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Politicized Historiography and the Zionist-Crusader Analogy

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POLITICIZED HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE ZIONIST-CRUSADER ANALOGY

by

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Chapter 1: History and Theory

On July 28, 2000, three days after the conclusion of the Camp David Summit, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat returned to Gaza. His reception, according to the Israeli novelist and activist Amos Oz, was that befitting a hero. While Oz lamented the failure to achieve concrete policies towards peace between Palestine and Israel, Gazans celebrated successful resistance and refusal to compromise on essential rights. The scenes on the television in Oz's living room showed this image: 'The whole Gaza Strip is covered in flags and slogans proclaiming the "Palestinian Saladin". "Welcome home, Saladin of our era" is written on the walls'.[1]

Saladin, to whom Arafat was compared, began as a man in the twelfth century. Born around 532/1138 to a Kurdish family, Salah ad-Din served under 'Imad ad-Din Zangi and then Zangi's son, Nur ad-Din, Turkish governors of northern Syria. In 1171, after two years as vizier in Egypt, Salah ad-Din deposed the last Fatimid Shi'i caliph and returned Egypt to Sunni orthodoxy and, nominally, Abbasid control. With the 1174 death of Nur ad-Din, Salah ad-Din ended his vassalage and seized control of Syria, establishing himself as independent ruler over the lands of his late lord. With Egypt and northern Syria united under Salah ad-Din's command, the Frankish Crusader states in the southern Levant were faced with a powerful and hostile polity on two fronts. At the head of a large and efficient army, Salah ad-Din exacted his 1187 victories against the Frankish

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[1] Oz, Amos, "The Specter of Saladin", *New York Times (1923-Current file)* [New York, N.Y] 28 July 2000: A21.

Crusaders at Hattin and Jerusalem: this constituted both a great blow to the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem—the impetus for gathering the Third Crusade—as well as the reclamation of a city holy to Islam from the rule of European Christians.[2] Died in 1193 and immortalized in accounts by contemporaneous authors, Salah ad-Din came to Oz's Gazans in the form of a politicized historical myth that had been altered and charged with nationalist and anti-colonialist significance by Arab authors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The memory of Salah ad-Din, encoded in the myth and deployed in the political arena of the Israel-Palestine conflict, acts as a construction of history and a claim as to the truth of the past. Of course, the very fact of the use of this historical myth in a political debate shows the immediate relevance of the past to the present and of history, as a "true" narrative of past events, to the future. If history were not about the future, there would be no sense in deploying it in a debate intimately about the future of a stateless people and a contested territory.

Oz is aware—keenly, sharply aware—of the meaning of Salah ad-Din. It pricks him and threatens him; it inspires sorrow and fear and a fierce defensiveness for his homeland. It challenges his existence. Of it, Oz writes:

> In silence, astounded, I watch, and I can't help reminding myself that the original Saladin promised the Arab people that he would not make pacts with the infidels, he would massacre them and throw them in the ocean. I see Mr. Arafat dressed in his gray-green combat uniform. It's an Arafat clothed like Che Guevara and treated like Saladin: my heart breaks.[3]

Let Oz's broken heart be an invitation to inquiry: why should this image of Salah

[2] Gabrieli, Francesco, ed. Arab Historians of the Crusades. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
[3] Ibid.

ad-Din trouble him so deeply? What does it mean that he attaches a history to Salah ad-Din and so confidently knows that this history—"he would massacre them and throw them in the ocean"—is the same history in which the Gazan people participate? Was this the message they intended to send?

This study looks at the ways in which historical discourse frames the meaning and future of the Israel-Palestine conflict, perceptions of which in turn influence modern historiography on Palestine.[4] Specific focus is paid to the variety of historical narratives proffered as to the "truth" of the Crusade period in Palestine, roughly the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries for the purposes of this thesis, and their mobilization in political agendas through the twentieth and twenty-first century Zionist-Crusade analogy. This comparison, a historical analogy likening Zionists to Frankish Crusaders or the State of Israel to the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, appears frequently in contemporary dialogue on the Israel-Palestine conflict from a diverse range of sources and for a variety of political ends. It shows that the politicization of history of the contested land is a widespread phenomenon that is limited neither to academic nor political circles. Indeed, the history of Palestine under the Franks, made immediately relevant to twentieth and twenty-first century Israel-Palestine via the Zionist-Crusader analogy, is researched, cited, and employed in political arguments by Israeli, Palestinian, and other Arab scholars and medievalists, politicians, authors, and lay contributors to popular culture and

