THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY OF THE CRUSADES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY EGYPT

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Abstract

This article examines how the Crusades were remembered and interpreted in nineteenth-century Egypt, exploring the intersection of historiography, intellectual thought, and national identity. It traces the evolution of Crusade memory from medieval Arabic sources to the late Ottoman period, focusing on key Egyptian figures such as al-Jabartī and Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī. Their works bridge traditional Islamic historiography with emerging nationalist perspectives, shaping how the Crusades were perceived in the context of colonialism and resistance. The study highlights how Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 revived comparisons between European imperialism and the medieval Crusades, influencing historical narratives. It also examines how intellectuals like Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī employed the Crusades as a framework to critique European colonialism and advocate for Islamic unity and modernization. The publication of the first Arabic book on the Crusades in 1899 marked a pivotal moment in Egyptian historiography, reflecting a growing scholarly engagement with the topic. Ultimately, this research underscores how the Crusades were integrated into Egyptian historical consciousness, evolving from religious conflict to a symbol of colonial resistance and national identity, shaping modern Arab historiography and public memory of the Crusades.

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Introduction

The medieval crusading movement and its legacy have profoundly influenced relations between the East and West, shaping historical narratives, collective memory, and interfaith dynamics between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. The impact of the Crusades extends beyond their medieval origins, continuing to influence modern perceptions of religious and cultural interactions. While traditionally framed as a series of military conflicts between Christian Europe and the Muslim world, the Crusades also played a crucial role in shaping political, economic, and intellectual exchanges across the Mediterranean and beyond. These influences persist today, as historical memory of the Crusades remains a powerful lens through which contemporary geopolitical and cultural conflicts are interpreted.

This study explores how Egyptians remembered and conceptualized the Crusades during the nineteenth century, a period marked by both colonial interventions and the intellectual resurgence of Arab nationalism. It focuses on the interplay between scholarly interpretations and public discourse, particularly in the context of anti-colonial sentiments and efforts to construct a national historical narrative. Recent scholarship, especially in Europe and America, has primarily focused on linking the Crusades and counter-Jihad narratives to modern political-religious Islamic movements, often emphasizing associations with contemporary extremist ideologies. This narrow focus has frequently overshadowed a broader academic and historiographical engagement with the Crusades as a historical phenomenon, reducing it to a politicized and religiously charged subject rather than an integral part of medieval and modern historiography.

To address this gap, this study examines nineteenth-century Arabic historical writings on the Crusades, situating them within the broader framework of historiographical evolution and collective cultural memory. By tracing the transmission of Crusade narratives from late medieval Arabic sources to the intellectual movements of the nineteenth century, this study highlights how the Crusades were reinterpreted in response to contemporary political challenges. It considers the impact of Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt in 1798, which revived historical comparisons to earlier Crusader invasions, and explores al-Jabartī's historiographical recollections of the Crusades, particularly in relation to his eyewitness account of the French occupation. The discussion then moves to an analysis of the transmission and perception of the Crusades in nineteenth-century Egypt, culminating in the publication of the first Arabic book dedicated to the Crusades in 1899. Finally, this study

examines the enduring impact of nineteenth-century Crusade historiographical memory in early twentieth-century Egypt, setting the foundation for a deeper understanding of modern Arab perspectives on the Crusades in both academic and public discourse.

By situating the memory of the Crusades within the broader intellectual and historiographical transformations of nineteenth-century Egypt, this study demonstrates how historical narratives were mobilized to shape national identity, resist colonialism, and reinterpret the past in light of contemporary struggles. In doing so, it challenges prevailing Eurocentric and politicized interpretations of Crusade memory and highlights the crucial role of Arab historians in reshaping historical discourse.

Latin and Arabic Concept of Crusades in Scholarship

When the Latin Christian forces (Franks) moved to fight the Muslims in the Levant and the Holy Land, the concept of the Crusades was identified by contemporaneous Latin sources as an *expedition* (expedition), *passagium* (passage), *iter Hierosolymitanum* (journey to Jerusalem), or *peregrinatio* (pilgrimage).[1] Twelfth-century sources such as, for example, Albrecht of Aachen, identified those Latin forces heading to fight the Saracens (Muslims), as "Quos peregrini et cruce signati (those who were pilgrims and marked with the cross)".[2]

According to Michael Markowski, the cross was associated with the crusading movement into the Holy Land that began in 1096 and the crusaders, thus, were commonly identified by the cross. The term *cruce signatus* was used by Pope Innocent III (p. 1198-1216) during the Fourth

[1] Benjamin Weber (ed.), *Crusade: The Uses of a Word from the Middle Ages to the Present,* Crusades-Subsidia (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024), 8-11; Daniel G. König, "1412: Al-Qalqašandī Historicises the Crusades", *Transmediterranean History 5* :1 (2023), 1-8, here, 7; Christopher T. Maier, "When Was the First History of the Crusades Written?," in *The Crusades: History and Memory, ed. T.K. Nielsen and KV Jensen, Outremer*. Studies in the Crusades and the Latin East 12 (Turnhout: Brepols: 2021), 13–28, here 13; Christopher Tyerman, "Were There Any Crusades in the Twelfth Century?," *The English Historical Review,* 110, no. 437 (1995), 553-577; E. O. Blake, "The Formation of the 'Crusade Idea'", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21, no. 1 (1970), 11-31.

[2] Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana, History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed.& trans. Susan B. Edgington, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 50.

Lateran in 1215, in which he called for a new crusade, the Fifth Crusade (1217-21) against Egypt.[3] The term "crusade" originates from the Latin *crociata*, which, according to Benjamin Weber's findings, did not appear in Latin papal records until 1300. Even after this time, its occurrence in papal chancery registers remained scarce until the latter part of the fifteenth century, when its usage gradually became more prevalent.[4] French terms like *croisade* and *croisés* appeared in the fourteenth century and German terms like *Kreutzzug* or *Creutzzug* in the late seventeenth century. In English, the terms "crusade" and "crusader" only found currency in the eighteenth century, subsequently serving as a legitimising discourse for European colonial movements.[5]

Medieval Muslim Arabic sources primarily referred to the invading Latin forces as the Franks. The crusading wars were termed *ḥurūb al-ifranj* or *ḥurūb al-firanjah* (wars of the Franks). The Crusaders were called *al-ṣalībiyyūn*, while the modern Arabic equivalent of the European term "Crusades" is *al-ḥurūb al-ṣalībīyah*, the term that initially appeared in mid-nineteenth century Arab Muslim literature. Another term, *al-ṣalībīyāt* (the crusade campaigns), is primarily used by fundamentalist Islamists and is rarely employed by academics in the Arab world.[6]

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[3] Michael Markowski, "Crucesignatus: Its Origins and Early Usage", *Journal of Medieval History*, vol. 10 (1984), 157-165, here 157-158; Tyerman, "Were There Any Crusades in the Twelfth Century", 568, 575.

[4] Benjamin Weber, "When and Where did the Word 'crusade' appear in the Middle Ages? And Why?", in The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, vol. 2, ed. Kurt V. Jensen and Torben K. Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 199–220; idem, Lutter contre les Turcs. Les formes nouvelles de la croisade pontificale au XVe siècle (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2013), 509–517.

[5] Christoph T. Maier, "From Kriuzvart to Kreuzzug German words for Crusade and their Usage from the 13th to the 18th Centuries", in *Crusade: The Uses of a Word from the Middle Ages to the Present*, *Crusade: The Uses of a Word from the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Benjamin Weber, Crusades-Subsidia (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024), 14-17. Also in the same volume: Rosa Cetro, "Croisade(s) et dictionnaires français Une étude diachronique (XVIIe-XXe siècle)", 83-69, and Carol Sweetenham, "Crucifixion, cross and crusade Crusading terminology in old French crusading chansons de geste", 97-106, Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades*, 3-5, 141-152; König, "1412: Al-Qalqašandī", 7.

[6] Ahmed M. Sheir, "Between Peace and War: The Peaceful Memory of the Crusades between the Middle Ages and the Modern Arabic-Egyptian Writings", in *Studies in Peace-Building History between East and West through the Middle Ages and Modern Era,*

The neglect of Arabic-Islamic sources of the crusading period is evident from the lack of translations and insufficient funding for research on the extensive Arabic and Islamic records from that period. The first significant attempt to translate these sources was in the *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Documents Orientaux*, but even this collection has received limited scholarly attention and is plagued by issues in both editing and translation.[7] Another notable effort to present Arab sources was Francesco Gabrieli's work, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*. However, it was not fully satisfactory from an academic perspective, since it presented only selective texts and, originally written in Italian, its English translation lacks sufficient contextualisation.[8]

Further significant efforts to translate Arabic Islamic chronicles from the crusade period began with Hamilton Gibb's translation of Ibn al-Qalānisī's chronicle in 1932.[9] This was followed by the translation of *The Book of the Jihad* by ʿAlī b. Al-Sulamī, a work that gained substantial attention in western academia of the Crusades and Islamic studies. However, much of Al-Sulamī's book is lost, and only a few parts survive. Its significance lies more in its study of Jihad rather than in providing a historical analysis of the Crusades, as it offers little information on the events of the First Crusade. Al-Sulamī's work, the earliest surviving Muslim response to the Franks' arrival, primarily addressed his immediate audience and students in Damascus, to understand Jihad's principles and to reconcile with God for success against their enemies (the Franks).[10] While the book did not directly represent an Arab-Islamic concept of the Crusades, it demonstrates that some Muslims in the late

eds. Aly Ahmed Elsayed, Abdallah Abdel-Ati al- Naggar, and Ahmed Sheir (Cairo: Sanabil Bookshop, 2019), 145–64, here 145-46; Abbès Zouache, "Écrire l'histoire des croisades, aujourd'hui, en Orient et en Occident", in *Construire la méditerranée, penser les transferts culturels*, eds. Rania Abdellatif, Yassir Benhima, Daniel König, and Elisabeth Ruchaud (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2013), 120-47, here. 120.

