**Facing the Franks again: the Crusades in Arab social and political thought (1914–48)[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Oleg Sokolov

St. Petersburg State University, Faculty of Asian and African Studies, Russian Federation

olegs1291@gmail.com

**Abstract**

Recalling the Crusades is a highly important aspect of the image of the West in the Arab thought of the second half of the twentieth and the first decades of the twenty-first centuries. This article explores the roots of the anti-Crusader rhetoric in the period between the world wars, both of which drastically altered the imaginary and self-perception of the populations of the Middle East and North Africa. It traces the main patterns of using the Crusades in Arab social thought and politics in this period, analyses why such references were used in various contexts, and demonstrates their connections with the heritage of the major intellectuals, littérateurs, and public figures of the Arab cultural revival (*al-nahḍa*).

**Keywords**

Crusades – *jihād* – Arab nationalism – pan-Islamism – Muslim reformers – Colonialism – Middle Eastern Christians – Interwar period – imagined communities

Leading Arab political figures of the second half of the twentieth century contributed to the anti-Crusader rhetoric. Egyptian President Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir[[2]](#footnote-2) (1918–70), Syrian President Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad[[3]](#footnote-3) (1930–2000), Iraqi President Ṣaddām Ḥusayn[[4]](#footnote-4) (1937–2006), and Libyan leader Mu‘ammar al-Qadhdhāfī[[5]](#footnote-5) (1942–2011) called on their followers to fight “the Crusader imperialists.” So too did prominent Salafī leaders, such as the ideologist of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), Sayyid Quṭb[[6]](#footnote-6) (1906–66) and *al-Qāʾida* leader Usāma bin Lādin[[7]](#footnote-7) (1957–2011), who called for *jihād* against Westerners, who were to them all upholders of “Crusader spirit.” Arab culture of the second half of the twentieth century is also full of references to the Crusades in popular film and television series[[8]](#footnote-8) that have become classics of Arab cinema, poetry,[[9]](#footnote-9) novels,[[10]](#footnote-10) and plays.[[11]](#footnote-11) The Crusades also became a frequent topic in Arabic historiography.[[12]](#footnote-12)

The abundance of works analyzing the appeals to the Crusades in Arab social thought, politics, and culture of the second half of the twentieth century contrasts with the almost complete absence of studies devoted to the analysis of this historical era by Arab authors of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. Thus, despite the salience of the Crusades theme from the middle of the twentieth century, this aspect of the Arab intellectual history has not yet received sufficient academic attention.

It seems logical to analyze the genesis of the modern anti-Crusader rhetoric from the 1914 beginning of WWI, which decisively reshaped the geographical map and outlook of the populations of the Middle East and North Africa, to 1948, when the establishment of the State of Israel also led to major shifts in the Arabic social and political thought.

There have been a handful of studies on Arab intellectual, political, and religious leaders using the theme of the Crusades in this period. Carole Hillenbrand, in the last chapter of her monumental study of Muslim-Christian encounters during the Crusades,[[13]](#footnote-13) briefly discusses the use of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s victories in the rhetorical imagery of several Palestinian public figures. Umej Bhatia’s monograph[[14]](#footnote-14)addresses the question but not in the interwar period. Jonathan Phillips mentions several interesting appeals to the theme of the Crusades in Arabic social thought, but most are drawn from the Arab art world.[[15]](#footnote-15) References to the Crusades by Arab public figures of the interwar period feature in studies devoted to the history of the British Mandate in Palestine[[16]](#footnote-16) and the French Mandate in Syria,[[17]](#footnote-17) but these works do not attempt to analyze the genesis of anti-Crusader rhetoric. Gerber (2008) gives vivid examples of references to the Crusades in Palestinian debates from the time of the British Mandate, but the study is limited to the Palestine.[[18]](#footnote-18) Peled’s article (1982) is significant because, in addition to focusing on literary production, it analyzes the uses of Crusader images in the Palestinian public sphere of the interwar period.[[19]](#footnote-19) Wien (2017) also contains important examples of post-WWI references to the Crusades.[[20]](#footnote-20) Important histories of the MB by both Richard Mitchell[[21]](#footnote-21) and ʿAbd al-Fattah el-Awaisi[[22]](#footnote-22) analyze some of its ideologists’ appeals to the Crusades theme, but both consider them only in relation to the movement’s own ideology of the itself and do not correlate them with the use of anti-Crusader rhetoric in 1930s’ and 1940s’ Arab public thought. Thus, the relevant historiography is quite diverse, but leaves a lot of room for further exploration of these issues and their intellectual history between 1914 and 1948.

Investigating the world of ideas and interpretations is key to understanding the dramatic events of the past in a given historical period and society. This article does not seek to examine every relevant case, but to uncover the main patterns of the use of the Crusader theme in Arab social thought and politics during the period under consideration. It also seeks to understand why such allusions were made and to trace their relation with the heritage of the Arab cultural revival (*al-nahḍa*). This topic is vast in itself and requires a separate, fuller study to complement the present one, so this article confines itself to certain examples in art that are especially illustrative of the ideas at play. The sources chosen are confined to the most crucial events in the history of the Middle East from 1914 to 1948 and to politicians and intellectuals who remained highly relevant to Arabic intellectual debates in the later-twentieth century. The sources include, memoirs, documents on European and Arab public and political figures, and periodicals in Arabic.

Before focusing on 1914–48, we should examine how references to the era of the Crusades before WWI were used by the ideologists of pan-Ottomanism, pan-Islamism, and pan-Arabism, as well as in the spheres of literature and theater.

**The Crusades in Arabic social thought and the culture of *al-Nahḍa* before 1914**

From the second quarter of the nineteenth century, there was a significant expansion of the Middle East’s secular historiography and sources of knowledge. In relation to the Crusades, this consisted of the increase in and wider dissemination of chronicles and historical studies. In addition, a number of literary works emerged that focused on the Crusades era.

The most famous example of the popularization of these chronicles is the serialization from 1858 of Abū Shama’s thirteenth-century biography of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in the Beirut-based *Ḥadīqat al-akhbār* (“The Garden of News”), newspaper. The first original Arab historical study entirely devoted to the history of the Crusades was Egyptian historian ʿAlī al-Ḥarīrī’s 1899 *al-Akhbār al-saniyya fī al-ḥurūb al-ṣalībiyya* (“Outstanding Tales of the Crusader Wars”), in which the author says in his introduction that what prompted him to address this topic was Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876–1909) statements claiming that Western Europeans were conducting a Crusade against the Ottoman Empire.[[23]](#footnote-23) Egyptian poet Aḥmad Shawqī (1868–1932) addressed the Crusades in a remarkable *qaṣīda “Kibār al-ḥawādith fī wādī al-nīl”* (“The Greatest Events in the Nile Valley”)[[24]](#footnote-24) first presented at the International Congress of Orientalists in Geneva in 1894. The poem alludes to the Ayyūbids, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn personally, but also to the Seventh Crusade and Louis IX of France[[25]](#footnote-25) and glorifies the *Mamlūk*s’ victory over the Seventh Crusade forces. Shawqī also alludes to the Crusades in other famous poems: examples include “*al-Usṭūl al-ʿuthmānī* “(“The Ottoman Fleet,” 1912), in which he praises Ḥusām al-Dīn Lūlū, the Egyptian Red Sea fleet commander who fought the Crusaders during the reign of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and saved Mecca and Medina from Reynald of Châtillon, and “*al-Andalus al-jadīda”* (“The New *al-Andalus*”, 1913), in which he mourns the fall of Edirne (or Adrianople as it was then known in the West) during the First Balkan War (1912–3), comparing the advancement of Balkan League troops to a Crusader invasion.

Among the Arab writers of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, the most important popularizer of Middle East history was the Lebanese journalist and writer Jirjī Zaydān (1861–1914) and central to his *œuvre* is a 17-novel historical series. His 1912 novel *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-makā*ʾ*id al-ḥashshāshīn* (“Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and the Wiles of the Assassins”) brings the reader into the court of the last Fatimid caliph, al-*ʿ*Āḍid. The events of the Crusades are also important to the plot of Zaydān’s 1914 novel *Shajarat al-Durr* covering the end of the Ayyubid dynasty and the beginning of the Mamlūk age. After the defeat of the Crusaders and the capture of Louis IX, Shajarat al-Durr, a ruler of Egypt from 1249 to 1250, says in Zaydān’s novel that the threat from the Crusaders persists: “You know that envious people surround us and enemies threaten us. Especially the Franks. They lost their sleep, preparing for war with us.” This may well be Zaydān’s warning to contemporaries who should concerned with the appetites of the European colonialists, the heirs of the Crusaders.[[26]](#footnote-26) In the February 1913 issue of *al-Hilāl* magazine, he published an article about the siege of Damietta (1218–9) during the Fifth Crusade, along with the excerpts from *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-makā*ʾ*id al-ḥashshāshīn*.[[27]](#footnote-27) He also repeatedly addressed the theme of the Crusades in his historical works. For example, his *Ta*ʾ*rīkh Miṣr al-ḥadīth maʿ fadhlaka fī ta*ʾ*rīkh Miṣr al-qadīm* (“The Modern History of Egypt with Reference to its Ancient History”) details the events of the Fifth and Seventh Crusades waged against Egypt.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Najīb al-Ḥaddād (1867–99)[[29]](#footnote-29) and Faraḥ Anṭūn (1874–1922)’s plays evince a romantic view of the epoch of the Crusades,[[30]](#footnote-31) as an era of noble rulers, such as Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and Richard the Lionheart. This view was concomitant with a particular perception of this period in contemporary Europe, alongside the historical optimism of the leaders of the Arab *al-nahḍa*, who projected the events of medieval history onto the present.

