. Baybars al-Manṣūrī makes no special comment on this coup, nor on the enthronement of Baybars al-Jāshnikīr in 708/1309, when, according to some accounts, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was not deposed but abdicated voluntarily.

Al-Tuhfa al-mulūkiyya, then, presents the history of the Mamluk sultanate as proceeding to its glorious culmination in the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn. His reign was indeed to be both long and successful – epithets which can by no means be applied to that of his son, al-Šāliḥ Ismā‘īl, to whom the second work now under consideration was addressed. Its full title is *al-Nūr al-lā‘ih wa’l-durr al-šādih fi ‘stifā’ mawlānā al-sultān al-Malik al-Šāliḥ*.¹² The author was one Shams al-dīn Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qaysarānī, who died in 753/1352. He came from a Syro-Palestinian family; his great-grandfather, Khālīd ibn al-Qaysarānī, was the vizier of Nūr al-dīn b. Zangī (d. 569/1174). He himself was a chancery clerk in Damascus, and subsequently in Cairo. The sultan for whom he prepared this offering, al-Šāliḥ Ismā‘īl, was the fourth of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s sons to succeed to the throne in the two years following his death. The first two sons had been victims of the factional ambitions of the great Mamluk amirs. The third, al-Nāṣir Aḥmad, had withdrawn, after a few weeks’ visit to Cairo, to his stronghold of al-Karak, against which eight expeditions were sent in al-Šāliḥ Ismā‘īl’s reign. The last of these captured the great fortress, and the former sultan was put to death.

The enthronement of al-Šāliḥ Ismā‘īl, who bore a reputation for piety, may have seemed to promise better times, but he died after three years’ reign (743–6/1342–5). His name, ‘Imād al-dīn Abū ‘l-Fidā’ Ismā‘īl, is identical with that of the Ayyubid ruler of Ḥamāh who was al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s favourite, and it may perhaps be surmised that he was born in 720/1320, when his namesake was granted the title of sultan.

In his opening pages al-Qaysarānī stresses the divine election of al-Šāliḥ Ismā‘īl as sultan, and proceeds to give his titlature at considerable length, including the historical style of ‘Servitor of the Two August Sanctuaries’ (*khādīm al-ḥaramayn al-sharīfayn*), which was to pass in due course to the Ottoman sultans. He pays a remarkable tribute to al-Šāliḥ Ismā‘īl’s piety by asserting that ‘it is he who is sent to this [Islamic] Community (*hādhihi ‘l-umma*) at the end of these hundred years to renew its Faith’.¹³ This salutation of a Mamluk sultan as a *mujaddid* is surely unique.

The body of the work follows the same lines as *al-Tuhfa* but is a briefer and altogether feeble piece of historical writing. It opens with the statement that

¹² Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Qaysarānī, *al-Nūr al-lā‘ih wa’l-durr al-šādih fi ‘stifā’ mawlānā al-sultān al-Malik al-Šāliḥ*, ed. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Salām Tadmurī (Tripoli, 1402/1982) (hereafter *Nūr*).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 50. The hundred years referred to are the first century of the Mamluk sultanate not, as usually with this belief, a *hijrī* century.

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from the start of the Mamluk sultanate to the death of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is one hundred years; i. e. the period which was to be crowned by the coming of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl as *mujaddid*. The period begins with al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb and closes with al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl; a neat literary turn, although a slight blurring of the chronology. Al-Qaysarānī does not, however, begin his narrative with al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb, but goes back to al-ʿĀdil Nūr al-dīn b. Zangī. This allows him to mention his two distinguished ancestors, Khālīd b. al-Walīd, the Companion of the Prophet, and Khālīd Ibn al-Qaysarānī, Nūr al-dīn's vizier. After dealing with the exploits of Saladin, and the accumulation of the Ayyubid territories by his brother, Sayf al-dīn, the author passes on to the formation of al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb's Mamluk household. At this point al-Qaysarānī says that he will give a brief list of the sultans with their dates, which he proceeds to do from Tūrān Shāh, al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb's son, to Salāmish, the son of al-Zāhir Baybars. This bald record enables al-Qaysarānī to leave unmentioned the violent circumstances in which some of these sultans gained or lost the throne. There is no mention of Baybars' exploits against the Mongols or Franks, although it is noted that he died of dysentery after eating coarse food and drinking much koumiss. Al-Qaysarānī finds space, however, to mention that his own grandfather was Baraka Khān's vizier in Syria.