[7] *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*: Documents Orientaux, 5 vols (Paris, 1872–1906).

[8] Francesco Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969).

[9] Hamilton Gibb, trans., *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades by Ibn al-Qalānisī* (London: Luzac, 1932), reprint, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2002.

[10] See Niall Christie, trans., *The Book of the Jihad of ʿAli Ibn Tahir* al*-Sulami (d. 1106): Text, Translation and Commentary* (London: Ashgate, 2015).

eleventh century had a distinct conceptual understanding of the challenges that faced Muslims under Frankish attack.[11]

Some other translations of Arabic chronicles from the crusading period were later published.[12] However, many of these texts still need a more satisfactory translation to fully capture the specific terminology and the historical perspective of the Arab and Islamic viewpoints on the Crusades. This still requires greater scholarly attention and dedicated funding initiatives. Recent scholarship has primarily focused on examining the perception of the Crusades in modern and early modern European scholarship and societies.[13] While some works have touched upon the Arab perspective, they often focus on medieval sources. Amin Maalouf, for instance, predominantly explores medieval sources rather than contemporary Arab perspectives on the Crusades.[14] However, thanks are due to Moḥammad ʿAwaḍ who catalogued hundreds of scholarly titles on the

[11] Paul E. Chevedden, "The Islamic Interpretation of the Crusade: A New (Old) Paradigm for Understanding the Crusades", *Der Islam* 83 (2006), 90–136.

[12] David Cook, trans., *Chronicles of Qalāwūn and His Son* al-*Ashraf Khalīl* (Abingdon: Routledge: 2020); D. S. Richards, trans. & ed., *The* C*hronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the crusading period from* al-*Kāmil fī* al-*Tārīkh*, 3 vols. (Aldershot: Ashgate 2006-2008). Reprint, Abingdon: Routledge, 2016; Idem, *The* R*are and* E*xcellent* H*istory of Saladin*, or *al-Nawādir al-Sulṭāniyya wa al-Maḥāsin al-Yūsufiyya* by Bahāʾ al-Dīn ibn Shaddād (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Malcolm Cameron Lyons, Ursula Lyons (trans.), Jonathan Riley-Smith (ed.) *Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders: Selections from the Tārīkh* al-*Duwal* w*a* al-*Mulūk of Ibn* al-*Furāt*, *Muḥammad* b. *ʿAbd al-Raḥīm* b. *al-Furāt,* 2 vols (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons,1971).

[13] For example, Megan Cassidy-Welch, ed., *Remembering the Crusades and Crusading. Remembering the Crusades and Crusading* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), idem, *War and Memory at the Time of the Fifth Crusade* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019); M. Cassidy-Welch, Anne Elisabeth Lester, eds. *Crusades and Memory: Rethinking Past and Present* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015); idem, "Memory and Interpretation: New Approaches to the Study of the Crusades", *Journal of Medieval History*, vol. 40 (2014), 225-236; Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Lucie Doležalová, *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages.* Later Medieval Europe 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[14] Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, trans. John Rothschild (London: Alsaqi Books, 1984).

Crusades in his Arabic-language bibliographical work.[15] It provides an invaluable survey of contemporary academic Arabic studies on the Crusades, and it is, for the first time, presented in an updated and revised English version in this volume.

In 1999, Carole Hillenbrand conducted an in-depth examination of twelfth and thirteenth-century Arab Muslim sources on the Crusades. She says, however, that the extensive topic of modern Islamic perspectives on the Crusades requires analysis across several volumes. In chapter eight, "The heritage of the Crusades," Hillenbrand sheds light on contemporary repercussions and the representation of Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn) within the narratives of certain religious and political factions, such as Ḥizb Allāh, Ḥamās, and al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn (the Muslim Brotherhood).[16] Likewise, in 2007, John Chamberlin, a naval captain, delved into ideological and politicised perspectives on the Crusades, focusing on the views of diverse Islamist groups.[17]

Reflecting on British imperialism and colonialism in the wider Middle East, including the Arab world, Riley-Smith examines how Enlightenment figures such as Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon critically viewed the Crusades as irrational religious conflicts during the nineteenth century. He points out that scholars like Charles Mills continued to criticize the Crusades as fanaticism impeding societal progress. Influenced by Enlightenment principles, the writer of historical romances Sir Walter Scott portrayed Saladin as a contemporary, liberal European character.[18] In contrast, Diana Abouali argues that Saladin's legacy, symbolically used in the Middle East for anti-colonial and anti-Zionist purposes, has enduring significance in Arab-Muslim culture. She challenges the misconception that the revival of his image was solely due to European influence, emphasizing his lasting presence despite western narratives that have attempted to sideline him.[19]

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[15] Moḥammad Muʾnis ʿAwaḍ, *Fuṣūl Biblīūghrāfīyah fī Tārīkh al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīya* (Cairo: Dār ʿAyn li al-Dirāsāt wa al-Buḥūth, 1996).

[16] Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 589-614.

[17] John M. Chamberlin, "Imagining Defeat: An Arabic Historiography of the Crusade", (MA. Thesis: University of the State of New York, Naval Postgraduate School Security Affairs, 2007), 33-60.

[18] Jonathan Riley-Smith, "Islam and the Crusades in History and Imagination, 8 November 1898–11 September 2001", *Crusades*, 2:1 (2003), 151-167.

[19] Diana Abouali, "Saladin's Legacy in the Middle East before the Nineteenth Century", *Crusades* 10:1 (2011), 175-189.

To elucidate the distinct stages and complexities that have shaped the historiography of the Crusades in the West, Constable defines four key periods in crusading scholarship. The first period (1095 to the end of the sixteenth century) describes Muslims as a significant threat, emphasizing the defence of Christendom. In the second period (seventeenth to eighteenth centuries), historiographical analysis becomes more nuanced, influenced by confessional and rationalist perspectives. The third period (early nineteenth to mid-twentieth century) is characterized by a more rigorous, though still biased, scholarly approach, reflecting a transition from nineteenth-century admiration to twentieth-century criticism. The fourth period underscores a growing divide between scholarly interpretations and popular understandings, highlighting the complex and contested legacy of the Crusades in the contemporary western context.[20] Building on this perspective, a comprehensive examination of the Eastern Arab viewpoint on the Crusades—encompassing both historiographical scholarship and public discourse—is warranted, and the present volume is intended as a first step in meeting this need.

In the politicised and religious context of the modern memory of the Crusades, Umej Bhatia examines how contemporary Muslims perceive the Crusades, particularly emphasising the adoption and reinterpretation of the Crusades by Islamic ideological and political movements since the 1950s, with significant attention given to their association with Osama bin Laden. He also analyses how figures like Saladin and Osama bin Laden are remembered and invoked in religious discourse. Bhatia also delves into the role of historical perspectives and sociological theories, drawing on scholars such as Maurice Halbwachs[21] and Jacques le Goff[22] to explore collective memory formation. Additionally, he discusses the utilisation of the Crusades

[20] Giles Contable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century* (Farnham & Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 5.

[21] E.g., Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952); idem, *The collective Memory* (New York: Harper & Row Colophon Books, 1980).

[22] Jacques le Goff, *History and Memory*, trans., Steven Rendall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press,1992); idem, *The Medieval Imagination*, trans., Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

by radical groups in promoting anti-western sentiment and ideological mobilisation within the Muslim world.[23]

In attempts to fill, but which equally highlight, the *lacunae* in the study of crusade historiography, Abbès Zouache has contributed a book chapter examining various approaches to crusade historiography in both Eastern and Western contexts, drawing attention to recent Arabic contributions. Nevertheless, Zouache emphasised that conducting a dedicated examination of Arab academic contributions to the Crusades necessitates a profound understanding of the history of Arab academia, fluency in the Arabic language, and extensive familiarity with Arabic crusade-related literature.[24]

In 2018, Jonathan Phillips and Mike Horswell founded the *Engaging the Crusades Series*, which presents new studies on the memory of the Crusades. However, this series has primarily focused on western perspectives, with occasional references to Middle Eastern memories of the Crusades. In the first volume, Jonathan Phillips explores the Near Eastern memory of Saladin from 1880 to 1925, highlighting Kaiser Wilhelm II's 1898 visit to Damascus and his homage to Saladin during a visit to the latter's mausoleum, acknowledging Saladin's bravery, commitment to justice, and noble character.[25] In the third volume of the same series, the Egyptian scholar Taef El-Azhari gives two

[23] Umej Bhatia, *Forgetting Osama bin Munqidh, Remembering Osama bin Laden: The Crusades in Modern Muslim Memory*, RSIS Monograph no. 12 (Singapore: S. R. School of International Studies, 2008), 16–65.

[24] Zouache, "Écrire l'histoire des croisades", 121, 128-37.