As for Arab Islamic thinkers,[[31]](#footnote-32) prominent figures like Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839–97) and *ʿ*Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī (1855–1902) interpreted the invasion of the Franks as God’s punishment for the corruption of Islam. al-Afghānī claimed that esotericism had weakened the *umma* and made the catastrophe of the Crusades possible:

The result of this was that the Franks came, conquered the lands of Syria, shed the blood of thousands of its innocent inhabitants, destroyed what they could destroy and established themselves in these lands for 200 years, and the Muslims could not repel them.[[32]](#footnote-33)

al-Kawākibī argued emphatically that religious fanaticism was alien to Islam and that the fundamentalism of the Seljuk Turks, who misunderstood Islam’s teachings, was reinforced by the negative example of the Crusaders’ religious zeal.[[33]](#footnote-34) Thus, he saw the Crusades as the moment the “virus of religious fanaticism” began to spread in the Middle East and insisted that “for Arabs, *jihād* ended seven centuries ago, in the time of the Crusades.”[[34]](#footnote-36)

al-Afghānī, Muḥammad *ʿ*Abduh (1849–1905), and Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874–1908) transposed the Crusade concept onto contemporary military and political conflicts between Christian and Muslim countries: the confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and West European states, the Crimean War (1853–56), and the *mahdī* uprising in Sudan (1881–99).[[35]](#footnote-37) al-Kawākibī, by contrast, called the medieval Crusader states colonial (*al-duwal al-mustaʿ mira al-ifranjiyya*), he claimed the long-standing nature of the European colonialism.[[36]](#footnote-38) Muṣṭafā Kāmil also applied the notion of the Crusade to the conflict between the Russian and Ottoman Empires, conflating it with the confrontation between Christians and Muslims in general.[[37]](#footnote-39)

The ideologists of Arab nationalism *ʿ*Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zahrāwī (1855–1916) and Rafīq al-*ʿ*Aẓm (1865–1925) argued that the religious banners under which the Crusaders came to “free the Holy Land” were a cover for European materialist ambitions to conquer the East. The same authors referred to the Crusades as an era that proved that religion was a poor unifying force and stressed that even when the *umma* and its major holy places were under threat of Crusader invasion, Muslims had not united to resist it.[[38]](#footnote-40) al-Zahrāwī developed a nationalist interpretation of the Crusades, arguing that Muslims defended Middle Eastern Christians from the Crusaders more often than the other way round during this historical period.[[39]](#footnote-41)

Around the end of the nineteenth century, both Muslim reformers such as *ʿ*Abduh and nationalists like al-*ʿ*Aẓm developed an interpretation of the Crusades as the catalyst for prosperity and progress in the West. ʿAbduh argued out that the Muslims had fought a defensive war against the Crusaders and that this largely helped Europe, which saw a true civilization in the Muslim world and took significant aspects of it back to the West, giving rise to the Reformation.[[40]](#footnote-42) According to al-*ʿ*Aẓm:

Before the beginning of the European Renaissance, the light of Western civilization appeared in the eighth century, during the reign of Charlemagne, but it faded away later to emerge again during the contacts of Christians and Muslims in Andalusia and during the Crusades, which, in a sense, enabled the Europeans to think more freely and gave them the opportunity to free themselves from blind submission to priests, which later helped them to carry out religious, political and social reforms.[[41]](#footnote-43)

The epoch of the Crusades was also the focus of debates between prominent Islamic and nationalist thinkers, such as that between Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Faraḥ Anṭūn. In the section entitled “Eastern Christians,” Anṭūn criticized ʿAbduh’s merging of the Eastern and Western Christians into a single community by reference to general characteristics of Christian civilization. Anṭūn insisted that “the Eastern Christians always had much weaker ties with the Western Christians than with their Muslim brothers.” As evidence of the historical and cultural unity of Christian and Muslim Arabs, he stated that “when the Western Christians came to the East during the Crusades, the Eastern Christians did not join them.”[[42]](#footnote-44)

Thus we have seen that references to the Crusades were in wide circulation in both Islamic and nationalist thought in the Middle East before 1914. Influential thinkers with various ideologies addressed the theme of the Crusades, argued about the course of history in the Middle East, and interactions with Europe, including referring to contemporary military conflicts in light of the Crusades and incorporating examples from the Crusader era into their reformist agendas. The secularization of historical knowledge and optimism of the Arab cultural figures during this period was expressed in a glorification of the medieval commanders who repelled the Crusaders. At the same time, they warned of the ongoing Crusader threat of European colonialism.

**The Crusades and relations with modern Europeans from 1914**

In the period after WWI began, the principal allusions to the Crusades were for the purposes of accusing Europeans of waging new Crusades to legitimize their control over the Middle East and North Africa. The fate of the Ottoman provinces of the Middle East had already been a frequent topic of debate in WWI’s victorious countries even before the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was officially acknowledged by the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. The future of Syria, Palestine, and Iraq was discussed at various meetings. These included the Paris Peace Conference of 1919–20, at which the French foreign minister, Stephen Pichon (1857–1933) delivered a speech proclaiming France’s historic right to control Syria, emphasizing the active and robust participation of the French in the Crusades. The meeting was attended by Fayṣal ibn Ḥusayn (1883–1933) as a representative of his father, the Sharif of Mecca, Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī (1854–1931), the leader of the Arab rebellion against the Ottoman Empire. Fayṣal’s translator was his former military adviser, Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888–1935), the famous “Lawrence of Arabia.” According to Lawrence’s memoirs, Fayṣal replied succinctly to the long speech of the French minister about the age-old right of France to Syrian lands paid for by the blood of the French Crusaders by asking: “Excuse me, Monsieur Pichon, but which of us won the [wars of the] Crusades?” Pichon, who considered Fayṣal a British puppet, had not expected such a rejoinder.[[43]](#footnote-45) Later, when Lawrence met separately with French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929), the British officer was again reminded of the French blood shed during the Crusades. Lending rhetorical support to Fayṣal, Lawrence firmly replied: “Yes, but the Crusaders were defeated, and the Crusades failed.”[[44]](#footnote-46) These exchanges are fascinating examples of the use of images of the Crusades in direct dialogue between Western and Arab politicians at the highest level, from differing perspectives. By advancing the unequivocal view of the Crusades as a glorious and victorious page in Muslim and Arab history, Fayṣal countered Pichon’s romantic image of the valiant French Crusaders who conquered and managed to hold the Holy Land.

On March 8, 1920, the Syrian National Congress (SNC) in Damascus proclaimed the independence of Syria and declared Fayṣal ibn Ḥusayn king. However, on April 25, Britain gained control over Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq, and Syria became France’s mandated territory under the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres. Jonathan Phillips cites the SNC’s call to resist potential French intervention as follows: “Do you not want to safeguard the land of your forefathers, who defended her from the offense of the Crusaders in the days of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn? Why do you not stand in their face now?”[[45]](#footnote-47)

This is redolent of Fayṣal’a words about the Crusader wars as a triumphant historical episode for the Middle East. It is difficult to establish the sources that shaped Fayṣal’s views on the Crusades but it may have been inspired by the anti-crusading rhetoric of the Ottoman Sultan ʿAbd ulhamīd II, since Fayṣal had spent his youth at his court in Istanbul with his father stayed from 1893 to 1908.[[46]](#footnote-48)

Two further episodes involving the English general, Edmund Allenby (1861–1936) and the French general, Henri Gouraud (1867–1946) respectively had significant influences on the Arab perception of the Crusader resonances in contemporary geopolitics. When British troops entered Jerusalem in December 1917, General Allenby allegedly said in the presence of the noble Arab families of the city: “Only now have the Crusades ended.” Likewise, when French troops entered Damascus, General Gouraud, allegedly declared beside the grave of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn: “*Réveille-toi, Saladin, nous sommes de retour. Ma présence ici consacre la victoire de la croix sur le croissant*.” (“Awake, Saladin, we are back. My presence here consecrates the victory of the cross over the crescent”).[[47]](#footnote-49) Although there is some doubt as to whether these statements were actually made, these words acquired an enormous symbolic significance and became firmly rooted in the Arab historical memory. Both incidents invoke the idea of the deliberate violation of a sacred space, whether trampling the graves of famous Muslim military leaders or claiming the right to the holy city of Jerusalem.

