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Seven Myths of the Crusades

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7. ISLAM AND THE CRUSADES: A NINE HUNDRED-YEAR-LONG GRIEVANCE?

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The Crusades are almost forgotten in the West but not closer to the lands in which the fighting took place. Anyone who doubts that need only recall the fanfare with which in 1987 Muslims in Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq celebrated the 800th anniversary of the victory that led to the Muslim reconquest of Jerusalem, or consider the leading role Islamic groups have played in mass demonstrations against the war [First Gulf War] in the streets of Cairo, Damascus and Amman. The historical conflict between Islam and the Christian West, in other words, is still a powerful rallying symbol among many Muslims.¹

When read in conjunction with the title under which they appeared, “Long Memories of the Crusades Overshadow the Future,” these words, part of an editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that appeared only hours before coalition forces secured Baghdad in the Second Gulf War, can only be understood to mean one thing: a centuries-long Muslim memory of the crusades fuels today’s hostility toward the West on the part of many Muslims. Four years earlier, John Esposito, a professor of International Affairs and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, had written in a similar vein:

Few events had a more shattering or long-lasting effect on Muslim-Christian relations than the Crusades. . . . For Muslims, the memory of the Crusades lives on as the clearest example of militant Christianity, an earlier harbinger of the aggression and imperialism of the Christian West, a vivid reminder of Christianity’s early hostility toward Islam. If many regard Islam as a religion of the sword, Muslims down through the ages have spoken of the West’s Crusader mentality and ambitions. Therefore, for Muslim-Christian relations, it is less a case of what actually happened in the Crusades than how they are remembered.²

The question is: Are they correct?

1. “Long memories of the Crusades overshadow the future,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 12, 2003, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/04/11/1049567875704.html> (accessed May 2, 2014).

2. John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37–38. In a like mode, John Trumbour has written, “The Crusades left a lasting impression on the Muslim world. The brutality of their campaigns, particularly in comparison with the noble reputation of Saladin, continues to color Muslim perceptions of the Christian West.” John Trumbour, “Crusades,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*, ed. John L. Esposito et al., 6 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2:9–14 at 12, col. 2.

The Thesis of This Chapter

The crusades took place in several complex pasts, and their history has an even more complex present. In the West they have been understood and explained in ways that are both favorable and hostile but always as a substantial part of European history and culture. In the Islamic world they have been described largely by selective reliance on the language and ideas of hostile Western historical criticism but not, until recently, as a major component of Islamic history. To complicate matters, at the extremes of both Western and Muslim interpretations of the crusades are popular cultural and political attitudes that remove them entirely from history—in the West by dismissing them (usually linking them to “the Inquisition”) as episodes of primitive barbarism and bigotry, and in some parts of the Islamic world by a kind of fictionalized political theology. Here is an example of the latter:

Soon after 11 September [2001] Osama bin Laden extended the term Crusaders to include Australians in East Timor. His rhetoric distorted history and geography. But it struck a chord with Southeast Asian Islamists. Imam Samudra, the operational chief of the October, 2002 Bali bombings screamed out “Crusaders!” when confronted by his victims’ relatives.³

There are doctrines at work in such attitudes that have nothing to do with history and everything to do with a contemporary designation of some aspects of the present in terms of a radical ideology that instrumentalizes the past. It has distorted the historical character of “crusades” and related terms more than any earlier definition. This chapter proposes to consider how such a process came about and how a wide range of interpretations of the crusades remains active in both the West and the Islamicate. In this essay the term “the West” designates the broad culture of Europe and the Americas from approximately the sixteenth century on. The less familiar term “Islamicate” designates the broad culture of distinctively Islamic societies, including ethnic differences as well as cultural and political components that extend beyond religion in its narrowest sense.

3. Umej Bhatia, “The War on Terrorism: A Crusade?” *Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Commentaries* 22 (2004): 1, http://www.researchgate.net/publication/38443034_War_on_terrorism__a_crusade (accessed March 26, 2015). See also the next note. The attack took place on October 12, 2002. On Samudra’s rationale of the attack, see Muhammad Haniff Hassan, “Imam Samudra’s Justification for Bali Bombing,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30 (2007): 1033–56. Ironically, there is an actual Australian cricket team called the Crusaders. The authors are grateful to Benjamin Z. Kedar, Roger Allen, Konrad Hirschler, and Paul M. Cobb for very helpful advice.

History as Constructed Memory

Every belief system asserts an absolute past, one that is not quite history as that term is academically understood today (although it is usually made to appear to be history) but a past that is a component of the system itself—its constructed memory. Its purpose is to account for the emergence and identity of—and to legitimate—a belief system, to identify the greatest threats to its existence, to celebrate its past triumphs, and to account for its present perceived condition. It is essentially dogma rather than history, or rather dogma asserted to be history. Some aspects of the past seem to serve this purpose more effectively than others and to do so at particular times, usually periods of anxiety or triumphalism. On occasion, a single belief system may entertain conflicting visions of the dogmatic past that reflect not conflicting histories but the polemical instrumentalizing of this past, in order to deal with conflicting ideas in the present. The crusades are part of both the present-day Western and the Islamicate pasts. But they have served very different understandings between them and sometimes very different purposes within each.⁴ Within this context, the critical study of history must somehow manage to keep its distance from extreme ideological positions, no matter how difficult that can often be.

Western “Memories” of the Crusades

From the Western academic perspective, the crusades were originally a series of militarized and (for their participants) devotional-penitential campaigns that commenced in the late eleventh century and originally were directed at the recovery and strategic protection of the Holy Land.⁵ They occurred during a remote and variously under-

4. A number of aspects of dogmatic pasts are considered in recent historical research on collective memory. For the purposes of this essay, the brief discussion in Urnej Bhatia, *The Crusades in Modern Muslim Memory*, Rajaratnam School of International Studies Monograph No. 12 (Singapore, 2008), 7–26, 59–65, citing Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), and Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, trans. Steven Randall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), is largely sufficient. Bhatia discusses public figures and political theorists rather than academics. His appendix, “The Crusades Continue,” 89–92, consists of a contemporary and quite distorted version of crusade history from a British Salafist website, *Mission Islam* (<http://www.missionislam.com>). In addition, for the topic of this essay, see Bernard Lewis, *History Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

5. As noted in the Introduction to this book, both the beginning and end of the crusades remain matters of scholarly debate, as does their definition. Our focus here is on the Holy Land crusades and the establishment of crusader states in what was called *Outremer*, the land beyond the sea. These crusades and crusader states are virtually the only aspect of crusade historiography in Arabic today. The most extensive recent survey of this perspective is that of John Tolan, Gilles Veinstein, and Henry Laurens, *Europe and the Islamic World*, trans. Jane Marie Todd, with foreword by John L. Esposito (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), for the Middle Ages, 12–107.

stood period called the Middle Ages (itself a frequently changing and debated intellectual construct), which has been condemned by some historians as a distant age of barbarism and religious bigotry and celebrated by others as the beginning of a distinct and dynamic European culture.⁶ Likewise, as noted in the Introduction, the medieval crusades might be regarded as examples of either greed-inspired, intolerant, and unprovoked aggression of the worst kind, which manifested itself in inhumane acts of cruelty, or else as instances of high idealism, religious or not, and great dedication to an admirable moral cause in the face of religious and political hostility. Thus, the “Western view” of both the Middle Ages and the crusades has often consisted of two quite distinct and polarized perspectives, a fault line within a single belief system.