[25] 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*, eds. Mike Horswell and Jonathan Phillips, Engaging the Crusades 1 (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 79-106; Jonathan Phillips, "The Memory of Saladin and the Crusades in the Near East from the Fifteenth to the Late Nineteenth Centuries", in *The Crusades: History and Memory. Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, Odense, 27 June - 1 July 2016, vol. 2. eds. Kurt Villads Jensen, Torben Kjersgaard Nielsen (Turnhout: Brepols: 2021), 29-53. An early version published in German under "Vor der orientreise Wilhelms II. Die Erinnerung an Saladin und die Kreuzzüge im Nahen Osten vom 15. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert", in *Kreuzzüge des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, ed. Felix Hinz (Hildesheim: Olms, 2015), 67–86.

pages of a brief image of the Crusades in Arab culture and media,[26] which he presented previously in a German article published in 2015.[27]

In 2019, Phillips delved deeper into Saladin's memory in the East, as part of his book on *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin*,[28] emphasising his enduring legacy of reclaiming Jerusalem and resisting western powers, despite criticisms from some Shiites. He shows that contemporary examples, like Saladin used as a screensaver among Syrian refugees, illustrate widespread admiration of him. Phillips' analysis also centres on religious-nationalist discourses, broadly categorised as pan-Islamism, by figures like Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduh, overlooking Arab historiography's perspectives on Saladin before and after history departments were established in Egypt and Arab universities by the mid-twentieth century.

Fadi Ragheb's chapter on "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin in Islamic History" provides an informative introduction and survey of Saladin's memory in Arabic sources from the late medieval and early modern Ottoman periods.[29] Focusing on historical writings from Egypt and Syria between the early sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries, the study highlights Saladin's lasting impact on Arab-Muslim historical chronicles of the early modern period. Ragheb also identifies a significant gap in references to the Crusades in Arabic sources from the early Ottoman period. This gap highlights the need for further research into the memory of the Crusades in the Arab world during the Ottoman era.[30]

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[26] Felix Hinz and Johannes Meyer-Hamme, eds. *Controversial Histories –Current Views on the Crusades*, Engaging the Crusades 3 (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 45-46.

[27] Taef El-Azhari, "Die Prägung zukünftiger Generationen durch das Bild der Kreuzzüge in der arabischen Kultur und Medienlandschaft", in *Kreuzzüge des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit,* ed. Felix Hinz (Hildesheim: Olms, 2015), 161–76.

[28] Jonathan Phillips, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2019), 329–86.

[29] Fadi Ragheb, "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin in Islamic History: An Explorative Essay into the Arabic Chronicles of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Period", in *The Political and Cultural History of the Kurds*, ed. Amir Harrak (New York: Peter Lang, 2022), 201-37.

[30] For most Arabic scholarship on Saladin see, Muḥammad Muʾnis ʿAwaḍ, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī bayn al-Tārīkh wa al-Usṭūra* (Cairo: Dār ʿAyn li al-Dirāsāt wa al-Buḥūth, 2008); Idem, *Riḥlat Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī* (Cairo: Dār al-ʿĀlam al-ʿArabī, 2012); Idem,

In a new investigation, Oleg Sokolov reveals how Arab intellectuals connected the Crusades to contemporary European-Muslim relations during the Arab National Renaissance (*al-nahḍa*) of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He analyses the roles of pan-Islamism, pan-Ottomanism, and Arab nationalism, and highlights various interpretations of the Crusades in Middle Eastern history. These include seeing the Crusades as punishment for the deviation of Muslims from their faith, a catalyst for western expansion, and a source of Middle Eastern fanaticism.[31] This analysis underlines the sophisticated and multifaceted political and religious legacy of the Crusades, demanding a thorough exploration of historical writings on the Crusades in the Arab world.

This survey of the scholarship accentuates the fact that western academics' views on the concept of the Crusades in modern Arab scholarship and public discourse often suffer from significant gaps due to a lack of engagement with contemporary Arab scholarship, focusing instead on politicised perspectives. They frequently form conclusions about the Arabic-Islamic perspective of the Crusades based on European sources and scholarship, rather than thoroughly examining both modern Arabic scholarship and medieval Arab sources. Despite the existence of rich Arab historical works on the Crusades, these sources, along with the perspectives of modern scholars, remain largely unexplored in western academia.

Consequently, until the early twenty-first century, western scholarship generally held the view that Arab Muslim historians lacked a comprehensive understanding and conceptualization of the Crusades as a historical

Qālū ʿan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Al-Ayyūbī (Cairo: Dār al-Karaz, 2013); Idem, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī Fāris ʿAṣr al-Ḥurūb al-ṣalībīyah* (Ramallah: Dār al-Shaymāʾ, 2014); Idem, 100 Kitāb ʿan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī: ʿArḍ wa Naqd (Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-ʿArabīya, 2015); Idem, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī wa ʿAṣruhu: Madkhal Bibliyūghrāfī* (Ramallah: Dār al-Shaymāʾ, 2015); Idem, *Riḥlatī maʿa Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī: Qaṭarāt min Shallālāt al-Dhākira* (Sharjah: Dāʾirat al-Thaqāfa wa al-Iʿlām, 2017); Idem, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī: Inkisārāt wa Intiṣārāt* (Damascus: Dār Ḥawrān 2020); Idem, *Min al-Tārīkh al-ʿĀlamī li Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī* (Sharjah: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif wa al-Iʿlām, 2020); Idem, *Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī fī al-Mawsūʿāt al-ʿArabīya wa al-Gharbīya* (Damascus: Dār Ḥawrān, 2020); Idem, *Al-Tārīkh Imraʾa: Aḍwāʾ ʿalā ʿAṣri Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī* (Giza: Dār ʿĀbid li al-Nashr, 2023).

[31] Oleg Sokolov, "The Crusades in the Arab Social and Political Discourse of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Crusades*, 22:1 (2023), 100-114.

phenomenon before the nineteenth century.[32] In this context, one could argue that modern European scholarship has reached its conclusion about the Arabic-Islamic perspective on the Crusades primarily through Western research and sources, rather than thoroughly engaging with medieval and contemporary Arabic scholarship. This approach underscores a broader Eurocentric bias towards medieval Islamic history in general, and specifically in the context of the Crusades.

The present study examines how the Crusades were remembered and reinterpreted in the modern Arab world, focusing on nineteenth-century Egypt. It is the first part of a larger project on Egyptian and broader Arab views of the Crusades, tracing developments from the medieval era to the nineteenth century. The study also explores how Crusade historiography evolved in the early twentieth century, leading to the establishment of an Egyptian historical school on the Crusades after World War II.

Bonaparte's Invasion of Egypt in 1798 and Al-Jabartī's Memory of the Crusades

Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1405), Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), Al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442), and Ibn Iyās (d. 930/1524) are considered to be the most outstanding Arab historians of the late Middle Ages. The Turkish domination of the Arab world since the early sixteenth century made Constantinople the cultural capital of the Islamic World, overshadowing Cairo and the other Arab cities. This led to a historiographical decline in these regions until the intellectual renaissance of the nineteenth century, which produced new intellectual and historiographical movements, often imitating the fifteenth-century Islamic historiographical tradition, especially Ibn Khaldūn and Al-Maqrīzī.

Building upon their medieval Arab Muslim predecessors, the authors of post-fifteenth-century Arabic texts commonly referred to the crusading movement as *al-ḥurūb al-Ifranjah*, or *ḥurūb al-ifranj*. They provide an overview of the Crusades, highlighting the periods of Saladin and Baybars in Egypt and Syria. These sources are built upon earlier chronicles from the twelfth to

[32] See, König, "1412: Al-Qalqašandī," 7-8; Cl. Cahen, "Crusades", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online, ed.* P. Bearman, EI-2 English (Brill, 2012) doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_1636; Francesco Gabrieli, "The Arabic Historiography of the Crusades", in *Historians of the Middle East, ed.* Bernard Lewis and Peter M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 98–107.

the fifteenth centuries. Notable examples include the sixteenth-century work *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr* of Ibn Iyās, the seventeenth-century chronicle *al-Nuzha al-zahiyya fī dhikr wulāt Miṣr wa-al-Qāhira al-muʿizzīyya* of Ibn Abī al-Surūr, *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī akhbār man dhahab* by Ibn al-ʿImād, and *Kitāb akhbār al-uwal,* a Sultan–Pasha chronicle of Egypt by al-Isḥāqī.[33]

Although no Arabic-Islamic historiographer used the European-Christian term "Crusades" before the nineteenth century, the Syriac Christian (Maronite) patriarch and historiographer Istifān al-Duwayhī (d. 1704) was the first to employ the term *al-ḥurūb al- ṣalībīya* in his work *tārīkh al-azminah (History of the Ages)*. He specifically titled the sixth chapter of his book "*Fī al-ḥurūb al-ṣalībiyya*". While he primarily used medieval Arabic and Syriac terms such as *al-Firanjah*, he occasionally incorporated terms like *al-ṣalībiyyin* (the Crusaders) or *al-ṣalībī* (the crusade/crusader) in titles or subtitles to describe certain events during the Crusades.[34]

Al-Duwayhī appears to have drawn upon Latin–Arabic translations circulating within Syriac Christian circles since the early modern period. Similar to his contemporary Arab Muslim historiographers, al-Duwayhī followed the traditional approach and chronology used by the medieval Christian Syriac historians like Ibn al-ʿIbrī (Bar Hebraeus, d. 1286). It appears that al-Duwayhī borrowed the title of his book, *Tārīkh al-Azminah (History of the Times),* from Ibn al-ʿIbrī's Syriac chronicle known as *Tārīkh al-Azminah*, which Ibn al-ʿIbrī summarised in Arabic chronicle *Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal*.[35]

Scholars paid little attention to Arabic historical writing from the late medieval and early modern Ottoman period, believing sources were scarce due to the so-called "period of decadence" under Ottoman rule. However, recent studies have shown that the Arabic historiography of that period is rich and varied. The earlier misconception arose because most works remained unpublished and in manuscript form throughout the twentieth century, limiting most historians' access and to and understanding of these sources. Scholarly interest in the Ottoman conquest of the Mamlūk state in the early sixteenth century also diverted attention from later works.