However true and however invoked, these alleged usages of Crusader rhetoric by European commanders provoked an immediate response. Enraged by what Gouraud was reported as saying, the eminent Iraqi poet Maʿrūf al-Ruṣāfī (1875–1945) composed the *qaṣīda* “*Maẓāhir al-ta*ʿ*aṣṣub fī* ʿ*aṣr al-madaniyya* (“Manifestations of Fanaticism in the Era of Civilization”),[[48]](#footnote-50) in which he accuses the general of provocatively invoking the Crusades and pointed to their romanticization in modern-day France.

The impact of these episodes is also evident in the ideology of the MB. In the 1930s, their activists construing parallels with Zionism as an aggressive movement as “Jewish Crusaderism” (*al-ṣalībiyya al-yahūdiyya*) in Palestine.[[49]](#footnote-51) As evidence of the West conducting a new Crusade, they also invoked Allenby’s and Gouraud’s reported statements.[[50]](#footnote-52) According to the MB, Palestinian Arabs had to fight two enemies: the Zionists with their large financial resources and the British with their military power.[[51]](#footnote-53) Since the MB viewed religion, society, politics, and culture as an undifferentiated whole, the idea of the Crusade had simultaneously political and sociocultural connotations for them. From their point of view, the Western imperialist Crusade was an attempt not only to conquer Muslim lands, but also to destroy Muslim society.[[52]](#footnote-54)

Furthermore, attention to the epoch of the Crusades was partly a result of the proselytism of the European missionaries in the modern Middle East. As an example, one can mention the writings of Palestinian public intellectual and journalist Būlus Shiḥāda (1882–1943), a Protestant native of Ramallah and one of the founders of *al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī* (National Party), which was created in 1923 as a bulwark against Zionism.[[53]](#footnote-55)

In 1919, Būlus Shiḥāda started the newspaper *Mirʾāt al-Sharq* (Mirror of the East) that covered the political and public life of the Syria-Palestine region. In an article dated April 12, 1928, he accused Europe of numerous historical misdeeds, including the Crusades and the European intervention in the Ottoman Empire. He criticized Europeans for using missionary hospitals and schools to strengthen their positions in the Muslim Middle East: “Is it really about protecting Middle Eastern Christians? They [Europeans] do not care about respect for religion, and all that they do is only for their own benefit. Were the Crusades, a series of bloody wars in the Middle Ages, started because of [Europeans’] love for the Christians of the Middle East, or were these crimes committed by the will of our Lord Jesus Christ? I swear to God, no.” The author blamed Europeans for instituting the policy of *ḥimāyat al-aqalliyyāt* (protection of minorities) that instilled hatred among representatives of various Christian communities in the Middle East, who “began to look at each other as enemies and become hostile to their Muslim brethren.”[[54]](#footnote-57)

We can find many examples of the overlaying of allusions to the Crusades on modern relations between Europe and the Arab world in the interwar press of Palestine. The newspaper *al-Jāmiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* sponsored by the *muftī* of Jerusalem, Amīn al-Ḥusaynī (1895–1974), published articles criticizing the proselytism of European missionaries in Palestine. An article dated April 24, 1928 states, for example that “missionaries, dressed in black robes, roam around the Muslim world, carrying the message of Jesus. They shout loudly ‘God is love!’ and ‘Glory to God on high, peace and joy be upon earth!” They are wolves in sheep’s clothing sent by colonial governments to bring contention among Muslim nations.” At the end of the article, the author addresses these preachers: “Oh missionaries! Your house is made of glass. How can you throw stones at people and not be afraid of meeting your Lord?...Nowadays, a new Crusade is being arranged and you are undoubtedly its ‘heroes’ who are responsible for the souls, property and blessings that it destroys.”[[55]](#footnote-58)

Arab public figures also challenged the pro-British way in which the Crusades were portrayed under the Mandate. For example, influential writer Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (1886–1969) published several articles in 1932 in al-*Fatḥ* (“The Conquest”) newspaper on disseminating interpretations of history advantageous to the British through educational literature in Palestine. He criticized the presentation of the history of the Crusades in *The New Age History Reader III*[[56]](#footnote-59) distributed in Mandate Palestine, quoting from the book in English with an Arabic translation.[[57]](#footnote-60) In addition to criticizing descriptions of the medieval Muslim rulers of Palestine as “hypocrites” and “infidels,” he quoted its statement on Britain’s historical role in Palestine to highlight what he considered the falsification of history to which the British were resorting to justify their control over Palestine through references to the Crusades:

Before I finish this lesson, let me remind you that what we failed to achieve during the last Crusades, our army was able to carry out during the Great War. In 1917, we defeated the Turks, conquered the Holy Land and hoisted the Union Jack on the wall of Jerusalem.[[58]](#footnote-61)

 Other Arab public figures stated that the brutal actions of European colonial troops were reminiscent of the horrors of the Crusades. Among the Algerian public and political figures who addressed Crusader rhetoric was Farḥāt ʿAbbās (1899–1985), the head of the Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien who later joined Jabhat al-Taḥrīr al-Waṭanī (National Liberation Front, commonly known by its French initials FLN). In 1943, ʿAbbās published a manifesto in which he proclaimed Algerians’ right to an independent state, in alliance with France, and its own constitution. The French authorities paid little attention to it, an attitude which resulted in widespread popular protests in Algeria. On May 8, 1945, there were violent clashes between the Algerian protesters and gendarmes attempting to confiscate posters with anti-colonial slogans from residents marching in Setif to mark the end of the War. On the same day, more than 100 French settlers were killed, to which the French authorities responded with punitive actions against villagers in Setif Province, notably using combat aircraft. Thousands of Algerians were killed. After the massacre there, ʿAbbās stated that “Setif brought us back to the time of the Crusades,”[[59]](#footnote-62) comparing the French atrocities with those of the medieval Crusaders’.

The interpretation of the Crusades as a time of savagery is evident in the poem “*al-Quyūd*” (“Bonds”)[[60]](#footnote-63) composed in 1937 by the Syrian poet and diplomat ʿUmar Abū Rīsha (1910–90), who related images of the Crusades to the 1936–39 Arab Revolt, emphasizing that the horrors of the modern conflict overshadowed the bloodshed of the medieval times. In mentioning the bloodshed in Jerusalem, the author may have been thinking of the Crusaders killing of thousands of the city’s inhabitants after its capture in 1099. By mentioning “kings standing in formation” he probably meant the leaders of the Third Crusade (1189–92): Richard I (“Lionheart”) of England and Philip II of France particularly while alluding more broadly, all European Crusader monarchs who led expeditions to the East.

Applying allusions to the Crusades to modern conflicts between Christian and Muslim countries had been done before 1914, but Arab intellectuals and politicians amplified this language after WWI with direct criticism of actions and statements by Europeans to counter their glorification of the Crusades.

**Mobilizing rhetorics**

By the early 1920s, most of the Arab world was under European control. The unrealized desire for sovereignty and the rise of Arab nationalism and Islamic movements became the impetus for the intensification of the anti-colonial struggle. In search of historical examples which could have been used to mobilize the masses, leading Arab figures in the public sphere turned to the era of the Crusades.

The new political parties that arose in the Maghrib in the 1920s and 1930s set themselves the goal of liberation from colonial rule. One of these parties was Tunisia’s al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Dustūrī (commonly known as “Destour”) that was founded in 1920. The Roman Catholic church’s decision, with the approval of the governments of France and Tunisia, to hold the 30th International Eucharistic Congress in Carthage in May 1930 was an important milestone in the history of the Tunisian anti-colonial struggle. This was a location with a particular Crusader resonance, since Louis IX of France had died there during his 1270 Crusade. The Destour, through the pages of its *La Voix du Tunisien* newspaper, condemned this French sponsoring of a Christian religious event on Tunisian soil, with all its the Crusader and colonial overtones, as an insult to Tunisians and Muslims in general. A notable autho of one of these articles wasthe future president of Tunisia, Ḥabīb Būrqība (otherwise Habib Bourguiba, 1903–2000). The processions of young French Catholics dressed in Crusader costumes, the distribution of brochures in Arabic urging conversion to Christianity, and the rhetoric of the papal legate, who characterized the Muslim era in North Africa as “14 centuries of desolation and death,” showed that the organizers of the congress did not understand Tunisian realities and neglected the patriotic feelings of Tunisians, thus providing Destour with the opportunity to mobilize Tunisian society against the French.[[61]](#footnote-65) As Maḥmūd al-Māṭirī (1897–1972), a major Tunisian politician and future leader of al-*Ḥizb al-ḥurr al-dustūrī al-jadīd* (“New Destour”) party, stated during these events: “The avant-garde of people and youth have shown their determination to confront the colonialists who started the Crusade against Islam in a broad daylight.” In this case, Tunisian political figures and nationalists used the Crusader allusions invoked by the French to declare themselves ready to repulse the “Crusader threat” posed by the colonial power, turning the French misguided allusions to the Crusades to their advantage.