Whatever one thinks of these questions, it is a mistake to assume that Europeans began to consider Islam only with the launching of the crusades. They had formed an image of Islam centuries before, and that image changed little over time, partly as a result of the crusades, and in many circles it has lasted till the present.⁷ More-

6. A brief and wise overview is that of Timothy Reuter, “Medieval: Another Tyrannous Construct?” reprinted in Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19–37. For early European history and its nationalistic future, see Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002). Most recently, Michael Mitterauer, *Why Europe? The Medieval Origins of its Special Path*, trans. Gerald Chapple (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

7. Two brief general surveys are Norman Housley, “The Crusades and Islam,” *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007): 189–208 and Jonathan Phillips, “The Call of the Crusades,” *History Today* 59 (2009), <http://www.historytoday.com/jonathan-phillips/call-crusades> (accessed May 5, 2014). See also J. W. Fück, “Islam as an Historical Problem in European Historiography since 1800,” in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. P. M. Holt and Bernard Lewis (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), and Shirin A. KahnMohadi, *In Light of Another’s Word: European Ethnography in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). One of the best shorter studies remains that of Jonathan Riley-Smith, “Islam and the Crusades in History and Imagination, 8 November 1098–11 September 1099,” *Crusades* 2 (2003): 151–67. Riley-Smith has expanded his earlier studies in *The Crusades, Christianity, and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). For early Christian attitudes, see Albert Hourani, *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Angeliki Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh, eds., *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001); John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); and Jean Flori, *L’Islam et la fin des temps: L’interprétation prophétique des invasions musulmanes dans la chrétienté médiévale* [Islam and End Times: Prophetic Interpretations of the Muslim Invasions in Medieval Christendom] (Paris: Seuil, 2007). For a more recent work, see Jacob Lassner, *Jews, Christians, and the Abode of Islam: Modern Scholarship and Medieval Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), particularly on the relatively humble status of history in the Muslim organization of knowledge. General histories in the Muslim world largely consisted of chronicles of cities and regions, histories of dynasties within regions, personal memoirs, and biographies of great Muslim (usually Arab) heroes. Where any of these touched on historical crusades, the crusades occupied a peripheral place. For Islam itself, see James Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Nor did criticism of crusades begin only in the sixteenth century. See Elizabeth Siberry, *Criticism of*

over, by the end of the eighteenth century in Europe, the crusades had long since been fought, lost, and largely forgotten, except for the cynicism and scorn heaped upon their memory and motives by both Protestant and some Roman Catholic religious critics and skeptical Enlightenment philosophical historians such as Hume and Gibbon, who roundly condemned them and those who had launched them. Enlightenment skepticism and secular anticrusade polemic were succeeded in the nineteenth century by different and more crusade-favorable myths.

Romantic idealism, nationalism, and a Catholic revival all rejected Enlightenment criticism and appropriated crusade history as an essential and admirable component of European identity and history. Regardless of these revisionist movements, the Enlightenment view that the crusades had been launched out of financial and territorial greed rather than from religious motives and were marked by savagery and brutality survived among a significant body of nineteenth-century skeptics who attributed such impulses and qualities to medieval Europeans in general.⁸ But such polarized opinions have been considerably reduced in the twentieth-century West in the corridors of serious scholarship, even though many of these notions survive in the tendentiousness of uninformed journalism, much confessional and political discourse of a similar kind, lazy schoolbooks, political thriller novels, pseudoethical movies, and therefore much popular opinion, often reflected in social media.⁹ In this sense,

Crusading, 1095–1274 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Christopher Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2011), 7–36. The entire problem (and the theme of this book) is the subject of a perceptive essay by Paul Crawford, “Four Myths about the Crusades,” *The Intercollegiate Review* 46 (2011): 13–22.

8. See James M. Muldoon, “Mad Men on Crusade: Religious Madness and the Origins of the First Crusade” and Corliss Slack, “The Quest for Gain: Were the First Crusaders Proto-Colonists?” in this book.

9. In September and November 2001, one current (George W. Bush) and one former (William J. Clinton) American president made public statements about crusades in the wake of the events of September 11th. Their statements, different as they were, revealed that neither president had the vaguest idea of what the historical crusades had been. Clinton’s consisted of a postmodern anachronism, for a correction of which see Benjamin Z. Kedar, “The Jerusalem Massacre of July 1099 in the Western Historiography of the Crusades,” *Crusades* 3 (2004): 15–75 and Jay Carter Rubenstein, “Cannibals and Crusaders,” *French Historical Studies* 31 (2008): 525–52. Bush’s use of the term appeared to be based on a general secularized idea of a moral conflict, although in the months following, the presidents of both France and Germany criticized Bush for interpreting the Middle East in an evangelical, Christian, apocalyptic context, for which see Garry Wills, “With God on His Side,” *New York Times Magazine*, March 30, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/30/magazine/30THEOCRACY.html> (accessed May 5, 2014). On June 2, 1944 Dwight Eisenhower told allied troops just before the Normandy invasion that they were engaged on “a great Crusade,” and he later titled his memoirs of World War II *Crusade in Europe*, although it is doubtful that Eisenhower knew much about what the crusades had been. His usage reflected a mid-twentieth-century secular understanding. The first U.S. government war film was titled *Pershing’s Crusaders* (1918), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKq2n3qazWl> (accessed March 27, 2015) and may have influenced Eisenhower’s usage. Coincidentally, the British Department of Information film on World War I *The New Crusaders: With the British Forces on the Palestinian Front*, was released in March of the same year.

common Western historical notions of crusades are no more based on the results of scholarly research than are most of those of the Islamicate.

Since the sixteenth century the historical sources of the crusades have slowly been discovered, retrieved, edited, printed, critically interpreted, translated into modern vernacular languages, and studied in the West according to the principles of an increasingly rigorous historical scholarship created by much learned debate and critical polemic. Crusade studies in the West, largely but not exclusively in the United Kingdom and the United States, are considered an essential part of medieval studies and are supported by many colleges and universities, extensive library collections, a number of regional research centers, a professional international scholarly association, the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East (SSCLE), which holds quadrennial international conferences and publishes *Crusades*, since 2003 the journal of that society, and the resources of the Internet, such as JSTOR.

Other professional associations, such as the Medieval Academy of America, also support crusade studies, and annual international scholarly conferences usually have sessions devoted to crusade research. Both general historical and specialized scholarly journals also accommodate crusade studies. Put briefly, the modern transformation of crusade studies in the West has been conducted without the West's having any longer a religious or cultural stake in their nature or outcome. But only relatively recently have most crusade scholars paid attention to Islamicate literature and thought.¹⁰

10. On the development of a critical historical method for crusade history and its relation to disinterested historical research generally, see Tyerman, *Debate*, 125–54, 182–215. Until the mid-nineteenth century the utter lack of Western interest in Islamic sources for the crusades or most other historical issues is indicated in the discussion of crusade sources and crusade histories in Heinrich von Sybel's 1841 study of the subject, parts of which, with material from his Munich lectures of 1858 are conveniently available in Heinrich von Sybel, *The History and Literature of the Crusades*, trans. Lady Duff Gordon (London, 1861; 2nd ed. 1881; rpt. 1905), especially his discussion of the sources on 239–72, where he notes "Oriental sources" twice, once in an instance when they had not been used and then in a discussion of Friedrich Wilken's history, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge nach morgenländischen und abendländischen Berichten* [History of the Crusades according to Eastern and Western Accounts], 7 vols. (Leipzig, 1807–1832), which did use "Oriental authorities with good results," but without specifying what these were, and nothing more. On Wilken's great history, see Tyerman, *Debate*, 127–40. Between 1841 and 1906, the great French publishing project *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades* [Collection of Crusade Historians] published sixteen folio volumes of crusade sources in Latin, Greek, Armenian, and Arabic. The sources in Arabic were unreliably edited and little used by Western historians. On the history of the development of Western scholarship on Arabic sources and Islam, see Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2006) and the earlier study by Maxime Rodinson, "The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam," in *The Legacy of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. Joseph Schacht and Clifford Edmund Bosworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