[33] See in detail, Ragheb, "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin", 213-217.

[34] Isṭifān al-Duwayhī, *Tārīkh al-Azminah*, ed. Buṭrus Fahd (Beirut: Dār Laḥadd Khāṭir, 1982), 80, 95, 79.

[35] Abū al-Faraj b. al-ʿIbrī, *Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal*, ed. Anṭūn Ṣāliḥānī (Beirut: Al-Maṭbaʿah al-Kāthūlīkiyya lil-ābāʾ al-Yasūʿiyyīn, 1890).

Additionally, the shift towards social and economic history, supported by newly accessible archival documents, left Arabic chronicles underexplored.[36]

Notably, in early modern Arab chronicles, the memory of the Crusades is closely associated with Saladin, a prominent figure in both Western and Islamic historical accounts. While Saladin's legacy is revered in medieval Europe and was lauded during the European Enlightenment, it remained largely overlooked in the Middle East until 1872, when Namık Kemal, a Turkish Muslim, authored Saladin's first known modern biography. The revival of Crusade history and memory in the nineteenth century coincided with the increasing influence of modern European empires in the Middle East, prompting the Arab and Islamic world to reconsider and engage with its historical narratives linked to these significant medieval events.[37]

Early research focused on monumental works by figures such as ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan al-Jabartī (1754–1825/1826), overshadowing investigations into other Arabic historians from the preceding two centuries. Al-Jabartī is considered the last and greatest historian of Ottoman Egypt. His chronicle, *ʿAjāʾib al-āthār fī al-tarājim wa-al-akhbār*, is a key history of Egypt under French occupation. He provides a detailed account of the Egyptian political and sociocultural landscape and his work is a masterpiece of historical insight into Egypt. However, al-Jabartī is often seen more as a continuation of the medieval Islamic historical school rather than a pioneer of a new distinct nineteenth-century historiographical school.[38]

While recounting the history of the Crusades, al-Jabartī highlighted the role of Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Zankī in battling the Franks and his efforts to defend Egypt against their invasions following the decline of the Fatimid Caliphate during the reign of al-ʿĀḍid (d. 1171). This decline was exacerbated by the internal conflicts between his viziers, Shāwar and Dirghām, who sought the Franks' assistance. He also dedicated a substantial section of his chronicle to the reign of Saladin, highlighting the Ayyūbid period and its

[36] Ragheb, "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin", 206-210; Michael Winter, "Historiography in Arabic during the Ottoman Period", in *Arabic Literature in the Post-classical Period*, eds. Roger Allen and D.S. Richards, the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 171– 188.

[37] Ragheb, "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin", 203-05; Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 591-93; Bernard Lewis, *History: Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 84-85.

[38] Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl, *Al-Muʾarrikhūn fī Miṣr fī al-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar* (Alexandria, Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīnīyah, 2000), 4-5; Ragheb, "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin", 210-211.

critical role in Islamic history. Al-Jabartī meticulously detailed Saladin's ascent, his campaigns in Egypt alongside his uncle Shīrkūh, the overthrow of the Shīʿī Fatimids, and the re-establishment of the Sunnī ʿAbbāsid caliphate in Egypt. He also narrated Saladin's conquests in the Holy Land, where Saladin continued the Jihad against the Franks, reclaiming Jerusalem and the Levantine coast.[39] Al-Jabartī's representation of Saladin, in the context of crusading history, is framed within the larger context of Islamic history.[40]

In his work *Maẓhar al-taqdīs bi zawāl dawlat al-firansīs*, Al-Jabartī examined the profound hardships endured by Egypt and the various forms of misery and oppression its people faced, particularly with the arrival of the French infidels (i.e. the French campaign of Bonaparte), marking the beginning of a dreadful torment. He draws a parallel between these events and the Frankish and Tartar invasions, noting that the Tartars took control of numerous countries and brought down many royal states, yet Cairo frequently emerged victorious against them. He further connects the French under Bonaparte with the Franks of the fifth and seventh Crusades (1217-1221 and 1248-1252), who attacked Damietta, associating the contemporary French invasion with the medieval Crusades.[41] He writes:

> The Franks arrived in Egypt during the time of al-Kāmil [r. 1218-38], son of al-'Adil [r. 1200-18], and they took control of Damietta and destroyed it. He fought them for months until he drove them out (...) Then they returned during the reign of al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn [1240-49] and took Damietta and advanced towards Fariskur. Al-Ṣaliḥ fought them for fourteen months, while he was ill and confined to the East, and he established the city known as al-Manṣūra. His illness worsened, and he died. His wife, Shajar al-Durr [May-July 1250], concealed his death and managed affairs until his son, Turān Shah [1249-50], arrived from Hasankeyf. The infidels [Franks] had already suffered a severe defeat before his

[39] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār fī al-Tarājim wa al-Ākhbār*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, vol 1 (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah, 1998), 24-25; idem, *Maẓhar al-Taqdīs bidhawāl Dawlat al-firansīs*, ed., ʿAbd al-Raḥīm ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAbd al-Raḥīm (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah, 1998), 11-14.

[40] Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār*, vol 1, 25-26; Ragheb, "New Sources on the Memory of Saladin", 217.

[41] Al-Jabartī, *Maẓhar al-Taqdīs*, 9-14.

> arrival, and their king [Louis IX] was captured. The Franks who were referred to were the French. They [Those] Franks were the firansīs [French] sect.[42]

In his historical survey of the crusading period, al-Jabartī employed some other medieval Arabic-Islamic terms such as *kuffār* (infidels) to describe the Franks, highlighting the religious and emotional dimensions of the conflict. He also focused on Saladin's rise and his efforts in reviving al-*madhhab al-sunnī* (the Sunni doctrine) in Egypt and the decline of the Fatimids and their Shīʿī doctrine. While narrating Saladin's jihad efforts and victories over the Franks, he omitted any reference to al-Kamil's relationship with Frederick II (d. 1250) and the latter's control over Jerusalem, a topic that remained debated in both contemporary and subsequent medieval Muslim writings. Instead, he emphasized al-Kamil's endeavours in establishing various religious sites in Egypt like the Dome (*Qubbat*) of al-Shāfiʿī and the house (*dār*) of hadith, known as *al-Madrasa al-Kamālīya* (the Kamaliya School). He highlighted the deeds of Al-Kamīl's son, Al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn, who purchased the Mamluks and raised them to defeat the Franks during the Seventh Crusade led by King Louis IX. Furthermore, he referred to the Mamluk rulers as the "Turkish kings", highlighting Baybar's governance in Egypt, his victories over the Tatars (Mongols) and the protection of Egypt and the Muslim world.[43]

Moreover, al-Jabartī briefly mentioned the Crusade of Peter I of Cyprus (r. 1358-69) against Alexandria in Egypt, known as the Alexandrian Crusade, which occurred during the era of Sultan Al-Ashraf Shaʿbān (r. 754-778 AH / 1363-1377 AD).

> And in the days of this Al-Ashraf's era, the Franks advanced upon Alexandria while its defenders were off guard, plundering its wealth and capturing its women. The news reached Egypt (i.e. Cairo), Al-Ashraf thus prepared and marched with his soldiers, [and] he found that they had already departed from there and abandoned it. I came across a historical account in two volumes on this occurrence [Crusade], which states that the mother of the

[42] Al-Jabartī, *Maẓhar al-Taqdīs*, 13-14.
[43] Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār*, vol. 1, 24-30.

> Frenchman who wears a ring in his ear originates from the women captured during this Crusade.[44]

While Al-Jabartī's conceptualisation of the earlier Crusades expresses religious dimensions, his mention of the Alexandrian Crusade is relatively devoid of this aspect. Instead, it reveals the economic motivations referring to the plundering of the city. Furthermore, he alludes to the French who landed on the coast of Alexandria in July of 1798, and traces their lineage back to the women captured during the fourteenth century Alexandrian crusade, thereby making a connection between the events of the Crusades and his own time. It is also noteworthy that Napoleon himself invoked the memory of the Crusades at the beginning of his campaign against Egypt, although he also claimed that he had come to Egypt to create modern political and economic structures in the country.[45] When the French fleet landed on the Alexandria coast in July 1798, coming from Malta, Napoleon addressed a proclamation to the people and scholars of Alexandria, invoking the memory of the Crusades that al-Jabartī mentions as follows:

> [..] O Egyptians, it has been said to you that I (Bonaparte) have come to this region with the intent to abolish your religion, but that is an obvious lie. Do not believe it and tell the denigrators that I have come to you only to liberate your rights from the hands of the oppressors, and that I, more than the Mamluks, worship Allah, the Almighty, and respect His Prophet and the Great Qur'an. [...], O sheikhs, judges, imams, and *al-jarbijiyyah* (Janissary knights/ officers) of the town (Alexandria), tell your people: the French are also sincere Muslims, and to prove this, they descended to Great Rome and devastated the seat of the Pope (the Papal See), who was always urging the Christians to fight Islam. Then, they went to the island of Malta and expelled the *al-kuwalīriyyah* knights (St. John knights), who claimed that God Almighty required them to fight the Muslims. [...].[46]

[44] Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār,* vol. 1, 34.

[45] Franz Herre, *Napoleon Bonaparte. Eine Biographie* (München: Hugendubel, 2006), 57-64.

[46] Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār*, vol. 3, 5.