In the interwar history of the Mashriq, the main prism for anti-Crusader mobilization and rhetoric was the situation in Palestine, the consequences of which ultimately culminated in the 1936–39 Arab Revolt and the 1947–49 war between the Arabs and the movement that saw the establishment of the State of Israel. This topic was not only addressed by the Palestinian leaders and activists of the time, but also by in other Arab regions.

One of the main issues provoking such opposition was the “Balfour Declaration,” sent during WWI on November 2, 1917 by the British foreign secretary to the Jewish community leader in Britain Lionel Rothschild and forwarded later to the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland, the text of which, supporting a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine, then still an Ottoman province, was published a week later.[[62]](#footnote-66) Lebanese poet Rashīd Sālim al-Khūrī (1887–1984), nicknamed *al-shāʿir al-qarawī* (“the village poet”) and *shāʿir al-ʿurūba* (“the poet of Arabness”) vivid invoked in his famous 1917 *qaṣīda* called “*Waʿd Balfūr”[[63]](#footnote-67)* (“Balfour’s Covenant”), which includes the following passages:

The truth is more than you and your declarations

Take it good, proud man,

You prepare declarations and demand their implementation,

Relocating worshippers, you will be banished, colonialist!

...

Arabs, the time has come for retribution,

Today you will take revenge with pride

Thy people are calling you, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, arise,

May the valor from sleep be awakened and guard us,

The Crusaders forgot how you taught them before death,

Go back to them and remind Richard

The best to remember your sword,

Let them ask him, he will not argue...[[64]](#footnote-69)

Here, the poet directly compares modern Europeans to the Crusaders, resurrecting the memory of the Crusades as a glorious period in Arab history when “Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn taught Richard the Lionheart a lesson.” Although it is not clear whether by “crusaders” the author meant only European colonialists or the Zionist activists as well, this poem is the first example of the use of anti-Crusader rhetoric in connection with Zionism and Jewish migration to Palestine in Arabic poetry.

Anti-Crusade calls were typical of nationalist rallies in interwar Palestine. For example, prominent Palestinian public figure and journalist Muḥammad Is‘āf al-Nashāshībī (1885–1946) published the book *al*-*Baṭal al-khālid Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-l-shāʿir al-khālid Aḥmad Shawqī* (“The Eternal Hero Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and the Eternal Poet Aḥmad Shawqī”) in 1932, in which he called on his contemporaries to free the lands of Islam from the invading Franks, just as the Sultan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī had done.[[65]](#footnote-70) al-Nashāshībī also articulated these ideas in his August 28, 1932 speech at the Congress of Palestinian Youth in Acre, dedicating it to the anniversary of the July 4, 1187 Battle of Ḥiṭṭīn, in which the army of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn defeated the combined Crusader forces and, thereafter, causing them to lose most of the territories they had acquired and leading to the restitution of Jerusalem to Islam. The beginning of the speech emphasized a deep antagonism between the Christians and Muslims, though arguing that attempts to restore the pride of Muslims should not be taken as an insult to “our Arab Christian brothers,” since his criticism of Christians was directed exclusively at European ones. The rest of the speech, however, was brimful with anti-Christian rhetoric.[[66]](#footnote-71)

In evaluating al-Nashāshībī’s speech, one must take the complex nature of Arab nationalism, with its several, mutually contradictory trends, into account. Some Arab nationalists considered Arab identity and Islam to be inseparable, but inclusive nationalists—including Muslims, Christians, and Druze[[67]](#footnote-72)—believed that Arabs should unite solely on an ethnic-national basis and that the use of religious slogans and symbols in nationalist rhetoric would only lead to disunity in the Arab ranks. al-Nashāshībī agreed with the former group, insisting that “the Prophet Muḥammad is the embodiment of Arab power.”[[68]](#footnote-74) Thus, it was quite natural for him to address his young compatriots as “descendants of ʿUmar,Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, and Khālid ibn Walīd,”[[69]](#footnote-76) [[70]](#footnote-77) Muslim commanders who had played a decisive role in the conquest of Palestine for Islam, liberating it from Christian rule.[[71]](#footnote-78) al-Nashāshībī’s inclusion of distinctly Muslim symbols in his appeal to the Arabs to unite on a national basis must have raised misgivings in the minds of Palestinian Christians about their place in the national liberation struggle. This demonstrates a possible negative impact anti-Crusader rhetoric may have had on attempts to rally Palestinian nationalism.

Gerber also notes a significant number of references to the Crusades in Palestine during the British Mandate, in particular various Palestinian leaders’ rhetoric of against the Zionists and British as “the New Crusaders.” For example Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, during a conference against land sales held in Jerusalem in January 1935, reminded attendees of the “millions” of people who, in the past, had offered up their lives to defend the country, before Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and during his time, and called on every one to follow that hero’s example. Gerber also cites the April 1920 Nabī Mūsā riots, a convention held in Nablus in 1935 to mark the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration’s publication, and various episodes in the 1936–39 Arab Revolt as events in which anti-Crusader slogans circulated widely.[[72]](#footnote-79)

From the uprising in Palestine in 1936 onward, the MB sought to mobilize their supporters against the British and the Zionists in Palestine, calling for assistance to the Palestinians and participation alongside the rebels in the armed struggle. In the MB’s al-*Nadhīr* (“The Warner”) propaganda magazine, the organization emphasized the importance of voluntary participation in the military conflict in Palestine, because words alone were not enough to save it.[[73]](#footnote-80) For example, one passage states: “Can a pen defeat a cannon, defeat a sword? That’s all we offer in order to preserve ourselves and our essence, as if by these articles we can scare and defeat Great Britain in this Crusade, using only empty words.”[[74]](#footnote-81) Another states: “This is how the first Muslims loved their God and wanted nothing but to become the greatest *mujāhidūn*…Oh, Muslim, it is high time to wake up to understand your duty and carry the banner.”[[75]](#footnote-82)

The anti-colonial rhetoric in Arabic newspapers intensified in 1947, when the United National Special Committee on Palestine completed its work, developing a project for the future state system of Palestine. The commission's work resulted in two possible solutions to the Palestinian question. The first option involved the division of Palestine into two states with Jerusalem under international control, while the second meant the creation of a federation of Arab and Jewish states with a capital in Jerusalem.[[76]](#footnote-83) During the pause that followed, when the UN General Assembly considered both proposals, the MB actively expressed dissatisfaction on the pages of its print media. According to the MB:

The United Nations and its organs are nothing more than a way to organize international piracy and camouflage the jaws of the snake and the paws of the wolf with soft silk to reassure people who are still captivated by illusions about the true nature of imperialism... All this is only a confirmation of what we talked about earlier: Western colonialism is only the Ninth Crusade to the East.[[77]](#footnote-84)

A leading initiator seeking to unify Arab forces against the creation of Israel was the first secretary general of the League of Arab States (commonly known as the “Arab League,” AL) from 1945 to 1952, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAzzām, known as ʿAzzām Pasha. In his attempts to persuade Arab politicians to participate in the war in Palestine, he repeatedly alluded to the era of the Crusades, an example of this is his negotiations with Transjordan’s King ʿAbdallāh (1921–51).

Alongside the gradual withdrawal of British forces from Palestine in 1947 and 1948, there was a covert struggle between two Arab regional blocs that diverged on the future of Syria. King ʿAbdallāh, relying on the support of Iraq, contemplated annexing Syria to Transjordan, but was opposed by Syria itself, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, which all sought to curtail the Hashemite king’s power and influence.[[78]](#footnote-85) A plan proposed by Egyptian Prime Minister Maḥmūd al-Nuqrāshī in November 1947 involved transferring responsibility for supplying and supporting the Jordanian Army from Great Britain to the AL. The aim behind this was to lay the responsibility for protecting Palestine on the Jordanian Army acting on behalf of the AL.

ʿAzzām Pasha was given the mission to persuade ʿAbdallāh I to enter the Jordanian Army into the war in Palestine. The details of the dialogue between them are in the memoirs of the Iraqi general, Ṭaha al-Hāshimī (1888–1961). Addressing ʿAbdallāh, ʿAzzām said: “You are right, we will have time to ensure the creation of Great Syria, but the Palestinian question is of primary importance. We must give up everything until we resolve it.” To ʿAbdallāh’s question as to who would rule Palestine, ʿAzzām replied: “The reign of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn came to an end after he saved Palestine from the Crusaders, but his name was being glorified for 1,000 years. The reign of the monarch is not eternal, but the glorious name lives on for centuries.”[[79]](#footnote-86) The negotiations ended in of ʿAbdallāh’s consent for the Jordanian army to enter and, in April 1948, he himself led the joint forces of the AL.