The accession of Qalāwūn is introduced with no mention of his usurpation of the sultanate from Salāmish. To the roll of the sultan's titles al-Qaysarānī appends the information that his grandfather was continued in office as vizier, and subsequently transferred to a post in the royal chancery, which he held until his death. He goes on to stress that Qalāwūn was the founder of the hereditary sultanate, which at the time of writing had lasted for sixty-four years and ten months. The brief account of Qalāwūn's reign is chiefly concerned with his death when about to undertake a campaign against Acre. It is followed by an equally brief notice of al-Ashraf Khalīl, his evil vizier Ibn al-Sal'ūs, and his fate. This impressionistic treatment continues in the presentation of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who is shown as reigning continuously for forty-nine years. The usurpations of Kitbughā, Lājīn and Baybars al-Jāshnikīr are disparagingly dismissed, and the bulk of al-Qaysarānī's notice of the reign is a series of encomia in rhymed prose, in which al-Nāṣir Muḥammad is improbably celebrated as a fighter in the Holy War: 'How many strongholds and cities did he conquer for Islam, plucking out castles and fortresses from the hands of the infidel? How many of his armies did he send to raid the idolaters in the midst of their country?'¹⁴ The sultan's military exploits were in fact limited to two defensive campaigns against the Mongols who had invaded Syria, and these were moreover in his second reign, when he was still a youth under the tutelage of Salār and Baybars al-Jāshnikīr.

From the death of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, which, we are told, caused universal grief, and which the author commemorates in an elegy, the work passes

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 63.

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directly to the accession of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl, omitting any reference to the three brothers who preceded him on the throne. He is hailed as ruler by hereditary right, ‘the sultan, son of the sultan, son of the sultan; the imam, son of the imam, son of the imam’,¹⁵ who will bring in better times; ‘he reassures the alarmed hearts of Islam, and gives stability to the distracted minds of men’.¹⁶ In fact, al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl, whom Ibn Taghrībirdī describes as the best of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s sons,¹⁷ made little impression on the course of events in his short reign.

The period of the later Qalawunids from the death of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 741/1341 to the usurpation of the throne by al-Zāhir Barqūq, finally in 792/1390, was dominated by the Mamluk magnates, who controlled the financial resources of the state behind the façade of the sultanate. Barqūq’s usurpation ended this charade. His own attempt to establish a hereditary sultanate failed when his son, al-Nāṣir Faraj, was overthrown in 815/1412. Thereafter the throne passed to a succession of war-lords, who had made themselves the first among the great amirs, their equals. A nominal sovereignty was frequently held by their sons until the emergence of the next successful usurper, but this was a device for administrative continuity and not a serious recognition of any hereditary principle. Two of the usurping sultans in the early ninth/fifteenth century were al-Muʾayyad Shaykh (815–24/1412–21), the successor to al-Nāṣir Faraj after the brief and ineffectual rule of the caliph al-Mustaʿīn, and al-Zāhir Ṭaṭar (824/1421), who deposed al-Muʾayyad Shaykh’s infant son. To each of these in turn a literary offering was presented by Badr al-dīn Maḥmūd al-ʿAynī (762–855/1361–1451), a native of ʿAyntāb, who held the post of *muhtasib* under Barqūq and his successors. His enjoyment of their somewhat capricious favour was assisted by his knowledge of Turkish.

Al-Sayf al-muḥannad fī sīrat al-Malik al-Muʾayyad,¹⁸ al-ʿAynī’s offering to Shaykh, can hardly be described as a *sīra*, a biography, in the usual sense. It is rather a work of encyclopaedic range, which in two separate blocks of narrative (chap. VI, sec.5; chaps. IX, X) narrows its focus to the events of his career and reign from 802/1400 to Jumādā II 819/August 1416, where it reaches its abrupt conclusion.

The first chapter ostensibly discusses al-Muʾayyad Shaykh’s origin and nationality (*fī aṣlihi wa-jinsihi*). It begins, in fact, with a survey of traditional Islamic cosmology. God has created 18,000 worlds, of which the earth is one. There are four orders of created beings: the angels, mankind, the *jinn* and the devils (*al-shayāṭīn*). Noah divided the earth among his three sons, from whom all nations are descended. The descendants of Japheth (*Yāfith*) include the

¹⁵ The salutation of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl (and also by implication his father and grandfather, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and Qalāwūn) as imam is in line with a tendency in the Mamluk sultanate to transfer the caliph’s prerogatives to the sultan. For an early instance, cf. W. Madelung, ‘A treatise on the imamate dedicated to Sultan Baybars I’, *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic*, 13–14 (n.d.), 91–102. ¹⁶ *Nūr*, 65.

¹⁷ Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* (Cairo, 1963–72), 16 vols., vol. X, 96. ¹⁸ See n. 1 above.

Franks, the Slavs, the Turks and the Mongols. Al-‘Aynī then expatiates on the Turkish tribes, and gives *inter alia* an account of Seljuq origins, from which he passes at a bound to Chingiz Khān, the Īlkhāns, and the Golden Horde. Turning to the Circassians, who are presented as ‘from the people of the Turks’ (*min ṭā’ifat al-Turk*), al-‘Aynī deals in detail with al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s tribal origins. He was, we are told, a son of the fourth hereditary chief of the tribe of Karamūk, which claimed to be of partially Arab descent. According to tribal legend, when Jabala b. al-Ayham, the last Ghassanid ruler, renounced Islam, he and 500 of his men fled with Heraclius, and became Christians. When Byzantine power declined, they withdrew to the mountains of Circassia, and intermarried with its people. Al-‘Aynī notes the qualities, good and bad, which the Circassians share with the Arabs, amongst them being an inveterate tendency to the perpetuation of hostility and the vendetta. The chapter ends on a personal note. Al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s mother was reputed to be Turkish, but the sultan assured al-‘Aynī that she was a Circassian. This, he says, was ‘when I met with him on Monday, 10 Rabī‘ II 818 [19 June 1415] for the purpose of reading his history and biography’.¹⁹ Apart from providing a date for at least the first draft of the work, the incident is reminiscent of the sessions, over a century previously, when Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir read his biography of al-Zāhir Baybars to the sultan.