A historical parallel to the Crusades emerged during Napoleon's conquest of Malta and the subsequent Egyptian campaign, referred to by the French novelist Alexandre Dumas (d. 1870) as the Eighth Crusade.[47] Bonaparte's invasion revived the Egyptian memory of the Crusades, especially the First Crusade (1095–1099) called for by the French Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont in 1095 and the Seventh Crusade of King Louis IX (1248-1252).[48] The French contributed much to the Crusades and they were the first to represent their modern imperialist projects in crusading terms. France created a legendary national crusading history to be associated with its modern imperialist program but it was not the only European country which invented such propaganda.[49]

While Al-Jabartī was an objective historian who praised the civilizational and scientific efforts of the scholars accompanying Napoleon,[50] his depiction of the Crusades became more prominent as a "living memory" in his writings. Utilising modern terms such as occupation and colonisation, he further described the French as infidels, echoing medieval Islamic terminology used to describe the Franks. He coined the term *al-Firansāwiyyah* (French) to refer to the French forces. Al-Jabartī's use of *Fransīs* to symbolise the French or their ruler is consistent with the traditional usage in Arabic Islamic sources for French kings, particularly during the Seventh Crusade. He rarely mentioned Napoleon Bonaparte by the name "Bonapartah." Additionally, he used *al-Ifranjah* not only to refer to the French or European forces but also to European merchants and residents in Egypt at that time. For instance, he referred to *al-tujjār al-ifranj* (the frankish merchants) and *jamīʿ al-Ifranj* (all Franks), indicating that Franks or Frankish had become synonymous with any European, particularly the French, in Egypt.[51] This

[47] Elizabeth Siberry, "Crusading against France, 1789–1815," in *Crusade: The Uses of a Word from the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. Benjamin Weber (Abingdon: Routledge: 2024), 107-119, here 112.

[48] Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum, 2003), 13-57; Thomas Asbridge, *The First Crusade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Alan V. Murray, "The Army of Godfrey of Bouillon, 1096-1099: Structure and Dynamics of a Contingent on the First Crusade", *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoir*e 70: 2 (1992), 301–29.

[49] Riley-Smith, "Islam and the Crusades in History and Imagination", 155-56.

[50] Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār*, vol.3, 179.

[51] Al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār*, vol.1, 11, 540-41, 585-86; vol. 2, 124; vol. 3: 1-5, 9-10, 12, 14-16, 19, 47, 298, 512.

term continues to be used today, albeit in a broader context to refer to the Europeans and the West.

Al-Jabartī's historicization of the Crusades was characterised by a religious and emotional dimension, focusing less on the battles with the Franks and more on their broader impact. His chronicles underscore the era of Saladin as a pivotal chapter in Egyptian history, reflecting an Islamic perspective on the Crusades. The Ayyubids, prominent during this period, profoundly influenced Egyptian history, a legacy continuing through the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. Al-Jabartī's narrative reveals an emerging Arab-Islamic interpretation of the Crusades from the nineteenth century, drawing from medieval and crusader-era sources. Thus, the Arab-Islamic perception of the Crusades underwent historicization from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, marking a transitional phase. Al-Jabartī's work serves as a bridge between late medieval and modern understandings of this significant historical epoch. He extended the concepts found in medieval Arabic sources into the nineteenth century and beyond, bridging the gap between medieval understanding and modern memory. This was in parallel impacted by the contemporary rising imperial powers in Europe, which sought to expand their influence over Egypt and other regions across the globe.

According to Wajīh Kawtharānī, Al-Jabartī, inheriting a traditional juridical and historical culture shaped by Ibn Khaldun's ideas, navigates disorders on two fronts. Firstly, he confronts the challenge of established Islamic cultural images from the late Middle Ages, while exploring a comparative historical disruption that reveals disconnected rifts among global civilizations. Within globalisation, these cultures intertwine beyond Islamic geography, while Al-Jabartī tries to engage closely with unfolding events, oscillating between documenting factual changes as an intellectual historian and reacting as a jurist to social and cultural upheavals. Al-Jabartī's narrative begins by examining dynamic interactions between the West and Islam, emphasizing tensions and exchanges across the Mediterranean. This period sees clashes through the Christian Crusades and Islamic Jihad. This era introduces new interpretations of collective memory intertwined with views on Crusades and Jihad, expressed in modern terms. The "Eastern Question" in Western discourse becomes a mission of cultural

dissemination,[52] while in the Islamic context, it encompasses fragmentation, occupations, the occupation of Palestine, and marginalisation. These developments surround enduring tragedies in collective memory, evoking upsetting historical recollections.[53]

Rifāʿa Al-Ṭahṭāwī and His Historiographical Memory of the Crusades

Rifāʿa Al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-1873) was a pivotal figure of the intellectual and cultural renaissance (*Nahḍah*) in nineteenth century Egypt. He was born in Ṭahṭā and educated at al-Azhar University in Cairo. He became the head of the Egyptian educational mission (1826-1830) sent by Egypt's ruler, Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha (r. 1805-1848) to Paris, where he mastered French and absorbed European culture. Upon returning to Egypt, al-Ṭahṭāwī played a crucial role in modernizing Egyptian education and intellectual thought. He established the School of Languages in Cairo and led a significant translation movement, bringing key European works in science, literature, and philosophy into Arabic, thereby fostering an intellectual renaissance in Egypt. His works emphasized education, rational thinking, and adopting beneficial western aspects while preserving Islamic values. Notable among his writings is *Takhlīṣ al-ibrīz fī talkhīṣ bārīz* (The extraction of gold in the summary of Paris), recording his observations of French society and offering insights into Egypt's development. Al-Ṭahṭāwī also authored and translated numerous other works, such as *Qalāʾid al-mafākhīr* and *Anwār tawfīq al-jalīl*. His efforts laid the groundwork for modern Arab thought and education reform, advocating a balanced modernization approach that embraced progress and cultural heritage.[54]

Al-Ṭahṭāwī seems to have appropriated the term *crusade* from the French *la croisade* during his residency in Paris.[55] He employed the term Crusades in

[52] On this see, Leslie Rogne Schumacher, "The Eastern Question as a Europe Question: Viewing the Ascent of 'Europe' through the Lens of Ottoman Decline", *Journal of European Studies* 44.1 (2014): 64-80

[53] Wajīh Kawtharānī, *Al-Dhākirah wa al-Tārīkh fī al-Qarn al-ʿashrīn al-Ṭawīl: Dirāsāt fī al-Baḥth wa al-Baḥth al-Tārīkhī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʿah, 2000), 27, 39-41.

[54] Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Al-Aʿmāl al-Kāmilah*, ed. Muḥammad ʿImārah, vol. 1 (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2010), 39-50; Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl, *Rifāʿa Al-Ṭahṭāwī Zaʿīm al-Nahḍa al-Fikrīya fī ʿasr Muḥammad ʿAlī*, (Windsor: Hindawi, 2017), 10-12; 33-46.

[55] Sheir, "Between Peace and War", 156, Martin Cleveland, William L. Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (USA: Westview Press, 2013), 86.

his writing about modern civilization in Europe as an example of Europe's past and as a warning about what could become of Islamic civilization which had broken down. He expresses his view as follows:

> "When the Crusades and the Frankish invasions in the eastern Islamic countries necessitated that the army leaders themselves travel to these wars, and they were the ones in charge, it required that they take from their resources as much money and men as they could for the sake of the war against Islam. They were zealous and religiously enthusiastic, and the times of invasion and fighting prolonged, to conquer the precious example of the holy Jerusalem, with the high expenditure due to prolonged conflict, and their insight in introducing the benefits of Eastern civilization into their western lands, learning from Islam what beautified their countries, and spending huge amounts of money to achieve all this for long periods, their economic conditions deteriorated, their money and men were lost over different times, and poverty afflicted them due to the necessity of wars, and they were unable to bear it. They were forced to sell lands and men, so the local people bought their properties and themselves with money. Some of them bought the privilege of appointing a sheikh [chief or a leader of a tribe] from the region to defend their civil rights, thus they enjoyed civil advantages and civil rights from that time, owned properties, emerged from subordination, and they, over time, increased in power in proportion to the weakening and loss of pride of those in charge. Everyone found freedom, and the European kingdoms became truly civilized and free."[56]

It seems here that al-Ṭahṭāwī, thus, was the first among the Egyptian scholars of the modern era who embraced the term *al-ḥurūb al-ṣalībīyah* in his works.[57] He acknowledged that the European campaigns against Islam

[56] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Al-Aʿmal al-Kāmlah*, vol. 1, 668.

[57] Ḥusām ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, "Al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī fī Fikr Rūwād ʿasr al-Nahḍa fī al-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar: Rifāʿah Al-Ṭahṭāwī Namūdhajān," in *Bayn al-Tārīkh wa al-Siyāsa. Dirāsat fī Tārīkh Misr wa al-ʿĀlam al-ʿArabī*, ed. Aḥmad Z. al-Shalaq and Wāʾil al-Dasūqī (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub wa al-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmīyah, 2019), 179-179, here 189; Sheir, "Between Peace and War", 156.

during the Middle Ages, driven by fervent religious zeal and fanaticism, also contributed to the profound influence of Islamic civilization on Europe.