Although, as Shlaim points out, “the impending British withdrawal from Palestine represented both a threat and an opportunity for Abdullah,” he conducted his own negotiations with the British and Zionist parties.[[80]](#footnote-87) This example may be considered the first case of a modern Arab political figure deciding to take on the role of a new Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, equaling whose fame was later dreamed of by Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn and other Arab politicians of the second half of the twentieth century too.

Support for the Hashemites and their association with Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn also found their way into Arabic poetry, as we see in the *qaṣīda* “*Raʾaytu al-sharq mulkan li-l-nabī”* (“I saw the East as the Prophet’s Dominion”) by the Lebanese journalist, writer, and poet Ilyās Ṭuʿma (1903–47; popularly known as Abū al-Faḍl al-Walīd). It contains these lines:

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn died, so does the namesake of their vanquisher possess the might of heavens?

The East will become free and independent, and the Hashemite Caliphate will unite it,

It will give the intentions and pasts firmness by the eternal sword…[[81]](#footnote-88)

 Azzām Pasha once famously said: “Centuries ago, the Crusaders were here against our will, and after 200 years we expelled them.”[[82]](#footnote-89) He said those words to the representatives of the Jews who came to him in September 1947 with a proposal for peace: “We will try to defeat you. I am not sure that we will succeed, but we will try. We managed to expel the Crusaders, but we lost Spain and Persia, and we can lose Palestine.”[[83]](#footnote-90) On October 11, 1947, an interview with ʿAzzām Pasha was published in the Egyptian newspaper *Akhbār al-Yawm* (“The Day’s News”), in which he stated: “The creation of a Jewish state would lead to a war of extermination and mass killings, which will be talked about as the defeat of the Mongols and the failure of the Crusades.”[[84]](#footnote-91)ʿAzzām’s anti-Crusader rhetoric of was heard by the forces seeking to establish the State of Israel. David Ben-Gurion, who considered ʿAzzām “the most honest and compassionate among the Arab leaders” summarized the position of ʿAzzām in the following words: “Just as we fought against the Crusaders, we will fight against you and wipe you off the face of the Earth.”[[85]](#footnote-92)

Arabic art of 1920s, ’30s, and’40s was frequently interspersed with allusions to the Crusades and the resistance to them. For example, Palestinian nationalist poet Ibrāhīm Ṭūqān’s (1905–41) “*Qaṣīda* *Ḥiṭṭīn”* of 1928[[86]](#footnote-93) features the following lines:

Stop by Ḥiṭṭīn and be humiliated. Your heart will ache for what has afflicted me.

Look there. Do you see the footprints of Yūsuf in the place?

Awaken Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, the Lord of the crown and the Yemeni sword…[[87]](#footnote-94)

This and previous examples that demonstrate the idea of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s “awakening” or “return” suggest the coming of a modern leader with the qualities and strength of a well-known warlord.

Another example of raising the theme of the Crusades in the context of the war in Palestine is part of the heritage of the MB’s theater troupe of the time. From 1934 to 1952, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Bannā (1884–1957), brother of Ḥasan al-Bannā (1906–49), wrote eight plays staged in Egypt.[[88]](#footnote-95) The play *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī munqidh Falisṭīn* (“Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī, savior of Palestine”),[[89]](#footnote-97) which premiered on May 14, 1948 at Khedivial Opera House in Cairo, Egypt’s premier such venue, gained the greatest popularity of the MB’s plays. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Bannā stated that “[t]his play is dedicated to the righteous martyrs of Palestine and the heroes of the holy *jihād* for the saving of the Islamic homeland and the liberation of [our] land. This play is dedicated to you, it was created to act, along with volleys of guns and the roar of aircraft, to achieve what you want, hoist the flag and hit the enemies.”[[90]](#footnote-98) Three of the troupe’s actors went with the MB contingent to take part in the war in Palestine to take part in the Arab-Israeli, with the play’s poster stating: “Now the actors of our troupe, Ibrāhīm al-Shāmī, Faṭīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd and Ibrāhīm al-Qirsh, are fighting in the war.”[[91]](#footnote-100) This would, in all likelihood, have enhanced the impact of the play.

Thus, we see that, unlike their predecessors, who in the nineteenth century used references to the Crusades mainly in cogitations about social, historical, and religious aspects, Arab intellectuals after WW I began to entwine anti-Crusader rhetoric with calls for direct mobilization.

**Ideological struggle in Arab thought**

Arab polemics launched by nineteenth-century intellectuals on the influence of the Crusades on the history of the Middle East and Europe, continued into the interwar period. The influential Muslim intellectual Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1935) invoked the anniversary of the Battle of Ḥiṭṭīn in his 1932 article in Cairo’s *al-Manār* newspaper, *Dhikrat Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-maʿrakat al-Ḥiṭṭīn* (“Memory of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and the Battle of Ḥiṭṭīn”). In it, he wrote that Europeans “were beaten in battles prompted their ambitions and it affected their thinking and led them to a reform of their politics and of their religion, and [of all things] necessary for the independence of reason and freedom of science, so they withdrew from waging *jihād* on us and started to wage *jihād* against their own souls.”[[92]](#footnote-101) He, thus, presents the Reformation and the Enlightenment as outcomes of an “ennobling” European encounter with the tolerant, culturally rich, and free Muslim societies of the Middle Ages. Riḍā, being a disciple of the prominent Muslim reformer Muḥammad ʿAbduh, probably followed his ideas, which also resonate with statements by Rafīq al-ʿAẓm, because both invoked the historical memory of the Crusades to praise the beneficial influence of Islam on Europe. At the same time, Riḍā argued that the military defeat of European forces was also important as the disastrous outcome of the Crusades for them should be a lesson for contemporary Europeans, stating: “Let Christians see what happened to their Crusader attack.”[[93]](#footnote-102) Thus, he tried to warn the modern colonial powers against attacking Muslim lands.

The idea of a “new Western Crusade” came to be closely linked with the idea that a “Crusader spirit” flowed in European veins. This was first expressed by Rashīd Riḍā, who referenced the Crusades in many of his works. These include his famous Qurʾān commentary *Tafsīr al-Manār*, in which he extensively referred to the Crusades while discussing relations between Christians and Muslims.[[94]](#footnote-103) According to Riḍā: “The West opposes the East, the spirit of the Crusades still excites the hearts.”[[95]](#footnote-104) Sayyid Quṭb’s influential 1952 al-ʿ*Adāla al-ijtimāʿiyya fī- l-islām* (“Social Justice in Islam”) reiterated the idea:

There are those who believe that only the financial influence of Jews in the United States and other countries drives Western policy. There are those who believe that both English ambitions and Anglo-Saxon cunning are to blame...But there are those who think that there is an antipathy between East and West...All these points of view do not take into account the vital element of this issue...the Crusader spirit, which flows in the blood of all representatives of the West.[[96]](#footnote-105)

As we can see, allegation of an inborn Crusaderism in Europeans quotes from Riḍā long before Quṭb.

Another MB leader of the interwar period, Ḥasan al-Bannā, also frequently touched upon the Crusades. In the publication *Bayn al-ams wa-l-yawm* (“Between Yesterday and Today”), he emphasized that when the Caliphate was at the peak of its military and political powers, scholars engaged in fierce debates, thereby contributing to disunity and strife within the ranks of the Muslims. Disputes over minor issues of religion and religious law led to the transformation of Islam into a religion of “words and phrases” rather than “faith and action.” Over time, the disputes gave way to religious fanaticism and stagnation at all levels of Muslim society. Rulers, confident of their power, were not concerned with the social life of other states, and when it interested them, they limited themselves to imitating someone else’s experience. Later, argued al-Bannā, political power in the Muslim world passed to non-Arabs: Persians, Mamlūks and Turks who could not understand “real Islam” due to their poor knowledge of the Arabic language. As a consequence, catastrophes began to strike one after another: the Crusades, the *Reconquista*, and the Mongol invasion. All these events, as al-Bannā states, caused great a damage to the Muslim *umma*.[[97]](#footnote-106) Thus, the founder of the MB reiterated what Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī had said in 1879: The disaster of the Crusades occurred because of the growth of “esoteric movements.”[[98]](#footnote-107) al-Bannā also invoked ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī’s idea that the Crusades became possible due to the growth of religious fanaticism,[[99]](#footnote-108) both seeming to refer to the alleged fanaticism of the Seljuks. This resonates with al-Bannā’s criticism of the Turks for their incorrect understanding of Islam caused by their poor knowledge of Arabic. al-Bannā, unlike al-Kawākibī, did not see the religious fanaticism that engulfed the Middle East as a direct result of that which the Crusaders brought with them from Europe. Phillips points out that al-Bannā also considered Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s defeat of the Crusaders by to be the foremost heroic example that modern Muslims should try to reproduce against all odds:

Who would imagine that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī would hold his ground for many years and hurl back the kings of Europe on their heels, defeated, despite their enormous numbers and the brave show of their armies, as 25 of their greatest kings had banded together against him?[[100]](#footnote-109)

Another publication by Ḥasan al-Bannā, *Daʿwatunā fī ṭawr jadīd* (“Our Calling in a New Phase”), described an exclusive role for Egypt in a Muslim world revival. It argued that, from the very beginning of Muslim history, the fate of Egypt was inextricably linked with that of the Muslim peoples in general. Being the center of the most ancient civilization, al-Bannā contended, Egypt was the logical and historically correct center for Islam. It was Egypt that held the banner of Islam high during the collapse of the Arab Caliphate and played a leading role in repelling the Crusader and Mongol invasions. Since Islam was deeply rooted in the “conscience and emotions” of the Egyptians and had become the “faith, language, and civilization” of Egypt, this country had a unique role to play in the revival of Islam.[[101]](#footnote-110)

**The Crusades and the Middle East’s Christians**

Various groupings of Middle Eastern Christians, interested in this era by reason of the debates over their role in these events, as opponents or abettors, contributed very significantly to disputes on the Crusades. While some of the Middle Eastern Christian communities claimed not to be Arabs, they participated widely in discussions on the history of the region conducted in the Arabic language.[[102]](#footnote-111)

From the moment the Mandate in Syria was established in 1920 until it ended in 1943, a series of rebellions took place against French domination. In such a charged atmosphere of civil strife, we find numerous references to the Crusades, for example, during the Syrian uprising of 1925–27 that was led by the Druze leader Sulṭān al-Aṭrash (1891–1982).

Journalist and politician Yūsuf al-Sūdā (1891–1969) published an article in the Lebanese newspaper *al-Rāya* (“The Banner”) in January 1927 that highlighted collaboration between the Crusaders and the Maronites in the Middle Ages. The article described the assistance provided by the Maronite Christians to the participants of the First Crusade (1096–99), including taking part in the siege of Jerusalem and Tripoli alongside the Franks. al-Sūdā states that Crusaders remaining after the fall of the Crusader states in the Middle East found refuge in the mountains what became Lebanon, where the local residents welcomed them. He concludes by saying that “history seems to be repeating itself: whereas the ancestors had shed blood during the siege of Tripoli, their great-grandchildren fought on the walls of Rashaya.”[[103]](#footnote-112) The episode that al-Sūdā compares to the Crusades was the joint defense of the fortress of Rashaya village by the French troops and Maronites against the rebellious Druze army 20–24 November 1925. The French managed to hold onto the fortress, despite heavy losses, whereas the Druze were forced to retreat to the of Anti-Lebanon Mountains. The failure of the Druze beneath the walls of Rashaya was a turning point and, in many respects, predetermined the defeat of the anti-French uprising.[[104]](#footnote-113)

In most modern historiography of the Levant, the Maronite community’s help to the Crusaders is regarded as insignificant and there is no reliable information about the level of participation of the Maronites in the defense of Rashaya. Nevertheless, al-Sūdā’s narrative is an attempt to create an image of the Maronites as the original allies of France fighting shoulder to shoulder with them since the Crusades, simultaneously counterposing the Maronites to the other religious communities of this region. For al-Sūdā, the Crusades were constitutively important in the formation of the French character of the Maronites. By mentioning that the Maronites fought alongside the French at Rashaya, he wanted to demonstrate that this collaboration was part of the long-standing tradition going back to the Crusades, while still relevant to contemporary events.[[105]](#footnote-114)

A few weeks after the appearance of this article, a response to it was published in the Egyptian monthly magazine al-*Zahrāʾ* (“The Radiant”), the main goal of which was to foster a negative image of the Maronite Christians as long-time allies of the French colonialists. Here the Crusades are used to demonstrate the ancient nature of this “unholy alliance”[[106]](#footnote-115). It serves as yet another instance of the Crusader trope in the Middle East’s wars of memory.

Debates also raged within local Christian communities over the historical role of Middle Eastern Christians in the Crusades and their relations with modern Europeans. A leading Christian intellectual who addressed this in relation to the division of Syria into the Mandate regions was the Lebanese writer, political activist, and theorist of Arab nationalism Amīn al-Rīḥānī (1876–1940).[[107]](#footnote-116) In 1920, he published an article called *al-Marada*[[108]](#footnote-117) *wa-l-ṣalībiyyūn* (“Marada and the Crusaders”), which was included in the final edition of his collected essays and articles entitled *al-Rīḥāniyyāt* (“al-Rīḥānī’s Writings”).

al-Rīḥānī, a scion of a Maronite family, condemned his fellow Maronites for glorifying the bravery of the Marada in their struggle against the Arab conquerors of the Levant in the seventh century and their later military alliance with the Crusaders. In the Syrian sources of the times of the Arab conquest of the Levant, the term “Marada” refers to Christians of the Mountain Lebanon who fought Muslims on the side of Byzantium. In Maronite historical literature, Marada are directly identified with Maronites. al-Rīḥānī argued that drawing such historical parallels was harmful and dangerous for modern Lebanese “who have forgotten that, in the Middle Ages, the Maronites in alliance with the Crusaders opposed the Arab Muslims because of religious hostility and not because of a desire for political independence.”[[109]](#footnote-119) According to al-Rīḥānī, appeals to old religious conflicts would not bring peace and independence to Lebanon.[[110]](#footnote-120) In his view, “the Maronites fought alongside the Crusaders as they should have, but we live in a different time, in different conditions, in a different world; the confusion of religion with politics harms both sides and the national consciousness based on the help of France is inherently erroneous.”[[111]](#footnote-121) An advocate of Arab nationalism, al-Rīḥānī desired that religious differences in the Arab East would be overcome, something which would imply, for him, eschewing historical references to the conflicts between Muslims and Christians harmful to the development of a united Arab identity.

Summarizing allusions to the Crusades in the interwar thought of Middle Eastern Christians, I should underline that if Maronites had long-standing tradition of associating themselves with France, based on their claimed alliance with it in the medieval era, other groups of Christians in the Levant had to determine their position toward the Crusades mostly through the anti-colonial struggle after WWI.

**Conclusions**

Already in the first half of the twentieth century the theme of the Crusades loomed large in the Arab public imagination, both in the Mashriq and the Maghrib, among Muslims and Christians, Pan-Islamists and Pan-Arabists. In other words, key ideas related to the Crusades that played a critical role in the formation of “anti-Crusader rhetoric” in the second half of the twentieth and the first two decades of the twenty-first centuries had already been articulated in the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. On the basis of the material analyzed, the following traces of Crusader/anti-Crusader appeals and allusions are apparent.

While, we observe only the general transposition of the concept of the Crusades onto modern events such as the Crimean War or the Mahdist uprising before WWI, anti-Crusader rhetoric was also used to condemn particular actions and calls of the European colonial and Mandate officials, including their promotion of Christian missionary activity after 1914. After WWI, we also see criticism of attempts by Europeans to legitimize their presence in the Arab world by appealing to their historical “rights” allegedly paid for by the blood of the Crusaders. Between 1914 and 1948 anti-Crusader references became an integral part of the anti-colonial rhetoric and found their way into the speeches of Arab politicians at the highest level.

While there were only hints at the colonialists’ appetites resembling those of medieval Crusaders before WWI, the period between 1914 and 1948 witnessed the formulation and dissemination of the idea that the “Crusader spirit” still flowed in the veins of modern Europeans. Prior to WWI, allusions by Arab cultural, political, and other public figures to the Crusades had usually taken the form of the glorification of those rulers who fought the Crusaders and underlining the influence of the Crusades on the course of both Arab and European history. In the period between 1914 and 1948, allusions to the Crusades changed from historical and philosophical references to mobilization calls among nationalists and Islamists.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Arab Muslim leaders had emphasized the defensive nature of militant *jihād*,describing it as a medieval reality, but in the period after 1914, they turned to calls for holy war to safeguard the Middle East, especially Palestine, against Europeans and Zionists, the “new Crusaders.”

