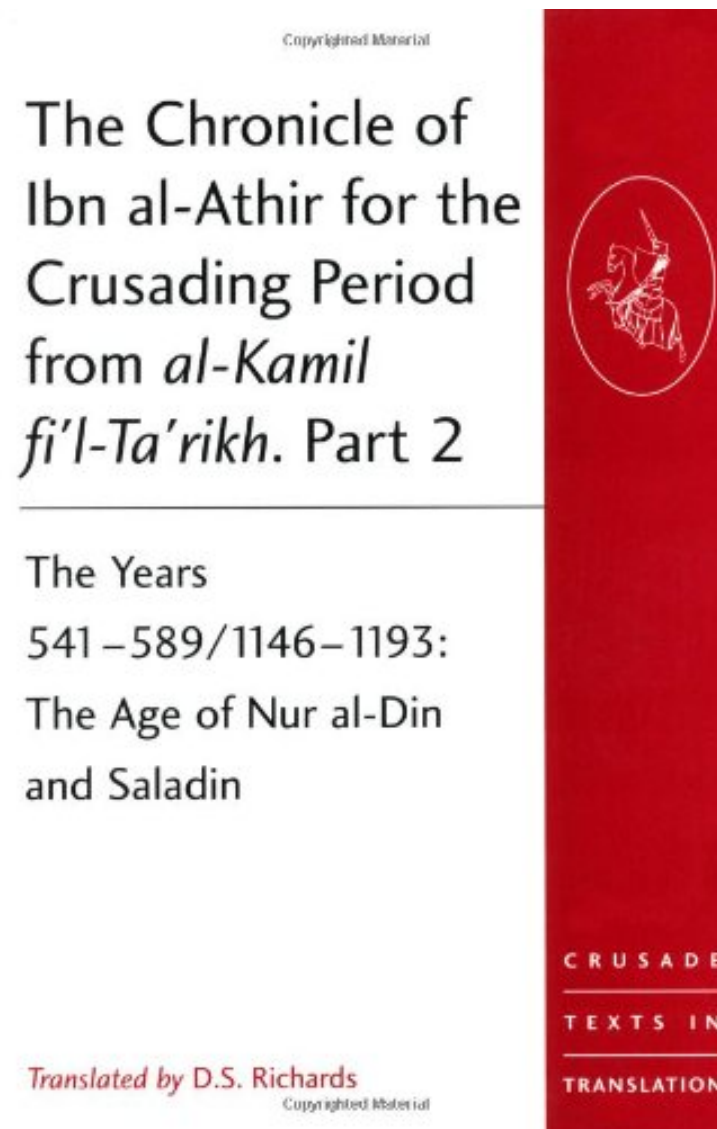


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D.S. Richards

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The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir (1160-1233 AD), entitled "al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh", is one of the outstanding sources for the history of the mediaeval world. It covers the whole sweep of Islamic history almost up to the death of its author and, with the sources available to him, he attempted to embrace the widest geographical spread; events in Iraq, Iran and further East run in counterpoint with those involving North Africa and Spain. From the time of the arrival of the Crusaders in the Levant, their activities and the Muslim response become the focus of the work. While continuing with the aim of comprehensive coverage, the years in this part are dominated by the careers of Nur al-Din and Saladin, the champions of the Jihad, sometimes called the 'counter-crusade'. Of special interest is the historian's partiality for the House of the former, and his perceived hostility to Saladin.

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About the Author D.S. Richards retired as lecturer in Arabic at the Oriental Institute, and is emeritus fellow of St Cross College, University of Oxford, UK.