The following chapters might be designated an exposition of the sultan’s *manāqib*. They are in fact an elaborate and strained assertion of al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s particular fitness for the throne he had usurped. Every possible significance is squeezed out of the sultan’s personal name (Shaykh), his *kunya* (Abū ‘l-Naṣr), and his *laqab* (al-Mu’ayyad), and all of these are made the occasion for encomia. He is even presented as an eschatological figure by reason of the letter *khā’* at the end of his name. Al-‘Aynī says that ‘he is the last of the Turkish [*sic*] sultans according to the interpretation of a certain interpreter of symbols, and the goodness of the earth shall come by him, and after him shall the order of the world be corrupted’.²⁰

These observations on al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh’s nomenclature occupy the second, third and fourth chapters of al-‘Aynī’s work. With the fifth he passes on to another subject, which enables him to display at length his historical knowledge. The dominant theme is the number nine. Al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh is, he says, ‘the ninth of the Turkish sultans who were brought to Egypt’,²¹ i.e. the true *mamlūks*, not the sons of sultans, who were *awlād al-nās*. Al-‘Aynī’s researches have shown him that there were nine great states before Islam, and nine great Islamic states. Each of these had nine great rulers, of whom the ninth was the best in every way. This leads him on to a lengthy excursus of almost 100 pages in the printed edition, in which he deals in turn with the nine pre-Islamic and Islamic dynasties, and the nine rulers of each, beginning with the kings of Persia, and ending with the Ayyubid sultan, al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb. He

¹⁹ *Sayf*, 30. ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 39. ²¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

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concludes the chapter with a prayer that al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's days may be as happy as the days of al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb. Can either the sultan or his encomiast have been unaware of the irony?

The sixth chapter of *al-Sayf al-muhannad* consists of ten sections demonstrating the various ways in which al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh is worthy of the sultanate. His age of about forty-four is the age of maturity, and al-ʿAynī notes that the Prophet was first inspired at the age of forty. Youthful sultans have done harm: 'Do you not see that a number of the sons of sultans have held the sultanate, and many evils have resulted from them?'²² The defective sultans are then listed in order from 'Alī b. Aybak to Ḥājjī b. Sha'bān, the last of the Qalāwūnids, the implication being that Barqūq's usurpation of the sultanate was justified. Section 6 gives a detailed account of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's career from his first appointment as governor of Tripoli in 802/1400 to the overthrow of al-Nāṣir Faraj and the partition of the Mamluk dominions between Shaykh and his rival Nawrūz in 815/1412. The tenth section seeks to demonstrate his unique fitness for the throne, and disparages Nawrūz, who in fact was perfidiously taken and put to death on 21 Rabī' II 817/10 July 1414. The section ends with two prophetic dreams concerning al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh. These are specimens of a literary form favoured by the encomiasts of Mamluk sultans.

The two following chapters, the seventh and the eighth, are essentially essays in the genre of mirrors for princes. The first deals with what the sultan should and should not do; the second with appointments made by the sultan.

The ninth chapter returns to historical narrative, and is concerned with the accession of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh to the sultanate. It picks up the story from the point reached in chapter 6, section 6, i. e. the entry of Shaykh into Cairo on 2 Rabī' II 815/12 July 1412. On 8 Rabī' II/18 July the caliph al-Mustaʿīn, the nominal sultan, conferred full powers on Shaykh, who was himself installed as sultan on 1 Sha'bān/6 November. The installation ceremonies are described, and the account of the new ruler's royal ride from the stables into the Citadel ends with astrological predictions of a long and successful reign.

Bearing in mind al-ʿAynī's preoccupation with the number nine, shown (as mentioned above) in the long fifth chapter, this was probably the end of the original offering, bringing it to a satisfactory literary and historical conclusion. There is, however, a tenth chapter, which gives in a straightforward narrative the annals of the reign to 8 Jumādā II 819/3 August 1416. The abrupt end is followed by a note, written presumably by some person after al-ʿAynī's death, saying: 'The shaykh, the imam, the most erudite scholar, Badr al-dīn al-ʿAynī (may God have mercy on him) completed to this point the compilation with which he concerned himself. God grant blessing and peace to our Lord Muḥammad, his family and his Companions'.²³

The sudden ending of *al-Sayf al-muhannad* was perhaps due to al-ʿAynī's loss of the sultan's favour. When, however, Shaykh's infant son was deposed

²² *Ibid.*, 209. ²³ *Ibid.*, 346.