Although his writings carried religious emotion, typical of traditional Muslim historiography that highlights the significance of Jerusalem, al-Ṭahṭāwī intertwined this religious importance with nationalist and intellectual dimensions. Unlike all pre-modern Arabic-Islamic sources, al-Ṭahṭāwī spoke of the Crusades as a global phenomenon affecting both historical and contemporary European-Islamic relations. This approach illustrates that the Crusades are a vital part of global history, bridging the medieval Islamic and Latin periods with the nineteenth-century European and Islamic contexts. This connection embodies a "global historical memory" within the framework of modern contextualisation. Furthermore, his approach was largely objective, aiming to reconcile historical pride with benefiting from modern European advancements. Consequently, he consistently referred to the past to make the case that Egyptian and Arab-Islamic societies were ripe for the developments and reforms that were taking place in nineteenth-century Europe.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī recognised the significance of the humanities, and in particularly history, as a central pillar of an intellectual renaissance, as evidenced by his statement: "We used to read a history book for two hours in the morning, before our Art and French classes, and every Friday we had three lessons in mathematics and engineering sciences." Furthermore, his quest to learn new sciences was influenced by his religious upbringing as a graduate of al-Azhar.

Therefore, we perceive in his efforts, as mentioned, that he never finished reading a book in any field or art until he undertook its translation. He aimed to convey this new knowledge to the lands of Islam and its people, hoping to create a new renaissance that would lead them to become a civilization comparable to European Christian civilization in terms of intellectual achievement.[58]

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's mention of the Crusades came within the scope of his interest in studying, writing, and teaching history, focusing specifically on Egyptian history divided into two periods: pre-Islamic, starting from the ancient Egyptian era, and post-Islamic, continuing up to his time. Despite al-Ṭahṭāwī's exposure to French culture, he also immersed himself in classical Arab-Islamic sources, developing his techniques of summarizing and citing from these sources. His historical writing thus blended rationally, merging

[58] Al-Shayyāl, *Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī Zaʿīm al-Nahḍah*, 17-24.

Arab-Islamic tradition with an acknowledgement of the necessity of adopting European advances.[59]

In this context, as a result of al-Ṭahṭāwī's continuous efforts in serving historical knowledge, history was officially recognised, for the first time, as a subject and a curriculum in schools. This is a matter that deserves attention and emphasises the pivotal role of al-Ṭahṭāwī in this regard. His role can be traced through three main directions: introducing historical lessons in schools, appointing teachers for them, and determining the textbooks to be taught. Al-Ṭahṭāwī first established a separate class for teaching geography and history as an adjunct to the *Madrasat al-Midfaʿīya* (School of Artillery) which he referred to as a "school" in the introduction of his book *Al-Taʿrīfāt al-Shāfiya li-Murīd al-Jughrāfiya* (The Beneficial Explanations for the Study of Geography), first published in 1834. This class or school served as the first nucleus of *Madrasat al-Alsun* (School of Languages), established in 1835, which also did not neglect the teaching of history. Subsequently, history was taught in preparatory schools, then in the School of Ancient Egyptian Language, and later in the School of *Dār al-ʿUlūm* (House of Sciences, later College of Dār al-ʿUlūm). [60]

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's intellectual contributions significantly enriched Egypt's cultural and academic landscape during the Arab Renaissance (*Nahḍa*) from 1860 to 1940. Thus, al-Ṭahṭāwī's works underscore the transformative power of historical memory in shaping intellectual aspirations within nineteenth-century Egypt and the Arab world. As a conclusion to the discussion on al-Ṭahṭāwī, the utilisation of the term "Crusades" in the nineteenth-century Arabic literary and historical works stemmed from the French-Arabic translation movement led by him.

This can also be traced in the works of two other important figures of the *Nahḍa* movement, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897) and Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905), both of whom spent years in Paris. Al-Afghānī was born in Asʿadabād, in the Kabul region of Afghanistan, in 1254/1839, and he moved to Cairo after internal struggles in his homeland. Beginning in 1871, he taught philosophy, theology, and Sufism in Cairo becoming famous among students and causing concern for the British authorities. Khedive Tawfiq Pasha of Egypt ordered his exile, leading Al-Afghānī to move to India and then to

[59] ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, "Al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī fī Fikr Rūwād", 188, 192, 195-198.

[60] Al-Shayyāl, *Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī Zaʿīm al-Nahḍah*, 26-30; ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, "Al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī fī Fikr Rūwwād ʿAṣr al-Nahḍah", 196-197.

Paris. Al-Afghānī also travelled to Iran and Istanbul, promoting reform until his death in Istanbul in 1897.[61]

In Paris, Al-Afghānī met with his friend Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbduh and they together founded the magazine *Al-ʿUrwat al-Wūthqā* (The Firmest Bond). ʿAbduh was born in 1842 in Gharbiya in Egypt and received his early education in Tanta and later at al-Azhar University in Cairo. He became a close friend of Al-Afghānī, mastering various sciences and the French language. He was involved in the *ʿUrābī* Revolt (*al-thawrah al-ʿurābīyah*). He warned against its repercussions and was subsequently exiled to Syria by the British. He later moved to Paris before returning to Egypt, where he was appointed judge and then Grand Mufti in 1899. He worked to reform al-Azhar, introducing modern sciences, thereby benefiting both Egypt and the wider Islamic world.[62]

The Crusades were mentioned in al-Afghānī's work *Al-Radd ʿalā al-Dahriyyīn* (a refutation of naturalists), translated from Persian to Arabic by Muḥammad ʿAbduh. The Crusades, alongside the Mongol invasion, were portrayed as events that profoundly shook the Muslim world. These disruptions were attributed to moral corruption and were ultimately resolved by returning to the core of Islamic morality. In his exploration of religious morals, ideals, pride, and honour, al-Afghānī delves into what can be termed "moral history". He examines nations "that succumbed to humiliation and acquiesced to oppression," starting with the Greeks and then focusing on the Islamic nation.[63]

Within this context, he attributed the attack of *aqzām al-ifranj* (a group of dwarf Franks) on Syrian lands to the moral decay he observed. This moral

[61] His biography was written by Muḥammad ʿAbduh in the introduction to his Arabic translation of Al-Afghānī's book *Al-Radd ʻalā al-Dahriyyīn, see* Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, *Al-Radd ʻalā al-Dahriyyīn, translated from Persian to Arabic by Muḥammad ʿAbduh* (Miṣr, Al-Maktabah al-Maḥmūdīyah, 1935), 9-16; Jamāl al-Dīn Al-Afghānī and *Muḥammad ʿAbduh, al-ʻUrwat al-Wūthqā*, ed. Saīd Hādī Khusrūshāhī, *Al-Āthār al-Kāmilah 1* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Shrurūq al-Dawlīyah, 2002), 60-67.

[62] Zakī Fahmī, *Ṣafwat al-ʿaṣr fī Tārīkh wa Rusūm Mashāhīr Rijāl Miṣr* (Miṣr: Maṭbaʿat al-Iʿtimād, 1926), 518-19; Mark Sedgwick, *Muḥammad Abduh, Makers of the Muslim World* (London: Oneworld, 2010), 16-19, 29-42; Andrew Hammond, "The Late Ottoman Intellectual Tradition: A Historiographical Review", in *Late Ottoman Origins of Modern Islamic Thought: Turkish and Egyptian Thinkers on the Disruption of Islamic Knowledge*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2022), 1-25.

[63] Al-Afghānī, Al-Radd ʻalā al-Dahriyyīn, 45-54.

decline, according to him, originated from the corruption of the *Bāṭinīya* sect (esotericism), in Iran, which he believed tainted the morals of the Islamic community both in the East and West. Al-Afghānī highlights the Muslims' inability to defend against these Crusaders as part of a broader narrative of moral deterioration that was also caused by the Tatars. He then indicated that Muḥammadan (i.e. Islamic) virtue remained resilient among many Muslims, enabling them to rise, fight against the Franks and Tatars, and eventually expel them from Islamic lands.[64]

In 1888, Muḥammad ʿAbduh returned to Cairo and resumed his position at al-Azhar University. Like al-Ṭahṭāwī, he aimed for an intellectual and scientific revival, seeking to introduce Western ideas and educational systems to Egypt. Influenced by François Guizot's writings on European civilization, ʿAbduh attributed Europe's progress during the Crusades to Arab-Muslim influence. By the early twentieth century, he highlighted the importance of Muslim cultural influence on Europe, viewing it as essential. He also believed that European influence could similarly benefit Muslim societies in the modern era. Although it is believed that ʿAbduh borrowed the idea of the influence of Muslim civilization on Europe during the Crusades from Guizot,[65] these concepts were already present in earlier works by al-Ṭahṭāwī and indirectly in the writings of al-Jabartī. This suggests that al-Ṭahṭāwī initially influenced ʿAbduh, who also followed in al-Ṭahṭāwī's footsteps by benefiting from and learning from the French education system.

It is crucial to clarify that ʿAbduh's and Al-Afghānī's use of the term Franks in *Al-ʿUrwat al-Wūthqā* did not exclusively refer to medieval crusaders. Instead, beyond its historical context, the term also symbolised modern Europeans. They specifically referred to the British colonists and authorities in Egypt and Sudan as Franks, without any reference to the Crusades. They criticised the British for their prejudiced perceptions and misconceptions of the Islamic doctrine of predestination (*ʿaqīdat al-qaḍāʾ wa al-qadar*) that frequently led to the colonial portrayal of Muslims as backward or fatalistic. Another example is the general description of the British as Franks when discussing the resistance of Muḥammad Aḥmad, known as the Mahdi, in

[64] Al-Afghānī, Al-Radd ʿalā al-Dahriyyīn, 53-54.

[65] Sokolov, "The Crusades in the Arab Social and Political Discourse", 104-105.