Arab Muslim religious thinkers extended Crusade associations to all Christians, accusing that their fellow Middle Easterners of being either Crusaders, their descendants, and/or their allies. Consequently, Muslim Arab leaders often excluded the idea of Christian Arabs being in the ranks of national liberation fighters . In other words, the anti-Western and anti-Crusader rhetoric of such leaders could occasionally become anti-Christian. However, many representatives of Arab nationalist movements, both Christians and Muslims, also insisted that, during the Crusades, Muslims often defended Middle Eastern Christians from European Crusaders and called upon the modern-day Arabs of all religious persuasions to unite in resisting the presence of European colonial powers in the Arab world. Middle Eastern Christians themselves lacked a common ideological position on the Crusades. Some Arab authors of Christian background did exploit anti-Crusader rhetoric, particularly to counter the activities of European missionaries. As a consequence of all of these disagreements, the Arab elites of the Middle East would often find themselves divided along religious lines and within faith groups.

Polemics about the historical legacy of the Crusades produced by Arab nationalists and pan-Islamists from the end of nineteenth century continued after 1914. Arab nationalists argued that even a threat to Jerusalem in 1099 had not united Muslims, while pan-Islamists contended that the Crusades demonstrated the unifying power of Islam, emphasizing that the Crusaders were ultimately expelled from the Middle East. The interwar period witnessed the development of the idea that the Crusades were punishment for the distortion of Islam by its followers.

Arab thinkers had claimed since the nineteenth century that modern Europe owed its prosperity and freedom from prejudice and clericalism to the ennobling influence of the Arab Muslim civilization in the aftermath of the Crusades. While before WWI it was argued that the Arabs now needed to borrow from European achievements, afterwards the prevailing message shifted to the spiritual superiority of the Islamic culture.

Finally, the notion of the Crusader as the “other” was instrumental in the formation of imagined communities that had emerged out of the ideologies of Arab nationalism and pan-Islamism in the first half of the twentieth century. This contained many different, often contrasting connotations and topoi: European, Christian, colonialist, and Zionist. Throughout that period, Crusaders evolved from being a semi-legendary enemy of the past to one immediately and tangibly present in the Middle East.

Further research around these issues could usefully center on detailed analysis of the respective (cross-)influence of images of the Crusades and Crusaders in Europe and in the Arab world in the light of the European positive romanticization of Crusader allusions in the nineteenth century and, especially during and after WW I, contrasting with the negative evaluations of this after WWII.