Early Islamic Views of the Crusades

In the Islamicate itself, whose religious, geographical, ethnic, and historical range now may be said to extend from Morocco to China, Indonesia, and the Philippines, as well as more recently to Muslim communities in the Americas and Western Europe, interest in the crusades has been relatively recent and of different kinds. Before the late nineteenth century, when Muslim thinkers considered Europe at all they rarely paid much attention to the crusades, focusing largely on various regions of the *Dar al-Islam*—or Abode of Islam—and the conventional topics of Arabic historical writing.¹¹

From the many local chronicle accounts of crusade history written in Arabic from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, the crusades, taken together, consisted of random momentary and largely local episodes in what was otherwise a much longer, larger, and until the early twentieth century, triumphalist history.¹² The European “Franks” (*Firanj*, *Faranj*, or *Ifranj*) had, after all, been barbarians and infidels who had managed to wrest control of parts of Syria and Palestine and to invade Egypt several times (largely because of divided and rival Muslim powers, as Arabic chroniclers regularly attested). They had been eventually and inevitably defeated in the Levant by Muslim forces led by such pious leaders as Nur ad-Din, Saladin, and Baybars, and the infidels had gone away.¹³ The departure of the European Christians from the Holy Land seemed to have justified the Muslim principle of *al-sabr*, patience in the face of temporarily irresistible opposition and confidence in eventual success (Qur’an, Surah 12 Yusuf 17–18).

Muslim observers did not originally regard the crusades as something separate and distinct from other conflicts with the Franks, nor did they initially single out the crusaders from the long series of infidel enemies whom they fought from time to time. The chroniclers report in detail the smallest skirmishes between Muslims and Frankish troops, but they have little to say about the internal affairs of the Frankish states in the Levant and even less about their lands in Western Europe. With one or two minor exceptions, Muslim historians made no attempt to trace the invaders back to

11. Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982); Nabil I. Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), and above, note 7. A parallel instance is the Islamic world’s reading of Darwin: Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

12. The most thorough recent study is Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2000). See also Paul M. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). On the forms of genres in Arabic literature, see Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

13. Nur ad-Din and Baybars were Turks, and Saladin was a Kurd. Subsequent Arabic historiography has tended to subordinate their ethnicity to either their Muslim faith or a process of implicit Arabization. There is little historiography in Arabic on the Christian conquests in Iberia and Sicily save for a number of elegiac poems.

their countries of origin or to the mighty yet invisible movement that had launched them across the Mediterranean.¹⁴

Medieval Arab historians also seldom distinguished between different ethnic groups of crusaders (much as Western Christians used the name "Saracens" [Latin *saraceni*] for all Muslim peoples). They called the Europeans *Firanj*, "Franks," or *Rum*, "Romans," the Arabic term for the Byzantine Greeks, already found in earlier Arabic sources. Many authors initially regarded the invasion of the Franks merely as a variant of recurrent Byzantine assaults. Most twelfth- and thirteenth-century Arab authors do not show particular hatred or animosity, religious or otherwise, toward the crusaders, although hostile epithets, such as "May God curse them" (*la'annahumallah*) are often used conventionally after mentioning the Franks. As Joseph Drory notes, "The predominant attitude is one of grief over the casualties and sorrow for the damages inflicted by the Franks, as by any other invaders, on human beings, property or religious monuments." The crusaders' conquests of Islamic territories, including Jerusalem, were described much like natural disasters and "were not regarded as national traumas, nor as major threats against which all Muslims should defend themselves."¹⁵

In any case, the memory of crusades paled before the disaster of the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century and their murder of the last Abbasid caliph. The immense

14. One exception was the Damascus scholar Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami (1039–1106), whose *Kitab al-jihad* argued that the events of 1095–1099 were part of a comprehensive Christian effort (which he termed a jihad) against the Muslims. Paul E. Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades: A New Synthesis," *History* 93 (2008): 181–200, has made a case for al-Sulami's substantial influence on later Arab historiography, but the subject remains open to investigation, since the exclusively religious understanding of jihad in a crusade context did not emerge until the second half of the twelfth century. Roy Parviz Mottahedeh and Ridwan al-Sayyid, "The Idea of Jihad in Islam before the Crusades," in *The Crusades*, ed. Laiou and Mottahedeh, 23–29. The literature on jihad is endless. See Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002) and Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). Important early studies and Arabic texts in translation are in Emmanuel Sivan, *L'Islam et la croisade* (Paris: Librairie d'amerique et d'orient, 1968) and Francesco Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) and more recently Joseph Drory, "Early Muslim Reflections on the Crusaders," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 25 (2001): 92–101 and Bernard Lewis, "The Use by Muslim Historians of Non-Muslim Sources," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Holt and Lewis; see also Emmanuel Sivan, "Modern Arabic Historiography of the Crusades," in Emmanuel Sivan, *Interpretations of Islam: Past and Present* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1985), 1–43; Françoise Micheau, "Les Croisades vues par les historiens arabes d'hier et d'aujourd'hui," [The Crusades as Seen by Arab Historians in the Past and Present], *Res Orientales* 6 (1994); *Itinéraires d'Orient. Hommage à Claude Cahen*, 169–185; Franco Cardini, *Europe and Islam* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001); Edward Peters, "The *Firanj* Are Coming—Again," *Orbis* (winter 2004): 3–17; Cobb, *Race*, passim; Jean Flori, *Guerre sainte, jihad, croisade: Violence et religion dans le christianisme et l'islam* [Holy War, Jihad and Crusade: Violence and Religion in Christendom and Islam] (Paris: Seuil, 2004), reprinted ed. with a new preface and an introduction.

15. Drory, "Reflections," 94; John M. Chamberlin V, *Imagining Defeat: An Arabic Historiography of the Crusades* (Monterey, CA: Ft. Belvoir Naval Postgraduate School, 2007), 9–19.

destruction they caused, their sacking of Baghdad in 1258, and their defeat in 1260 by the Turkish Mamluks of Egypt far outshone the crusaders' capture of Jerusalem and the Mamluk capture of Acre in 1291 and remained sufficiently compelling that the Palestinian newspaper *Al-Quds* compared the fall of Baghdad in April 2003 to its conquest by the Mongols, the greatest imaginable historical disaster for Islam.¹⁶

By the fourteenth century the Islamic world was placed squarely on course for the successive later triumphs of the Mamluks and then the Safavids in Persia and the Ottoman Empire from the fourteenth century to the end of the seventeenth. The crusades receded into a vast and now largely Ottoman-dominated and -defined past.¹⁷ They reemerged in the wake of European colonial policies and the attempts to create national governments in the territorial remains of the now-dissolved Ottoman Empire after 1919. Conflicting pasts within belief systems and conflicting pasts between belief systems constitute the background for the emergence of Arabic modernity, a period in which various pasts played new and ultimately more dangerous roles.

A Nineteenth-Century Turning Point: European Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Crusades

As European attitudes toward and understanding of the crusades (and often the Middle Ages with them) shifted from the religious criticism and reciprocal polemic of the several confessional sides and political interests of the Reformation to the more secular and largely negative criticism of the Enlightenment, and finally toward Romantic nationalism and the resurgent-historical polemics between Catholicism and Protestantism, other political circumstances gave a new historical prominence to

16. "A Nation at War: Global Viewpoints; Commentary Divided on Fall of Baghdad," <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/13/world/a-nation-at-war-global-viewpoints-commentary-divided-on-fall-of-baghdad.html> (accessed May 4, 2014). For the fall of Acre, see Donald P. Little, "The Fall of 'Akkā in 690/1291: The Muslim Version," in *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honour of Professor David Ayalon*, ed. M. Sharon (Jerusalem: Cana Ltd., 1986), 159–81.

17. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*; Bhatia, *Modern Muslim Memory*. The scholarly study of modern Arabic political thought continues especially in the work of Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), *Mythes politiques arabes* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), "Muslim Representations of the Crusades," in *Verso Gerusalemme: Il convegno internazionale nel IX centenario della 1 crociata (1099–1999) (Bari, 11–13 gennaio 1999)* (Naples: M. Congedo, 1999), 125–33, and his essays collected in his *Interpretations of Islam: Past and Present* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1985); Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades, Christianity, and Islam*, chapter 4, "Crusading and Islam," and now the perceptive and important study by Abbès Zouache, "Écrire l'histoire des croisades, aujourd'hui, en Orient et Occident," [Writing the History of the Crusades Today in the East and West] in *Construire la Méditerranée, penser les transferts culturels. Aspects historiographiques et perspectives de recherche*, ed. Rania Abdellatif, Yassir Benhima, Daniel König, Elisabeth Ruchaud, Ateliers des Deutschen Historischen Instituts Paris, Vol. 8 (Munich, Germany: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2012), 121–47, with substantial further bibliography.

the crusades.¹⁸ Whereas until the early nineteenth century, crusades had been largely considered by Western scholars as pan-European and Catholic, in the course of the nineteenth century they came to be considered as part of national histories (and contemporary national identities with their own dogmatic pasts) and often, but not exclusively, as religious phenomena.

With the immensely popular crusade histories by the French journalist and royalist propagandist Joseph-François Michaud (1767–1839) and the French invasion of Algeria in 1830, followed by the later French and British assertions of the right to protect Christians in the Levant (and the considerable impact upon local government and law in the exercise of that right), French diplomacy in the Muslim Middle Eastern soon took on a religious dimension that colored French (and later British and German) colonialism for the rest of the century.¹⁹ Michaud's work helped inspire

18. Tyerman, *Debate*, 37–135. Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983; rev. ed. London, 2006); Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006). On nineteenth-century nationalism in France and the resuscitated idea of crusade in the service of empire, see Ronni Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter 2, and Geary, *The Myth of Nations*.

19. Joseph F. Michaud, *Histoire des croisades* [History of the Crusades], 6 vols. (Paris, 1812–1822), 7th ed. by J. L. A. Huillard-Bréholles, 4 vols. (Paris, 1849). Michaud also published a four-volume collection of original sources in French translation, *Bibliothèque des croisades* [Crusade Library] (1829), the correspondence of his journey to the Middle East in seven volumes (1833–1835), and a posthumous and patriotic brief account for young people. Michaud was influenced by the royalist, conservative, and strongly Catholic Chateaubriand, whose *La Génie du christianisme* [The Genius of Christianity] had appeared in 1802. Chateaubriand had also visited the Holy Land and been made a knight of the Holy Sepulcher, an honorific title much coveted in the nineteenth century. See Tyerman, *Debate*, 101–21, 141–52. Ironically, Michaud's seat 29 in the French Academy has been held since 2011 by the Lebanese-born Christian Francophone journalist and author of several books on crusades and the modern Middle East, Amin Maalouf, whose study *The Crusades through Arab Eyes* (London: Al Saqi Books, 1984) is one of the earliest attempts to address the subject evenhandedly. The nineteenth-century European nationalist search for historical heroes often turned up crusaders. In France, the crusader king and later saint Louis IX served this purpose (Adam Knobler, "Saint Louis and French Political Culture," in *Medievalism in Europe II*, ed. Leslie J. Workman and Kathleen Verduin, *Studies in Medievalism VIII* [Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 1996], 156–74), as did Godefroid de Bouillon (Godfrey of Bouillon) in nineteenth-century Belgium. The versatile figure of Frederick Barbarossa often served a comparable purpose in Germany, particularly with the history by Hans Prutz, *Kaiser Friedrich I*, 3 vols. (Danzig, 1871–1874). Prutz (1843–1929) succeeded Wilken as the leading German historian of crusades, especially with his work on the Templars and his *Kulturgeschichte der Kreuzzüge* [A Cultural History of the Crusades] (Berlin, 1883). In England, the case of Richard the Lionheart is an example. See John Gillingham, "Some Legends of Richard the Lionheart: Their Development and Their Influence," in *Richard Coeur de Lion in History and Myth*, ed. Janet L. Nelson (London: Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, King's College, 1992), 52–69. Richard is commemorated in the equestrian statue at Westminster by Carlo Marochetti installed in 1860. Godfrey of Bouillon was commemorated in the twelfth-century *Liber Floridus* and in the large and heroic

Louis-Philippe's decision in 1843 to convert the abandoned palace at Versailles into a grand museum of French history, including the Salles des Croisades, five large rooms of commissioned historical paintings and coats of arms (some of them authentic) of crusading families.²⁰

In addition, the development of source criticism and source publication in the nineteenth century soon outstripped even the herculean labors of Michaud. Published between 1841 and 1906, the *Receuil des historiens des Croisades* (Collection of the Historians of the Crusades), a massive collection of thousands of documents in Latin, Greek, Arabic, Armenian, and Old French relating to the crusades, was the most ambitious of these. The private wealth and the forty thousand-volume private library of Comte Paul Riant (1836–1888) enabled him to establish the Société de l'Orient Latin (Society of the Latin East) in 1875, which printed two volumes of *Archives de l'Orient Latin* between 1881 and 1884, and then the twelve-volume *Revue de l'Orient Latin* between 1893 and 1911. That is, in France alone a veritable flood of scholarly and popular crusade materials appeared in print and often, as elsewhere, in modern vernacular translation and in a broad range of media, both scholarly and popular. All of this was occurring while France extended its colonial presence into North Africa, Syria, and Lebanon, asserting its right to protect local Christians and contending with British and Russian ambitions to do the same, the latter on behalf of Orthodox Christians.

Although the precise relation between any of these individual scholars and scholarly projects and French colonial policy has yet to be studied in detail, it is clear that the imagery and ideas of the crusades entered nineteenth-century European consciousness on a number of levels and in dramatic and inescapable ways.²¹ Today, however, Western historians have largely ended the discussion as far as both colonialism and economic advantage in the modern world might in any sense echo or continue

equestrian statue made in 1848 by Louis-Eugène Simonis, now on the Place Royale in Brussels. For Muslim memory, besides the works cited below, see Umej Bhatia (note 4, above) and Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes*. In 1993 a very large equestrian statue of Saladin, accompanied by representatives of simple Muslim faith and popular resistance to crusaders (and two prominent defeated crusaders at Hattin), made by Abdallah al-Sayed and located in front of the citadel, was dedicated in Damascus. The iconography of this group indicates the historical argument that successful Muslim resistance to the Franks was accomplished by popular military enthusiasm and the simple Muslim faith of Sufism.

20. Francis Haskell, *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 281–82; Siberry, *The New Crusaders*, 51–53, 208–11; Giles Constable, "Medieval Charters as Sources for the History of the Crusades," revised in *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, 93–116.

21. The point has been made by Christopher de Bellaigue, "Where Edward Said Was Wrong [review of Robert Irwin, "Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents"]," *Times Literary Supplement*, May 17, 2006, and above, note 7. One exception is Kim Munholland, "Michaud's *History of the Crusades* and the French Crusade in Algeria under Louis-Philippe," in *The Popularization of Images: Visual Culture under the July Monarchy*, ed. Petra ten-Doeschate Chu and Gabriel P. Weisberg (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 144–65.

the crusades, rather than their being wholly original nineteenth-century enterprises.²² But the extent to which Arab historians have used hostile Western secularist criticism of the crusades suggests that they have a bearing on the contemporary Islamicate's understanding of its crusade past.