[4] My use of "Palestine" here refers solely to the name of the land, and not to the people or the political entities associated with the State of Palestine. "Israel-Palestine" indicates the political entity in the land of Palestine; it is hyphenated to acknowledge the two claims, by the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority respectively, to ownership over the land. While I will also use "Palestine" in reference to a political entity, as a parallel usage to "Israel" for the State of Israel, I do not intend the conflation of the name of the land and the political organizations that lay claim to the land. For the purpose of this thesis, then, both Israel and Palestine aim to inhabit (the land of) Palestine.

mobilized for differing, often opposing, ends — although, significantly, common national origin or loyalty does not guarantee common political conclusions or agreement on the "facts" of the Crusader past. On a broader level, this study investigates national histories and communal memory and theorizes their employment as political devices in nationalist movements. Within the specific context of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the modern State of Israel, this study explores the relationship between historical narratives and land claims, and hence the modern discussions of the validity of the Zionist-Crusader analogy and the application of Crusade history to supporting or challenging contemporary political-religious claims to the land of Israel-Palestine.[5]

As this study is historiographical in nature, the primary sources are texts containing either a historical narrative of Israel-Palestine's Crusader past or an interpretation of the political implications of these narratives. Since the pool for potential primary sources is so large, I have limited my selection to one or two sources from each of a variety of voices that participate in the Zionist-Crusader discourse; my hope in doing so is to achieve an overview of the wide variety in the origin and application of instances of this phenomenon. The study attempts, thus, not a comprehensive catalogue of this phenomenon but an analysis of the use of a national history for political ends in which a few diverse sources have been selected in hopes that the breadth of societies they cover

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[5] I explicitly do not intend to argue one way or another for the substantiality of the Zionist-Crusader analogy, but rather to assert the appearance of substantiality and to leave open the possibility of its actuality. In other words, I offer a historiographical or anthropological analysis based on the fact that many people perceive a real similarity between the medieval and modern experience of occupation of the land of Palestine; this perception of reality ensures that I may analyze the events as those experienced as real, without attaching a truth value to this reality. This is, then, a note that I treat the Zionist-Crusader analogy as *a reality of experience* and judge that to be satisfactorily "real" to be the subject of my study. I do not, however, intend nor desire to discuss the validity of the analogy on a historical or political basis; its importance in the minds of many people proves the validity of an anthropological study of the analogy.

will contribute to a more well developed and widely applicable theoretical analysis. That said, the primary sources constituting the main body of data for this study are of the following types: a review of Israeli scholarship on the Crusades by a Palestinian Arab, a *New York Times* Op-Ed by an Israeli author, two historical works on the Crusades by Israeli scholars, the memoir of an Israeli Crusade archaeologist, a religious treatise by an Egyptian Muslim, and a blog post by a Palestinian Arab activist and political advisor. Details on individual authors and texts are found below with the accompanying analyses.

This study cites as secondary sources other historiographical works on the Zionist-Crusader analogy and its appearance as a politicized history; for this, David Ohana's book *From Canaanites to Crusaders: The Origins of Israeli Mythology* is invaluable. Theoretical texts also form a significant base of this study, informing both the selection of primary sources and the discussion that follows; this category I have populated with the ideas of Michel Foucault, Pierre Nora, Walter Benjamin, and Jean Baudrillard.