Sudan against the British occupation, and the consequent death of General Charles Gordon, the British Governor of Sudan, in 1885.[66]

In addition, when discussing fanaticism, ʿAbduh and Al-Afghānī criticised European policies, particularly British alliances with *al-dahriyyīn* (naturalists), which they argued corrupted Muslims' faith and exacerbated internal divisions.

> Indeed, we are most astonished by the behaviours of Westerners from the Frankish nations who exert great efforts to spread these ideas [fanaticism] among Easterners. They do not shy away from promoting religious fanaticism while accusing the fanatics of harshness. The Franks are the most zealous in this type of intolerance and the most committed to its causes.[67]

In a broad context, this also aligns with the general culture in Egypt (and the Arab world), where a Western person is commonly referred to as *al-Ifranjī*, implying a foreigner, especially a European. This term was used not only for people but also for products, goods, and other items. However, in another clear example, European colonisation and intolerance were often connected with the crusading fanaticism of the past. They reflected on the religious zealotry among Europeans towards those of different religions.

> Some can reach the highest levels of freedom, such as [William] Gladstone (the British statesman and liberal politician). However, you can discern the soul of Peter the Monk in his words. You may further find that they share the same spirit [of fanaticism].[68]

In this context, Umej Bhatia argues that Muḥammad ʿAbduh's comparison between modern Europeans and medieval Crusaders is anachronistic and lacks historical accuracy, suggesting that he was influenced by Al-Afghānī's practice of referring to Europeans as Franks,

[66] Jamāl al-Dīn Al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Al-ʻUrwat al-Wūthqā*, ed. Saīd Hādī Khusrūshāhī, vol. 1 (Cairo: Maktabat al-Shurūq al-Dawlīyah, 2002), 138, 140, 142, 402.

[67] Al-Afghānī and ʿAbduh, *al-ʻUrwat al-Wūthqā*, 138.

[68] Al-Afghānī and ʿ*Abduh, al-ʻUrwat al-Wūthqā*, 138-39.

echoing medieval usage. He compares Crusaders and contemporary European colonialists, suggesting continuity in European aggression.[69]

In a more systemic approach, Sokolov argues that while ʿAbduh initially likened Europeans to Franks, his views evolved to underscore the complexity of making sweeping generalisations. He did not always perceive them as identical to the Crusaders due to cultural shifts over time. His comparison of William Gladstone (d. 1898) to Peter the Hermit illustrates his evolving perspective on European influence.[70]

By the end of the nineteenth century, Arab intellectuals' memory of the Crusades had undergone gradual changes, with developments including other entangled influences and not only with the colonial West. Al-Afghānī blamed Muslim Sufis, while al-Kawākibī blamed the Turks. Later, Hasan al-Bannā integrated these views, criticising non-Arabs and Muslim Sufis for facilitating crusader victories. ʿAbduh, Al-Afghānī, and Mustafa Kāmil utilised the Crusades to explain contemporary Christian-Muslim conflicts, emphasising Muslim resilience and the necessity of Islamic unity against colonial powers. Alongside them, the Syrian ʿAbd al-Hamīd al-Zahrāwī (d. 1916) and Rafīq al-ʿAzm (d. 1925) critiqued the Crusades as masking political and material ambitions, underscoring divisions within the Muslim community.[71]

In the Egyptian context, the memory of the Crusades was enduring and continuously revived, reflected in the historiographical movement from al-Jabartī and al-Ṭahṭāwī to ʿAbduh. They and others argued that Western powers pursued goals similar to the Crusades: economic and expansionist colonialism intertwined with religious bias. They viewed the implicit use of the Crusades as metaphorical of the expansive colonial movement, intensifying religious fanaticism rather than promoting liberation. Drawing on historical examples like the Crusades, they highlighted Muslim resilience against colonial powers, aiming to inspire contemporary resistance and revive Islamic identity as a unifying force against colonial narratives. They acknowledged modern European civilization and scientific advances, emphasising the need to learn from Europe's transition from medieval darkness to modernity.

[69] Bhatia, Forgetting Osama bin Munqidh, 20

[70] Sokolov, "The Crusades in the Arab Social and Political Discourse", 103-107.

[71] Sokolov, "The Crusades in the Arab Social and Political Discourse", 103-107.

First Egyptian Historiographical Account of the Crusades in 1899

At the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth century, significant volumes of studies and editions of primary sources on the Crusades were published, as a natural reaction to the extension of the imperial powers in much of the non-western world, especially the Arab World. As Jonathan Phillips noted, "The Arab world began to try to shake off the shackles of Western imperialism; the struggles of their predecessors against the Crusaders seemed highly relevant, and this perception has continued." The increase in publications on the Crusades and the occupation of Arab lands contributed to reviving the memory of the Crusades, presenting them as "a much sharper and more vivid presence, largely because the events of the medieval period have several pertinent parallels to the present."[72]

By the end of the nineteenth century, this longstanding memory and historiography of the Crusades was accomplished in the first dedicated Arabic book on crusading history. In 1899, the Egyptian Sayyid al-Ḥarīrī authored the first original Arabic history (untranslated) of the Crusades. He explained his motivation for writing the book: "Since Arab readers lack a comprehensive resource on the history of the Crusades to understand its truths, justifications, and consequences, I have written this book titled *Al-Akhbār al-Sanīya fī al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah.*"[73]

The book's publication coincided with Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany's visit to Syria, where he visited Saladin's mausoleum in Damascus in 1898. Wilhelm visited Istanbul, Palestine, and Syria to strengthen ties with the Ottoman Empire. Saladin's legacy thus served as a bridge between the Ottomans and their German patron, Kaiser Wilhelm II. Wilhelm praised Saladin, describing him as "one of the most chivalrous rulers in history and a knight without fear or blame."[74] While the visit primarily aimed to support the construction of the Berlin-Baghdad railway and further German-Ottoman interests in the region, it also stirred memories of the Crusades among Arabs. Jonathan Riley-Smith suggests that "Kaiser Wilhelm II reintroduced Saladin

[72] Phillips, *The Crusades* 1095-1197, 2.

[73] Sayyid ʿAlī al-Ḥarīrī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-Sanīyah fī al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah* (Cairo: al-Zahrāʾ li al-Iʿlām al-ʿArabī, 1985), 15. The first print of this book was in 1899. There is also a current edition in 2017 by Dār ʿain in Cairo, edited by Qāsim ʿAbduh Qāsim.

[74] Phillips, '"Unity! Unity between All the Inhabitants", 90; Riley-Smith, "Islam and the Crusades in History and Imagination", 151-52.

to the Muslims in the Levant, who had been almost forgotten by them".[75] This is an exaggeration, for despite potential gaps in Arab collective memory relating to certain aspects of the Crusades, Saladin, as the idealistic Muslim leader, had not been forgotten.[76]

In this regard, Al-Ḥarīrī's book appears to be a product of the late nineteenth-century revival of the Crusades' memory. The author portrays Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II (r. 1876-1909) as the protector of Muslims, fighting against a new crusading movement from Europe. This depiction links the contemporary struggle between Europe and the Ottoman Empire to the historical Crusades between Europe and Islam. This demonstrates that the Crusades were employed as a political propaganda tool in the conflict between Europe and the Ottoman Empire. However, Al-Ḥarīrī believed that Christianity was entirely innocent of the wars waged in its name. Al-Ḥarīrī's perspective is expressed as follows:

> It is evident to any person the significance of the Crusades (*al-Hurūb al-Ṣalībīyah)* that took place in past generations, and the provocations of the popes and clergy (*al-Āklīrūs*) for the people of Europe to fight the Muslims, and the Crusaders' occupation of the lands of the Levant (*Bilād al-Shām*) under the cause of liberating Jerusalem from Islamic control. And what followed this forms the unity of Muslims and the expulsion of the Crusaders from these lands, and the hardships, destruction, failures, and confusion that befell those crusaders. Now, as the kings of Europe show prejudice against our sublime state, may God protect it from what resembles the actions of those past generations. Our great Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-thānī, and magnificent Khan, safeguarded by the Seven Heavens (*al-Sabʿ al-Mathānī*) stated that Europe is now fighting against us a crusade war under a political form.[77]

The history of the Crusades is presented in chronological order by al-Ḥarīrī, who began with the origins of the Crusades at the councils of Piacenza in Italy and Clermont in France in 1095.[78] He traces the history of the First

[75] El-Azhari, "Die Prägung Zukünftiger Generationen durch das Bild der Kreuzzüge", 170.

[76] Abouali, "Saladin's Legacy in the Middle East", 175-189.

[77] Al-Ḥarīrī, Al-Akhbār al-Sanīyah, 15.

[78] Al-Ḥarīrī, Al-Akhbār al-Sanīyah, 19-20.

Crusade and subsequent campaigns, culminating with the fall of Acre and its conquest in 1291 by the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Khalīl ibn Qalawūn (r. 1290-93). Al-Ḥarīrī's methodology was notably influenced by medieval Muslim sources, evident also in al-Jabartī's work, yet he achieved a more comprehensive and balanced account of the Crusades, incorporating events from both the European and Muslim worlds of the time.

This approach represented a significant shift in Crusades historiography, as al-Ḥarīrī incorporated European and Arabic terms such as Crusades, Crusaders, or Frankish wars, and Franks, blending Latin and Arabic terminology. His narrative intertwines battles viewed from both Latin and Muslim angles, presenting the Crusades as a narrative sourced from medieval Muslim perspectives while also incorporating Latin viewpoints. Al-Ḥarīrī's thorough description of events, particularly the capture and recapture of cities and fortresses by Muslims during the Crusades,[79] exemplified a pioneering approach in Egyptian and Arab historiography at the end of the nineteenth century.