A Nineteenth-Century Turning Point: The Renaissance of Arabic Literature

In the course of the nineteenth century, European cultural influence helped institute the *Nahda*, or renaissance, of Arabic literature. Arabic history, along with nearly all other literature, science, and technology, gradually and selectively adopted Western topics and methods and was strongly influenced by what were initially hostile Western norms and points of view. This influence and adaptation occurred at different rates in different parts of the Arabic world and among different social strata. One of the most productive areas in this respect was Maronite Christian Syria. Until the mid-nineteenth century there had been no specific term in Arabic for the crusades. The Arabic phrase for the crusades, *al-hurub al-salibiyyah* (Wars of the Cross), was coined by Maronite Christian Arab translators of French crusade histories, notably in 1865 in a work attributed to an otherwise unidentified M. Monrond and probably translated by the Melkite patriarch of Jerusalem, Maximos III Mazloum.²³ From that point, crusades became an object of distinct and separate interpretation in the Arabic-speaking world. Furthermore, European diplomacy enhanced both the acceptance and rejection of European ideas in the Islamicate.

22. James M. Powell, "Crusading: 1099–1999" reprinted in Powell, *The Crusades, the Kingdom of Sicily, and the Mediterranean* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), I.

23. M. Monrond, *Tarikh al-hurub al-muqaddasa fi l'Mashriq al-mad'uwa Harb al-Salih* [A History of the Holy Wars in the East, Otherwise Called the Wars of the Cross] (Jerusalem, 1865). The patriarch himself is quite plausibly suggested as the translator by Chamberlin in *Imagining Defeat*, 21–32, and the French author identified as the popular nineteenth-century writer Maxime de Montrond. Chamberlin's discussion of Franco-Maronite relations in this context is highly informative. There is a list of subsequent histories written in Arabic that generally follow the hostile Western model of crusade criticism in Chevedden, "The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades," 183, note 5 and Bhatia, *Crusades in Modern Muslim Memory*. The most recent study of this Arabic translation of Montrond's French original *La Guerre saintes d'Outre Mer, ou tableau des croisades retracé d'après les chroniques contemporaines* [The Holy Wars of Outremer, or a Picture of the Crusades drawn from Contemporary Chronicles] (1840) is Iris Shagir and Nitzan Amitai-Preiss, "Michaud, Montrond, Mazloum and the First History of the Crusades in Arabic," *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 24, no. 3 (2012): 309–12, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09503110.2012.727660> (accessed August 18, 2014).

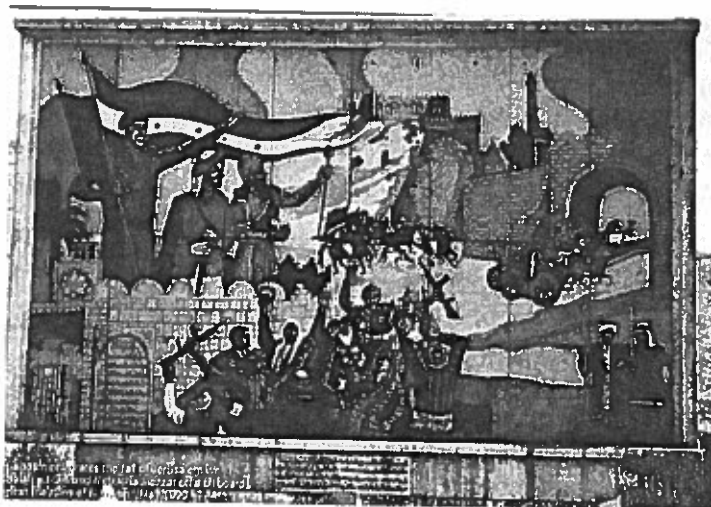
The End of a Century and New Influences on the Islamic Vision of the Crusades

At the end of the century new circumstances brought the crusading past into even greater prominence. The years 1898–1899 signaled a significant turn in the Islamicate’s and West’s understanding of the historical nature of the crusades. In 1898 on a grand tour of the Middle East, Kaiser Wilhelm II, himself a cultural and diplomatic product of one particular strand of European thought on the subject, costumed as an elegant, imperial pilgrim, triumphantly entered Jerusalem on a white horse through a specially made gate in the city wall and visited the holy places. In the Syrian city of Damascus, he paid public tribute to the memory of Saladin, commissioning a restoration of Saladin’s tomb and a memorial wreath to be placed upon it, a key moment in the process by which the memory of the Kurd Saladin was revived and revised as that of an Arab and Muslim hero.²⁴ The kaiser’s visit was part of a longer-range German effort to expand its diplomatic influence and to thwart Anglo-French interests in the Middle East and Asia. It can also be seen to serve as a landmark in the process by which German diplomatic and cultural influence played a prominent but inconsistent role in the Islamic world before, during, and after World War I.²⁵

24. On the Kaiser’s visit and its attendant rituals as well as the formation of the Saladin legend, see Anne-Marie Eddé, *Saladin*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2011), especially 1–10, 492–502; Werner Ende, “Wer ist ein Glaubensheld, wer ist ein Ketzer? Konkurrierende Geschichtsbilder in der modernen Literatur islamischer Länder” [Who Is a Believer, Who Is a Heretic? Concurrent Historical Pictures in Modern Islamic Lands] *Die Welt des Islams* [The World of Islam] new series 23–24 (1984): 70–94; Eitan Bar-Yosef, “The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign, 1917–1918,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 36 (2001): 87–109 (revised and expanded version in Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture, 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005], 247–94); Hillenbrand, *Islamic Perspectives*, 592–600; Elizabeth Siberry, *The New Crusaders: Images of the Crusades in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2000), and above, note 15. For the broad historiographical background, see Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 90–126; Tyerman, *Debate*, passim; Giles Constable, “The Historiography of the Crusades,” revised in Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 3–43. For an articulate contrary voice that criticizes the notion that Western admiration for Saladin was a significant influence on Arabs and Muslims, see Diana Abouali, “Saladin’s Legacy in the Middle East before the Nineteenth Century,” *Crusades* 10 (2011): 175–85.

25. The nature and extent of such influence is a much disputed subject, dating back at least to the polemical study by the great Dutch Arabist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *The Holy War “Made in Germany”* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s, 1915) and novels like John Buchan’s politically fanciful propaganda piece *Greenmantle* (1916). On the latter genre, see Reeva Spector Simon, *Spies and Holy Wars: The Middle East in Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), with additional examples in Robert Irwin’s review, “Delhi Dreadful,” *Times Literary Supplement*, May 19, 26, 2011, 3–4. The important question of German influence on Arab attitudes toward Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been widely debated. One of the clearest and least polemical studies is that of Gilbert Achcar, *The Arabs and the Holocaust: The Arab-Israeli War*

Seven Myths of the Crusades



A mural in Baghdad depicting Saddam Hussein in the company of two other conquerors from Iraq, the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar and Saladin. Hussein also emphasized that both he and Saladin were natives of the city of Tikrit. Photo source: Wikimedia.