1. St. Petersburg State University’s funding (grant number 94034002) to support this research project is gratefully acknowledged. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Allusions to the Crusades by Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir have been examined in detail in modern historiography: see, for example, Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 165–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad’s references to the Crusades, see Mordechai Kedar, *Asad in Search of Legitimacy: Message and Rhetoric in the Syrian Press Under Hafiz and Bashar* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 133–41. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Detailed examination of references to the Crusade era in the speeches of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn is in Ofra Bengio, *Saddam’s Word: Political Discourse in Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 82–3, 104, 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For Mu‘ammar al-Qadhdhāfī’s references to the Crusades, see Allison Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 154–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Sayyid Quṭb’s mentions of the Crusades are analyzed in Richard Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 227–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See a discussion of references to the Crusades in Usāma bin Lādin’s statements in David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 160–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The most famous film is “al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn” (Egypt, 1963) and the TV series “Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī” (Syria, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Maḥmūd Darwīsh in *Dhikrat al-Nisyān* (1982), Aḥmad Maṭar in *Warthat Iblīs*, and Tamīm al-Barghūthī in *al-Ḥurūb al-ṣalībiyya* (2009) are some of the most famous Arab poets of the second half of the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries who addressed the theme of the Crusades in their work. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See, for example, the novels *Aṣwāt* (1972) by the Egyptian author Sulaymān Fayyāḍ and *Ḥārith al-miyāh* (1998) by the Lebanese writer Hudā Barakāt. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See, for example, the play “Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn” (Egypt, 1973) by Maḥmūd Shaʿbān. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Emmanuel Sivan, *Modern Arab Historiography of the Crusades* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1973); Emmanuel Sivan, *Mythes politiques arabes* (Paris: Fayard, 1995). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 593–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Umej Bhatia, *Forgetting Osama bin Munqidh, Remembering Osama bin Laden: The Crusades in Modern Muslim Memory* (Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Jonathan Phillips, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* (London: Vintage, 2020), 356–67; Jonathan Phillips, “‘Unity! Unity Between All the Inhabitants of our Lands!’: the Memory and Legacy of the Crusades and Saladin in the Near East, c.1880 to c.1925”, in *Perceptions of the Crusades from the Nineteenth- to the Twenty-First Century,* vol. I, ed. Mike Horsewell and Jonathan Phillips (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 94–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Noah Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine: Communalism and Nationalism, 1917–1948* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 78­–84. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Philip Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920–-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 474–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Haim Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining Palestine: Identity and Nationalism from the Crusades to the Present* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 106–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. M. Peled, “Annals of Doom: Palestinian Literature – 1917–1948”, *Arabica* 29: 2 (1982), 167–8, 182–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Peter Wien, *Arab Nationalism: The Politics of History and Culture in the Modern Middle East* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 36–46. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Richard Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 211–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, *The Muslim Brothers and the Palestine Question 1928–-1947* (London, New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 50–1, 149–50. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. ʿAlī al-Ḥarīrī, *al-Akhbār al-saniyya fī al-ḥurūb al-ṣalībiyya* (Cairo: al-Zahrāʾ lil-I*ʿ*lām al-*ʿ*Arabī, 1985), 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Aḥmad Shawqī, *al-Shawqiyyāt* (Cairo: Muʾassasat Hindāwī lil-Ta*ʿ*līm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2012), 25–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Werner Ende notes only the presence of the name Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in this poem, but does not mention other allusions to the Crusades in it: see “Wer ist ein Glaubensheld, Wer ist ein Ketzer? Konkurrierende Geschichtsbilder in der modernen Literatur islamischer Länder”, *WI* 23/24 (1984), 70–94. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Jirjī Zaydān, *Shajarat al-Durr* (Cairo: Muʾassasat Hindāwī lil-Ta*ʿ*līm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2012), 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Jirjī Zaydān, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr al-ḥadīth maʿ fadhlaka fī taʾrīkh Miṣr al-qadīm* (Muʾassasat Hindāwī lil-Ta*ʿ*līm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2012), vol. 2, 10–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Najīb al-Ḥaddād, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī* (Muʾassasat Hindāwī lil-Ta*ʿ*līm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Faraḥ Anṭūn, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-mamlakat Irushalīm* (Cairo: n.p., 1923). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. For a detailed analysis of references to the Crusades in the Arab thought before WWI, see Oleg Sokolov, “The Crusades in the Arab Social and Political Discourse of the 19th–early 20th Centuries”, *Crusades* 22:1 (2023), 100–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, *al-Radd ʿalā al-dahriyyīn* (Manṣūra: Maṭbaʿ al-Mawsūʿāt, 1902), 42–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. al-*Shahbāʾ* (Aleppo), 3, 6 January, 1877. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī, *Umm al-qurā* (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿ al-Miṣrī bi-l-Azhar, 1931), 214. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
35. Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, *al-*ʿ*Urwā al-wuthqā* (Cairo: Muʾassasat Hindāwī li-l-Ta‘līm Wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2014), 247, 253, 276, 403, 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
36. al-Kawākibī, *Umm al-qurā*, 150. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
37. Muṣṭafā Kāmil, *al-Mas*ʾ*ala al-sharqiyya* (Cairo: Mu ʾassasat Hindāwī li-l-Taʿlīm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2014), 80-81. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
38. Rafīq al-ʿAẓm, *al-Jāmi*ʿ*a al-islāmiyya wa-urūbā* (Cairo: Muʾassassat Hindāwī li-l-Taʿlīm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2014), 6–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
39. Rashid Khalidi, *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1991), 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
40. Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 1994), 166–70. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
41. al-ʿAẓm, *al-Jāmi*ʿ*a al-islāmiyya*, 15–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
42. *al-Munāẓara al-dīniyya bayn al-shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbduh wa Faraḥ Anṭūn*. Taqdīm Mīshāl Juḥā (Beirut: Bīsān lil-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ, 2014), 227–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
43. Letter from T.E. Lawrence to Robert Graves, June 28, 1927; quoted from Robert Graves and Basil Liddell-Hart, *T. E. Lawrence to His Biographers* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1938), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
44. Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919. Six Months That Changed the World* (New York, NY: Random House, 2003), 494. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
45. Phillips, *Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin,* 359–60. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
46. Ali Allawi, *Faisal I of Iraq* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 17­–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
47. Shareen Blair Brysac and Karl Meyer, *Kingmakers: The Invention of the Modern Middle East* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
48. Maʿrūf al-Ruṣāfī, *Dīwān Maʿrūf al-Ruṣāfī* (Cairo: Mu’assasat Hindāwī lil-Taʿlīm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2014), 625-626. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
49. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, 229. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
50. *Jarīdat al-ikhwān al-muslimīn*. (Cairo), 22 October, 1938. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
51. *Jarīdat al-ikhwān al-muslimīn*. (Cairo), 16 June, 1936. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
52. Mitchell, *Society of the Muslim Brothers*, 229. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
53. Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians,* 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
54. Būlus Shiḥāda, “Urūbā attakhidhu al-masīḥiyyīn shabakat istiʿmār”, *Mirʾāt al-Sharq* (Jerusalem), April 12, 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
55. “Khaṭar al- ʿālam al-islāmī. Ḥaqāʾiq rāʿia yakhuṭṭuha kātib gharbī”, *al-Jāmiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* (Jerusalem), 126, 24 April, 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
56. *The New Age History Reader III* (London: Nelson and Sons, 1924). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
57. Weldon Matthews, *Confronting an Empire, Constructing a Nation: Arab Nationalists and Popular Politics in Mandate Palestine* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
58. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Fatḥ* (Cairo), August 2, 1932. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
59. Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954­–1962* (New York, NY: New York Review of Books Classics, 2006), 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
60. ʿUmar Abū Rīsha, *Dīwān ʿUmar Abū Rīsha* (Beirut: Dār al- ʿAwda, 1998), vol. I, 556–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
61. Kenneth Perkins, *A History of Modern Tunisia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
62. James Barr, *A Line in the Sand: Britain, France and the Struggle that Shaped the Middle East* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
63. Rashīd Sālim al-Khūrī, *Dīwān al-ʿāṣīr* (Beirut: Maṭbaʿ Mirʾāt al-Sharq, 1933), 71–84. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
64. Translation from Oleg Sokolov, “Unsheathing Poet’s Sword Again: The Crusades in Arabic Anticolonial Poetry before 1948”, *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Asian and African Studies*, 14:2 (2022), 343, lns 1–2, 18–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
65. Is‘āf al-Nashāshībī, *al*-*Baṭal al-khālid Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-l-shāʿir al-khālid Aḥmad Shawqī* (Jerusalem: Maṭba*ʿ* Bayt al-Maqdis, 1932), 90–1. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
66. Peled, *Annals of Doom*, 143–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
67. Wien, *Arab Nationalism*, 9–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
68. al-Nashāshībī. *al-Baṭal al-khālid*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
69. ‘Umār ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (585–644) was the second “rightly-guided caliph,” reigning from 634 until his death. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
70. Khālid ibn al-Walīd (592–642) was a follower of Muḥammad and commander who participated in the wars with Byzantium and the Sassanid Empire. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
71. Peled, *Annals of Doom*, 143–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
72. Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining Palestine*, 180–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
73. El-Awaisi, *Muslim Brothers,* 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
74. *al-Nadhīr* (Cairo) 11, 15 August, 1938. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
75. *al-Nadhīr* (Cairo), 14, 28 August, 1938. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
76. Gudrun Krämer, *A History of Palestine: From the Ottoman Conquest to the Founding of the State of Israel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 305–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
77. *Majallat al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* (Cairo), 18 October, 1947. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
78. Michael Doran, *Pan-Arabism before Nasser: Egyptian Power Politics and the Palestine Question* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), 143–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
79. Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, *Mudhakkirāt,* vol. II, (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī ʿa li-l-Ṭibāʿa wa-l-Nashr, 1978), 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
80. Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988), 83–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
81. “*Raʾaytu al-sharq mulkan li-l-nabī*”, al-Diwān.net, https://www.aldiwan.net/poem35655.html (derived 20.12.2022); lns 80­–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
82. Efraim Karsh. *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
83. Cited in Aharon Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World* (London: W.H. Allen, 1970), 381. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
84. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAzzām, “al-Bilād al-ʿArabiyya Tastaʿidd lil-Ḥarb” in *Akhbār al-yawm* (Cairo) 103, 11 Oct. 1947. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
85. Joseph Heller, *The Birth of Israel, 1945–1949: Ben-Gurion and His Critics* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000), 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
86. This *qaṣīda* is also known as *Ahlan bi-rabb al-mahrajān* (“Welcome to the Master of the Festival”). [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
87. Ibrāhīm Tūqān, *al-*ʿ*Amāl al-shi*ʿ*riyya al-kāmila* (Cairo: Kālimāt ʿArabiyya lil-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 2013), 67–9, lns 18–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
88. ʿAṣṣām Talīma, *al-Khawf min ḥukm al-islāmiyyīn* ʿ*an al-dawla al-madaniyya wa-l-ḥurriyyāt wa-l-muwāṭana wa-taṭbīq al-sharī*ʿ*a* (Beirut: al-Shabaka al-ʿArabiyya lil-Abḥāth wa-l-Nashr, 2013), 145–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
89. The play was also called *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn baṭal al-Ḥiṭṭīn* (“Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, the Hero of Ḥiṭṭīn”). [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
90. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Bannā, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī munqidh Falisṭīn* (Cairo: Dār al-Iʿtiṣām lil-Ṭabāʿa wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ, 1988), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
91. Talīma ʿAṣṣām, *Ḥasan al-Bannā wa-tajribat al-fann* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba lil-Ṭabāʿa wa-l-Nashr, 2008), 10–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
92. Rashīd Riḍā, “*Dhikra Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wa-ma‘rakat al-Ḥiṭṭīn*”, al-*Manār* (Cairo) 32, Sep. 1932, 595. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
93. Riḍā, “*Dhikra Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn*”. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
94. Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al- ʿIlmiyya, 1971), vol. V, 329; vol. VI, 26; vol. VII, 9; vol. X, 311–2, 336. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
95. Anwar al-Jundī, *al-Adab al-* *ʿarabī al-hadīth fī maʿrakat al-muqāwama wa-l-ḥurriyya wa-l-tajammuʿ* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Risāla, 1960), 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
96. Sayyid Quṭb, *al-* *ʿAdāla al-ijtimāʿiyya fī l-islām* (Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, 1995), 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
97. Ḥasan al-Bannā, *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil al-imām al-Bannā* (Cairo: al-Baṣāʾir lil-Buḥūth wa-l-Dirāsāt, 2010), 384. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
98. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, *al-Radd ʿalā al-dahriyyīn* (Manṣūra: Maṭbaʿ al-Mawsūʿāt, 1902), 40–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
99. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī, *al-Shahbāʾ* (Aleppo) 3, 6 January, 1877. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
100. Phillips, *Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin,* 362. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
101. al-Bannā, *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil*, 399–400. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
102. On the Arabic component of Syrian Christian culture, see Hilary Kilpatrick, “The Arabic Culture of Christians in Syria in the 16th and 17th centuries”, *Contacts and Interaction. Proceedings of the 27th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Helsinki 2014*, ed. Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, Petteri Koskikallio, and Ilkka Lindstedt (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 221–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
103. Yūsuf al-Sūdā, *al-Raʾya* (Beirut) 8, 13 January, 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
104. Zamir Meir, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon* (London: Routledge, 1985), 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
105. This example should be interpreted as a development on ideas that existed in Maronite historiography. A description of the close historical connections of the Maronites with France appears in Nīkūlās Murād, *Notice historique sur l’Origine de la Nation maronite et sur ses Rapports avec la France, sur la Nation druze et sur les Diverses Populations du Mont Liban* (“Historical Note on the Origin of the Maronite Nation and its Relations with France, on the Druze Nation and on the Diverse Populaces of Mount Lebanon”) (1844) and Ṭanūs al-Shidyāq, *Kitāb akhbār al-a‘yān fī Jabal Lubnān* (“Book of the Greatest of Nobles in the Mountains of Lebanon,” 1859). These authors speak of the active support provided by noble Maronite families to the Crusaders from 1099 to 1291, who were called “brothers in Christ.” [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
106. “*Lubnān fī ʿahd al-ḥurūb al-ṣalībiyya wa fī l-ʿāmayni al-sābiqayni*” in *al*-*Zahrāʾ* (Cairo), January 1927, cited from annual digest of articles *al-Zahrāʾ* (Cairo: al- Maṭbaʿa al-Salafiyya) 3, 1345 (1927), 478. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
107. Phillips only mentions al-Rīhānī’s appeal to the theme of the Crusades in his novel *The Book of Khalid* (1911), in which the hero speaks of the need for the arrival of a new Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn who should rid the Middle East of the despotism of the Ottoman Empire: see *Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin*, 352–3. However, the key statements on the theme of the Crusades al-Rīhānī made were after WWI. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
108. “Marada” is a name also currently used by the right-wing Lebanese Maronite Party. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
109. Amīn al-Rīḥānī, *al-Rīḥāniyyāt*, (Cairo: Muʾassasat Hindāwī li-l-Ta līm wa-l-Thaqāfa, 2014), 577. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
110. Nijmeh Hajjar, *The Politics and Poetics of Ameen Rihani: The Humanist Ideology of an Arab-American Intellectual and Activist*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
111. al-Rīḥānī, *al-Rīḥāniyyāt*, 578. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)