Al-Ḥarīrī precisely detailed crusader figures, leaders, princes, and kings of Jerusalem, often using pronunciations reminiscent of their Latin or Old French forms; for instance, he referred to Richard the Lionheart as "Rīkārdūs", close to the Latin "Richardus". He also mentioned the kings of France, Germany, and England, alongside other European leaders, and discussed their encounters, relations, or conflicts with Byzantine emperors and the papacy during the Crusades. Further, in a distinctive bilingual approach, he transliterated European city names into their original and Arabic languages. For instance, he referred to Sicily as *Suqalīyah* during earlier Crusades, but later he used *Sīsīlīyā*, which closely approximates *Sicilia*.[80]

Meanwhile, he provided an in-depth presentation of the broader dynamics within the Muslim world, encompassing the Fatimids, Abbasids, Seljuks, Zankids, Nur al-Din, Saladin, and the Ayyubids, as well as their relations with Franks, Byzantines, Armenians, and later Mongols. In this vein, Al-Ḥarīrī was the first to systematically categorize each crusade numerically, setting a precedent followed by subsequent historiographical works in Egypt and the Arab world. He assigned equal attention to Fatimid, Abbasid, Zengid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk histories during the Crusades,

[79] Al-Ḥarīrī, *Al-Akhbār al-Sanīyah*, 50, 58, 67, 111, 127, 178, 180, 197-201.

[80] Al-Ḥarīrī, *Al-Akhbār al-Sanīyah*, 53, 55, 66, 81, 85, 95, 218, 221, 270, 273, 279, 283, 286, 343, etc.

accentuating his Egyptian national identity by exploring Egyptian history in this period. In the meantime, Al-Hariri's work symbolises a synthesis of Crusades history into a global medieval narrative, reflecting the interconnectedness of world history at the time.

This book by Al-Ḥarīrī served as a primary source for crusade history until the establishment of the Egyptian historical school in universities during the latter half of the twentieth century. It maintained its significance and was reprinted as a cornerstone of Islamic historiography on the Crusades. Its publication was considered a significant deed. In the introduction to the book's 1985 edition, funded by the Egyptian Islamic Faisal Bank, it stated:

> This book was the first Arabic-language work to compose the history of the Crusades from their beginning to their end, covering events spanning two centuries. It chronicles eight consecutive campaigns [considering Louis IX's crusade on Tunis as the eighth crusade] waged in the name of Christianity and the Cross, despite Christianity's disavowal of them... Today, as in the past, our Islamic world suffers from both crusader plunder and Zionist aggression... We present this book to Muslims as a glimmer of hope for a future in which the glories of Islam and Muslims may return.[81]

This presentation marks a crucial moment in crusade historiography within the Arab-Islamic world, linking the time of the book's first publication with the circumstances of Muslims and Arabs in the 1980s. This perspective situates the Crusades within a contemporary historiographical framework while emphasising their lasting collective cultural and political impact on Arab memory and collective consciousness. This influence gained renewed prominence in the early twentieth century, notably due to colonial expansions, World War II, the Palestine issue from the pre-Balfour Declaration in 1917 to the establishment of Israel in 1948, and subsequent Arab-Israeli conflicts. The idea of the crusade was instrumentalised as a nationalist instrument against colonial powers in the Arab world, particularly from the early twentieth century onward.

[81] Al-Ḥarīrī, Al-Akhbār al-Sanīyah, 9-8.

Muṣṭafā Kāmil (d. 1908), an Egyptian lawyer, journalist, nationalist and the founder of the idea of establishing the Egyptian University,[82] revived the memory of the Crusades to illustrate the Ottoman-British struggle over Jerusalem and Palestine. He emphasised the implications of British ambitions for Jerusalem under Protestant authority and questioned the reaction of the Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims who historically defended the city. Kāmil linked past resistance to future liberation efforts, asserting Jerusalem's significance as an Islamic city transcending sectarian boundaries. He warned against wresting Jerusalem from the Ottoman Empire, foreseeing catastrophic consequences for global stability. [83]

The Balfour Declaration of 1917 intensified comparisons between Zionism, British imperialism, and the Crusades. During World War I, the British censored references to the conflict as a modern crusade, yet British media portrayed the Crusades through paintings and cartoons.[84] The modern Zionist occupation of Jerusalem has been likened to the medieval crusader conquest, with historians drawing parallels between the crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem and Israel.[85] This association persisted through the Arab-Israeli conflict, underscored during the presidency of Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir (r. 1956-70) in Egypt. Nāṣir portrayed Western military actions, like the Suez Invasion, as contemporary Crusades, invoking historical parallels to rally Arab unity against foreign aggression.[86] The legacy of the Crusades continues to resonate in discussions about Jerusalem and Arab-Israeli relations, shaping not only contemporary Arab perceptions and political discourse but also the historiographical narratives.

In these developments, the Egyptian and broader Arab historical scholarship on the Crusades began with initial writings and gained academic prominence following the establishment of Cairo University in 1908. The

[82] See: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Rāfiʿī, *Muṣṭafā Kāmil Bāʿith al-Ḥarakat al-Waṭanīyah* (Egypt: Dār al-Maʿārif, 5th ed, 1984), 9-11; Arthur Goldschmidt Jr, *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt* (USA-Boulder: Lynne Rienner Pub, 2000), 101-103.

[83] ʿAlī Fahmī Kāmil, *Sīrat Muṣṭafā Kāmil fī Arbʿah wa-Thalaṯhīn Rabīʿan*, vol.3 (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Difāʿ al-Waṭanī, 1926), 179, 181.

84 Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The War for the Holy land* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2012), 480; El-Azhari, "Die Prägung Zukünftiger Generationen," 165.

[85] Oleg Sokolov, "Facing the Franks Again: The Crusades in Arab Social and Political Thought (1914–48)", *Die Welt des Islams* (2023), 1-29, here 15; Phillips, '"Unity! Unity between All the Inhabitants", 93-94, idem, *The Crusades 1095-1197*, 3.

[86] Mūflih ʿAlī, Abṭāl al-Waḥdah al-Sūrīyah wa-al-Miṣrīyah fī al-Hūrūb al-Ṣalībīyah, vol.1 (Damascus, 1958), 13-14; Maalouf, The Crusades through Arab Eyes, 13-14, 265.

field expanded significantly post-World War II with the spread of history departments in Egyptian universities. This growth coincided with the nationalist ideals advocated by ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and the surge of anti-colonial movements across the Arab world. The lasting impact and memory of the Crusades became increasingly evident in academic historiography, resulting in numerous scholarly works examining the Crusades from various perspectives. This ongoing project aims to provide an in-depth investigation of the academic and collective cultural memory of the Crusades in Egypt and the Arab world during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Conclusion

This study examines how nineteenth-century Egyptian historiographical memory perceived the Crusades, spanning analysis from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. It comprehensively explores both historiographical and intellectual aspects, investigating their impact within the context of colonialism and decolonization in Egypt. Central to this examination are the writings of al-Jabartī and al-Ṭahṭāwī, pivotal figures whose works bridged the traditional Arabic Islamic historiography of the late medieval period with emerging Arab national perspectives on the Crusades. This intellectual trajectory culminated in the 1899 publication of the first Arabic book on the Crusades by al-Ḥarīrī.

Furthermore, the contributions of ʿAbduh and Al-Afghānī were instrumental in Egypt's Nahḍa movement, addressing intellectual and nationalistic concerns alongside anti-colonial objectives. Their writings on the Crusades and other historical events aimed at societal reform, fostering national identity and unity. Drawing on Islamic principles and historical narratives, they aimed to counter internal stagnation and resist colonial interference, advocating for modernization in education, law, and sociocultural norms. Their efforts laid the groundwork for subsequent historical and national movements that emphasized the significance of historical memory in contemporary anti-colonial and national struggles.

Karl Marx's early writings characterized oriental societies as static and devoid of class consciousness, a perspective he later revised after 1881. This shift was influenced by a growing body of original studies coinciding with the expanding influence of colonial powers in the East, notably the British presence in Egypt. Marx came to acknowledge that modes of production could develop at varying speeds and take different forms, influenced by both external circumstances and internal structural elements within each mode of

production.[87] This adjustment mirrors the environment in which the Crusades were remembered and interpreted, by Al-Jabartī, Al-Ṭahṭāwī, ʿAbduh, Al-Āfghānī and Al-Ḥarīrī, shaped by both internal national dynamics and external colonial influences. The examination reveals that the memory and historical interpretation of the Crusades were deeply intertwined with broader intellectual, social, and economic contexts of nineteenth-century Egypt.

Therefore, the nineteenth-century Arabic scholarship on the Crusades marked a turning point between idealism and innovation. It merged the traditional Islamic presentation of history chronologically with new analyses that are particularly linked with national discourse, such as intellectual revival and decolonising efforts. The historiographical examination of the Crusades and European-Muslim relations evolved significantly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly after World War I and the rise of nationalism and anti-colonialism that further shaped historical discourse. This also influenced a new generation of Egyptian historians whose work had a profound impact on Arab historiography, paving the way for future research. This ongoing evolution underscores how Egyptian writings on the Crusades reflect shifting perspectives on medieval crusading and Jihad movements, challenging European views that dismiss modern Arab historiography's grasp of crusade history.

[87] Amar S. Baadj, "Maḥmūd Ismāʿīl and his Historical-Materialist Approach to the History of the Medieval Islamic World", *What's Left of Marxism. Historiography and the Possibilities of Thinking with Marxian Themes and Concepts*, eds. Benjamin Zachariah, Lutz Raphael and Brigitta Bernet (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 156.