In 1899 two important historical works were published by Muslim scholars, both of which dealt with the crusades and represented different historical traditions. Syed Ameer Ali, a learned Shi'a jurist in British India, published *A Short History of the Saracens*, which contained a brief account of the crusades derived from heavily critical European accounts by Gibbon, Mills, Michaud, and other writers to his own day.²⁶ The second work, the first specifically dealing with the crusades to be written in Arabic and to use both Arabic sources and Western scholarship, was that of the Egyptian writer Sayyid Ali al-Hariri, *Kitab al-akhbar fi al-hurub al-salibiyyah* (The Great Book of the Wars of the Cross). In his history, Al-Hariri praised the Ottoman caliph and sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876–1909): “The sovereigns of Europe nowadays attack our Sublime Empire in a manner bearing a great resemblance to the deeds of those people [the crusaders] in bygone times. Our most glorious sultan, Abdulhamid II, has

of Narratives, trans. G. M. Goshgarian (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010). The great virtue of Achcar's work is its long chronological range (from 1933 to the present) and his ability to consider the differences among several distinct varieties of Arab and Muslim thought on the subject and the varying significance of recent Jewish history in each, particularly the case of Muhammad Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem (131–59). For the volume and character of Nazi-Arabic propaganda, see Jeffrey Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009). Herf does not mention the crusades in this propaganda war until the postwar polemics of the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qutb, 258. Further, see Meir Litvak and Esther Webman, *From Empathy to Denial: Arab Responses to the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

26. Syed Ameer Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens* (London: Macmillan, 1900 [1899]), 320 ff., bibliography 629–30.

rightly remarked that Europe is now carrying out a crusade against us in the form of a political campaign.”²⁷

As Al-Hariri indicates, the Arabic term for crusade (and crusaders, *as-salibyyu*, “followers of the cross”) and its purpose in characterizing the policies of contemporary European powers in the Eastern Mediterranean and elsewhere was circulating in the Ottoman world well before 1898, and its use was by no means restricted to Abdulhamid II. Virtually every major power in Abdulhamid’s world used the term “crusade” in various senses in regard to its own diplomatic, colonizing, and military enterprises. These included France, Spain (where, ironically, Abdulhamid II had been made a knight of the Golden Fleece in 1880), Greece (in the *Megale Idea*, or “Grand Idea” of Eleftherios Venizelos and other pan-Hellenic nationalists, to recreate the Byzantine Empire with its Christian capital at Constantinople), Russia (where the word *krestosonets*, “crossbearer,” formerly designating a liturgical participant or a pilgrim, now acquired the Western meaning of religious combatant), Britain, Bulgaria, and even Ethiopia.²⁸ To add yet another example, on April 5, 1848, General Giovanni Durando, commanding a papal army sent north to prevent an Austrian invasion of the Papal States, issued a proclamation stating that his force constituted a crusade against foreigners. Pope Pius IX, however, was not pleased with the gesture that called for a papal crusade against Austria, a Catholic nation, and the designation was quietly dropped.

That Abdulhamid II used the term defensively about the Ottoman Empire should come as no surprise. He was simply echoing contemporary geopolitical rhetoric that had acquired in the mid to late nineteenth century a distinct, but not predominantly religious tone and in that semantic fog was applying it defensively to the Ottoman Empire. Even though Abdulhamid II had also been advised by the widely traveled Persian journalist and publicist of pan-Islamism Sayyid Jemal-ad-Din al-Afghani (1836–1897) to the effect that representing himself as caliph and the empire as an

27. Cairo, 1899. There is a discussion and partial translation in Chamberlin, *Imagining Defeat*, 28–31. An abbreviated Turkish translation of Michaud’s *Histoire des Croisades* had appeared around 1870, and it elicited a history of Saladin and other earlier heroes now appropriated by the Ottomans; the *Evraq-I perishan* [Scattered Leaves] by the young Ottoman intellectual Namik Kemal. Kemal was highly critical of Michaud’s hostile characterization of Saladin and helped inaugurate the long career of Saladin as an Ottoman and later a modern Arab and Muslim hero. For late Ottoman historiography generally, see Ercüment Kuran, “Ottoman Historiography of the Tanzimat Period” in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Holt and Lewis, 421–29. Most Muslim scholarship on the subject, however, has been written in Arabic.

28. Adam Knobler, “Holy Wars, Empires, and the Portability of the Past: The Modern Uses of Medieval Crusades,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48 (2006): 293–325, for France, see 295–97. On the then-contemporary circulation of the terms and their meaning in France, there is an exhaustive discussion in Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories*, chapters 1–3; Munholland, “Michaud’s *History*”; and William E. Watson, *Tricolor and Crescent: France and the Islamic World* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003).

Islamic power would garner greater support among Muslims worldwide, the advice was not always accepted.²⁹ Nor should it be surprising that when, on November 11, 1914, Abdulhamid's brother and successor, Mehmed V (r. 1909–1918), proclaimed a political jihad as the Ottoman Empire entered World War I as an ally of Germany, there was relatively little Muslim response.³⁰

The Allies' Dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire

The circulation of terms and images of crusading as various groups of nineteenth-century European thinkers understood and used them can easily be seen, not only in romantic, nationalist, and colonialist vocabularies and Muslim responses to them but also in diplomacy since the Crimean War, whose own strongly religious dimension (although Britain and France were allied with the Ottoman Empire against Russia)

29. Nikki R. Keddie, "The Pan-Islamic Appeal: Afghani and Abdulhamid II," *Middle Eastern Studies* 3 (1966): 46–67; Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani": A Political Biography* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1972); Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: The Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). See also Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1789–1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962, reprinted Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) and Azmi Ozcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877–1924)* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1997). The account written by the American publicist and eugenicist Lothrop Stoddard, *The New World of Islam* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1921), 45–97, was one of the earliest English-language accounts of the pan-Islamic movement after that of Snouck Hurgronje. Stoddard, who greatly admired ethnic Arabs and Wahabi Islam, despised other Muslims, including Shi'as, and all other races besides his own Caucasian, as indicated in his *The Rising Tide of Color against White World Supremacy* (New York: Scribner, 1920) and his *The Revolt Against Civilization: The Menace of the Underman* (New York, 1922). He also argued that twentieth-century atrocities continued those of the crusades. For a recent work on al-Afghani, see Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia* (London: Allen Lane, 2012).

30. Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). The call to jihad was not common on the part of the Ottoman sultans. In 1827 the sultan had proclaimed it against unbelievers on the occasion of the battle of Navarino Bay. R. C. Anderson, *Naval Wars in the Levant 1559–1853* (Liverpool, UK: University Press, 1951), 492–93, 523–36, cited in David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 539. Further references are in the major study by Michael Cook, *Ancient Religions, Modern Politics: The Islamic Case in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 218–34. The target of the 1914 jihad was "the oppressive entity that bears the name 'Triple Entente' . . . whose national pride takes extreme pleasure in the subjection of thousands of Muslims." Henry Laurens notes, "Because the Ottoman Empire belonged to the Central Powers, it could not make any reference to a Christian enemy, which was in keeping both with nineteenth-century reformist thought and with the increasingly national character of the war." Laurens, in John Victor Tolan, Gilles Veinstein, Henry Laurens, et al., *Europe and the Islamic World: A History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 361.

has recently been asserted by Orlando Figes.³¹ That diplomacy was greatly strained by the entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I on the side of Germany in 1914 and the resulting Middle Eastern theater of the war, the so-called sideshow.³² It is evident in the D-Notice (Defence Notice)—an official request not to publish something in the interest of national security—issued to the press by a section of the British Department of Information on November 15, 1917 (within two weeks of the Balfour Declaration concerning British support for a Jewish homeland) that referred to “the undesirability of publishing any article paragraph or picture suggesting that military operations against Turkey are in any sense a Holy War, a modern Crusade, or have anything whatsoever to do with religious questions.”³³

The subdued formal entry of General Edmund Allenby into Jerusalem, on December 11, 1917, wearing a field khaki uniform and on foot, was not only a rebuke to the grand entry of the Kaiser in 1898 but also perfectly consistent with the instructions of the D-Notice a month earlier. But British communications media routinely ignored the D-Notice. Crusade language in its triumphalist form had become too attractive and expected.³⁴ Few realized that it could also become lethal.

31. Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: A History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012). See also Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); Caroline Finkel, *Osmans Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1923* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 354, 488–99, 529. On the image of the Turk in the literature of crusading, see Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Christopher Tyerman, “Holy War, Roman Popes, and Christian Soldiers: Some Early Modern Views on Medieval Christendom,” in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life: Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. Peter Biller and R. B. Dobson (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 1999), 293–307, with extensive bibliographical references; and Tyerman, *Debate*, 37–66, 208–11; Gérard Poumarède, *Pour en finir avec la croisade: Mythes et réalités de la lutte contre les Turcs aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* [To Complete the Crusade: Myths and Realities in the Struggle against the Turks in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries] (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2004) and Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), both cited in Housley, “The Crusades and Islam.” The image had been formed in the course of sixteenth-century European debates about the legitimacy of war and the place of the past amid contemporary religious and political conflicts. Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk, 1452–1517* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1967); Kenneth M. Setton, *Western Hostility to Islam and Prophecies of Turkish Doom* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1992).
32. E.g., the ominous titles of the study by Anthony Bruce, *The Last Crusade: The Palestine Campaign in the First World War* (London: John Murray, 2002) and that of Eitan Bar-Yosef, “The Last Crusade?” above, note 24.
33. The full text appears in Bar-Yosef, “The Last Crusade?” 87. Needless to say, the press and other media paid very little attention to the D-Notice. The British army was particularly sensitive to the Islamic beliefs of many of its troops in Palestine and especially India and elsewhere in the East.
34. For example, F. H. Cooper, *Khaki Crusaders: With the South African Artillery in Egypt and Palestine* (Cape Town, South Africa: Central News Agency, 1919).

The Allied victory and the subsequent peace conferences at Versailles and elsewhere completed the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and also raised the questions of pan-Islamism and Arab nationalism, as well as other diplomatic issues across the Middle East.³⁵ Here, too, crusades came into at least rhetorical play. At one point during the peace conference at Versailles, Stephen Pichon, the French foreign minister, spoke at length and with great certainty about France's long involvement in Syria since the crusades, until Emir Feisal, the son of Sharif Hussein of the Hejaz (who had launched the Arab revolt in Arabia in June 1916), is said to have asked (through his translator, T. E. Lawrence), "Pardon me, Monsieur Pichon, but which of us won the Crusades?"³⁶ The subsequent creation of mandates out of former Ottoman possessions in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine and the anticipation of their independence was one more factor leading to an Arab sense of identity and national aspirations.

But Mandate Palestine, also known as the Holy Land, was probably the most complex of these factors, because it was not simply another part of the dismembered Ottoman Empire but an appealing and incendiary focus for Jewish, Zionist, and Arab interests. Palestine had an initially fluctuating, but increasingly large Jewish population since the Russian discriminatory laws of 1882, and it became a growing center of friction not only because of steady Jewish immigration into this Promised Land but, conversely, because of stiff British interdiction of immigration, especially after anti-Semitic events in Nazi Germany in 1933 and 1935. The increasingly violent character of conflicting local communities was also aggravated in part by the shifting and deceptive character of Anglo-French diplomacy and its inimical influence on both Jews and Arabs.³⁷ In November 1936, the Peel Commission even argued (unsuccessfully) for separate Arab and Jewish mandate territories in Mandate Palestine. The



"The Last Crusade" Celebrating the capture of Jerusalem from Ottoman forces by Field Marshal Sir Edmund Allenby on December 9, 1917, *Punch*, a British magazine of humor and satire, depicted King Richard the Lionheart gazing down on the city he had been unable to regain and declaiming "My dream comes true."

35. David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: H. Holt, 2001); James Barr, *A Line in the Sand: The Anglo-French Struggle for the Middle East, 1914–1948* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2012), especially 41–65.

36. Bhatia, *The Crusades*, 14, citing B. H. L. Hart, *Lawrence of Arabia* (London, 1989), 315. The retort is also attributed to Lawrence himself in a brief discussion with Georges Clemenceau by Arnold Toynbee, in his *Acquaintances* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 187–88. See the discussion in Barr, *A Line in the Sand*, 65–68, and Peters, "The Firanj Are Coming—Again."

37. Barr, *A Line in the Sand*, 155–62; Henry Laurens in Tolan, Veinstein, Laurens, *Europe and the Islamic World*, 350–53, 359–83.

language of crusading then came to play a new, irregular, and more dangerous role in the peace process and later.³⁸

The Crusades from the Perspectives of Arab Nationalism and Radical Pan-Islamism

The Islamicate's understanding of crusades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, approximately until the Versailles agreements, consisted chiefly of resentment against the current diplomatic and economic intrusion of Western European powers into the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern worlds. The initial wave of pan-Islamism did not possess the means to create Arab and Muslim states at the time, although it did witness the emergence of several pan-Islamic, antinational revival movements such as Salafism in India and Egypt, which preaches a fundamentalist interpretation of the Qu'ran and a literal following of the practices of the earliest Muslims.

Arab nationalism could also add to it an increasingly hostile degree of religious and cultural friction, no longer against the original local Jewish rural communities but against a larger and more politically aware Jewish presence that represented political Zionism, and by extension against the West in general. Zionism, in the context of an increasingly large Jewish immigration, mostly from Europe, inspired a number of Jewish thinkers as well as Arab opponents to regard it as yet another instance of Western colonialism, peopled largely by Eastern Europeans, and now analogous, in terms of both geography and Arab scholars' interests in the region, to the crusades as an earlier movement of the same kind.³⁹

The deteriorating relations between Arabs and Jews in the midst of the collapse of the British Palestine Mandate reached a flash point with the declaration of Israeli independence in 1948. The deliberate imprecision of the Balfour Declaration of 1917⁴⁰ and subsequent reinterpretations of it by Britain as well as by Jews and Arabs had made it possible for different peoples affected by it to interpret it in different ways. Those European immigrant Zionists who urged militancy in *Eretz Israel* (the Land of

38. For an extreme example, see Adam Knobler, "Crusading for the Messiah: Jews as Instruments of Christian Anti-Islamic Holy War," *Tolerance and Intolerance: Social Conflict in the Age of the Crusades*, ed. in Michael Gervers and James M. Powell (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 83–89.

39. See Corliss Slack's chapter in this book, "The Quest for Gain: Were the First Crusaders Proto-Colonists?"

40. "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country," <http://history1900s.about.com/cs/holocaust/p/balfourdeclare.htm> (accessed May 6, 2014).

Israel) also began to use the terminology of crusade and colonialism about themselves. So did their opponents. As early as the eve of World War I some Arab political leaders had also referred to what were initially European Jewish agricultural settlements as a parallel with earlier crusader states. The policies of the Zionist movement in Israel came to be regarded by Arab and some Israeli thinkers as designs to avoid the fate of the earlier colonists—the crusaders.⁴¹ Several different kinds of Jewish thought came to focus on Mandate Palestine variously as a Jewish religious state, a democratic European-type state, or a socialist state, and each of these had consequences in interpreting the place of the crusades, if any, in state formation and identity.⁴²

From the perspective of much of the Islamicate, the new state of Israel, located precisely in former crusader territories and peopled by European and some American Jews, had been imposed upon Mandate Palestine by European powers, which centuries earlier had launched crusades. In some radical Arabic thought, this was also a new colony, since it was now claimed that Jews had never lived in the area before and had originally come to Eastern Europe from Khazaria, a Central Asian khanate whose leaders converted to Judaism in the ninth century. The land was thus authentically and from the beginning only Arab land, successively invaded and polluted by hostile Western powers, first during (and in some narratives far earlier than) the crusades, and now by Zionists, the new crusaders. Hence the identification of Zionism with “crusaderism.” Even contemporary Western-sponsored scholarly conferences, such as the quadrennial meetings of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, could be interpreted as collaborations with Zionist scholars and venues for a Zionist message.⁴³ The United States was first included among the new crusaders in

41. Benjamin Z. Kedar, “Il motivo della crociata nel pensiero politico israeliano” [The Crusade Motif in Israeli Political Thought] in *Verso Gerusalemme*, 135–50 (above, note 12); Sophia Menache, “Israeli Historians of the Crusades and Their Main Areas of Research, 1946–2008,” *Storia della Storiografia* 53 (2008): 3–24; Baruch Kimmerling, “Academic History Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Case of Israeli-Jewish Historiography,” *History and Memory* 7 (1995): 41–65, at 56; David Ohana, “Are Israelis the New Crusaders?” *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 13 (2006), <http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=865> (accessed May 4, 2014).

42. Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle: Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Jabotinsky had proclaimed Zionism as a colonizing venture, echoing the terminology of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British and French propagandists, crusade historians, and diplomats. Yosef Gorni, *Zionism and the Arabs, 1882–1948: A Study of Ideology* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1987).

43. Ziad J. Asali, “Zionist Studies of the Crusader Movement,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 14 (1992): 45–60. Asali, not a historian himself, points out that there were very few Middle Eastern scholars represented at the conference in Syracuse that he attended in 1990, although the society has been making a continuing effort to attract more members from the Islamic world. In his address to the scholars meeting with the SSCLE in Jerusalem in 1987, the president of Israel, Chaim Herzog, warned against facile and false analogies in which the crusader states are compared with the nation of Israel. Some attendees at the conference who identified themselves as crusade historians were

some of the polemic of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt during the 1950s and later in Libyan anti-American propaganda.

Various movements of Arab nationalism vigorously promoted Arab identity and cohesion, not only by writing histories in Arabic and emphasizing Arab preeminence in Islamic history but also by asserting an Arabic popular resistance to the regimes of the crusader states and the centrality of Egypt in that effort.⁴⁴ They also claimed (borrowing from a group of earlier and entirely discredited Western arguments on the subject) that Europeans had appropriated so much Arabic science and learning (and with it earlier Greek learning as well) through the crusades that the process led to the end of “feudalism” and hastened the arrival of the Renaissance and modernity as well as later forms of European domination in the Islamic world. Such assertions put history to a strenuous test, one that forces it to fail unless it becomes capable on both sides of directly addressing the full range of historical circumstances and differences between the crusading past and the recent past and avoiding both myths and ideology.⁴⁵

Political and cultural history aside, there is yet another aspect of Islam that transcends the problems of Arabization and nationalism—that of the new, religious pan-Islamism generally designated as Salafism.⁴⁶ The guarded optimism of Sivan’s account of Arab revisionist historians disappears before the utterly ahistorical assertions of such thinkers as the Pakistani Maulana Sayyid Abul-Ala Maududi (1903–1979) and his opposite number in Egypt, Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966) and their growing number of followers. Both professed a foundational Islam that recognizes no national identities and regards the past and present as a continuous conflict between pure Islam and a new *Jahiliyya*, an age of ignorance and barbarism (the term usually otherwise reserved in Arabic for the pre-Islamic period in Arabia). Between the two there can never be a truce because Salafism professes absolute religious certainty based upon its authentic reading of scripture and its rejection of cultural differences within a global Islamic community. This explains its appeal to groups in the Islamicate diaspora,

given probing interviews by Israeli security, either departing for or leaving Israel, being asked such questions as, “Why did you become a crusade historian?”

44. Sivan, “Modern Arab Historiography,” *Interpretations*, 3–43. Unfortunately, the perceptive and wide-ranging survey by Michael Brett, “Islamic Historiography of the Crusades, 1951–2001,” a paper presented at the Third International Conference: Half a Century of Studies on Crusades and Military Orders, 1951–2001, Teruel, Spain, 19–25 July, 2001, has not been published.

45. Emmanuel Sivan, “Arab Revisionist Historians” in *Interpretations*, 45–72. One solution may be a new Western focus on the Muslim world. The publishing house of Brill has announced a series edited by Suleiman A. Mourad, Paul M. Cobb, and Konrad Hirschler, *The Muslim World in the Age of the Crusades: Studies and Texts*. Forthcoming in that new series is Alex Mallett, ed., *Muslim Historians of the Crusades*, <http://www.brill.com/publications/muslim-world-age-crusades>.

46. Roel Meijer, ed., *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) and Sivan, *Radical Islam*, 84–107; Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought from the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 154–59, 219–315.

from Europe to Indonesia, and its characterizations of its opponents as barbarians and crusaders, as occurred in the outburst in the Jakarta courtroom mentioned at the beginning of this essay.

The Crusades Today in Islamic Scholarship

As a number of historians have pointed out, the range of thought in the Islamicate is far broader than both formulaic Arabic nationalist history and Salafism. Liberal Westernizers, residual Marxists, secular nationalists, and professional scholars, some trained in the West, all conceive the past in different ways. Arab students who have studied in the West often return home with the experience of direct access to modern scholarship and can find much of it translated into Arabic at home. There remains, indeed, sufficient room among these groups for nonpolemical history to be done. But the circumstances and facilities for historical research in the Islamicate are usually very different from those in the various parts of the West.

Abbès Zouache has pointed out the extent to which political authority in Middle Eastern states constitutes a formidable presence in history education and research, since it controls the means of support for them, especially funds for research and translation.⁴⁷ The location of the study of crusade history is often not in history departments but in faculties of classical Arabic literature and education. Few Muslim historians are actually experts on the subject, and there is often very little communication among them concerning it. Smaller and remote universities often lack the library resources of the great universities like Damascus, Yarmuk (Jordan), Cairo, 'Ain Sams, Alexandria, and d'az-Zaqaziq and often rely on considerably dated Western scholarship, even though Arabic translations of both original Latin sources and more recent Western scholarship regularly appear but often do not seem to circulate beyond the private libraries of a few scholars.⁴⁸ Nor is much recent historiography in Arabic (or Turkish or Farsi) translated into Western languages. Much of this holds true for current scholarship on the subject in Turkey, Iran, and the rest of the Islamic world. Any idea of a common historical approach should begin with mutual access to common scholarship.

47. Zouache, "Écrire l'histoire des croisades," 121–26.

48. Zouache cites as examples the very frequent use of the 1907 history by William Stevenson and the work of Steven Runciman, René Grousset, and others. One of the authors of this essay was recently asked to provide some biographical information on the career of John La Monte because an Arabic translation of his *Feudal Monarchy in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1932) was forthcoming from Cairo. A translation of La Monte's work into Arabic for archival purposes is perfectly understandable, but the research and main theses of the book are no longer part of the working scholarship in the West, although a number of La Monte's articles remain useful.

In conclusion, it is also necessary to agree on a working definition of the crusades. Most Muslim historians residing in the Islamic world write on the crusades in Arabic and deal exclusively with the area of the Holy Land crusades, present-day Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. That is, they focus on their own local crusade history, very much in the line of Hans Eberhard Mayer's "traditionalist" definition of crusade, military expeditions aimed at liberating Jerusalem and preserving it in Christian hands.⁴⁹ Other competing definitions, notably the "pluralist" definition associated with Jonathan Riley-Smith and others that sees crusades as all military expeditions charged by the popes with the defense of Christendom and the Church from internal or external enemies, are generally not considered, thus increasing the distance between Western and Islamic approaches to crusade history.⁵⁰

Crusades are a part, but only a part, of the larger history of the Mediterranean world, a history that is not solely one of religious or military conflict but of contacts and exchanges of many kinds. A Mediterranean perspective may prove more useful for scholarship (and ultimately for political and common opinion) than an exclusive and narrow focus on cultural pride and despair, aggression and retaliation, intractable religious differences, imaginary clashes of civilizations, and the unresolvable claims of memory in both the West and the Islamic world.⁵¹

49. Described in the work of Tyerman, *Debate*, and Constable, "Historiography of the Crusades," and wisely discussed in Zouache, "Écrire l'histoire," 141–44.

50. See the Introduction to this book for a discussion of the differing academic definitions of crusading among largely Western crusade specialists.

51. As in the work of Olivia Remie Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and that of Jessica L. Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and Their Business World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).