The historical myth of Salah ad-Din, the famed Kurdish Muslim conqueror who united Syria and Egypt and, more relevant for the purposes of this study, reclaimed Jerusalem in 1187 from the Frankish Crusaders, is treated in this study as a subset of the Zionist-Crusader analogy. I have utilized a variety of sources, both secondary and primary, in sketching a history and analyses of the legacy, medieval and modern, of Salah ad-Din. An essay by Islamic historian Carole Hillenbrand, which outlines the development of a Western European myth of Salah ad-Din through a survey of several key Western texts mentioning him, serves as my central source for the first section of my

argument. I work to supplement her European timeline with a set of sources by indigenous—that is, Levantine or Egyptian—authors on Salah ad-Din and thereby to trace the development of the myth in the region once home and host to Salah ad-Din. Hillenbrand's article presents a data set supporting the absence of references to Salah ad-Din in indigenous writings from the fourteenth through the nineteenth centuries. According to Hillenbrand, after this six century gap Salah ad-Din reentered the indigenous awareness and was used in rhetoric directed against Western European imperialism. My research, however, provides data and analyses on what I perceive to be two significant shortcomings of Hillenbrand's formation. The first concerns her characterization of the fourteenth through nineteenth centuries as a period of silence on Salah ad-Din in indigenous texts, a characterization I argue fails to account for al-Maqrizi, among other indigenous authors, who mention Salah ad-Din. The second is the underdevelopment of the role of anti-colonialist politics in Hillenbrand's analysis of the contemporary appearances of the myth of Salah ad-Din. This latter issue receives the greater share of my efforts below. Working against and within Hillenbrand's argument, then, the first section of this thesis attempts to provide a focused development of the anti-colonialist dimensions of the myth of Salah ad-Din, particularly as it is used within the discursive framework of the Zionist-Crusader analogy.

The second and final movement of this thesis is devoted to developing the Zionist-Crusader analogy and populating a discussion of the discourse surrounding this analogy with sources from Israeli, Palestinian, and other Arab authors in the modern period. The argument I advance in these sections is this: the analogy is deployed

primarily in the context of Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflicts for the respective purposes of supporting a claim to the land of Palestine and encouraging rhetoric against Israel. History, as the practice of constructing seemingly true narratives of the past, is central to the conflict as a means for establishing the legitimacy of contested political positions; its importance in this context becomes immediately relevant to these analyses, and is developed further below. Drawing from the cultural theory and historico-political sources discussed above, I argue for a theorization of history as a disciplined political practice that, in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflicts, constructs visions of the future.

Discourse and Dialectic: Foucault, Benjamin, and Baudrillard

In his 1976 work *The History of Sexuality*, historian and bodacious philosophizer Michel Foucault constructs a theory of the social production of the individual. Taking the legacy of Victorian "prudishness" and modern sexuality as a case study, Foucault theorizes the limits of the conceivable, and sketches a system of relationships between the individual and society such that a realm of the thinkable is elucidated. This sphere of the possible Foucault terms a "discourse": the individual within discourse—and all individuals are produced by it—is bound to *be*, in an existential use of the word, in the ways and channels prescribed by that discourse. If "power" is the presence, like voltage, directing movements through the circuits of social relations, resistance—in the Foucauldian, not electromagnetic, sense, although the overlap is amusing—is a practice acting contrary to the directives of power. Power coerces individuals in discourse to

follow the dictates and pathways of that discourse: discourse defines the routes of the possible, and power polices these lines. And yet, power transcends simple repression: discourse is created through power, which reveals the productive operation of power. Power produces the realm of the possible in a positive, inclusive manner, rather than in a negative mode by removing the impossible.

One of the most significant of Foucault's argument in this text, however, comes as a twist at this point: the relationship between power and resistance, while oppositional, is also one of commonality. That is to say, resistance, too, is scripted by discourse such that certain of the pathways reserved as possible within a discourse are dedicated to the practices of resistance, while others are compliance with discursive dictates. The result, in either case, is the containment of possibilities, be they of resistance or of cooperation, to those directions allowed for by the discourse itself. Resistances are "inscribed in [relations of power] as an irreducible opposite": they are accounted for and contained. The potential for truly radical action—necessarily an extra-discursive entity—is neutralized as the modes for challenging discourse are themselves provided by discourse. In this way are conflicts about a discourse both created by and contained with that same discourse. Those within the discourse fight one another on terms set by the discourse itself, sending volley after volley of prescribed thoughts: each idea, conceived as a challenge to an opponent, is deployed and received only because it is possible within the limits of the discourse that contains it.

Expanding on the relationship between discourse, power, and resistance, Foucault writes:

> We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it.[6]

Within the discourse on sexuality that forms the focus of Foucault's analyses in *The History of Sexuality*, homosexuality and the vocabulary of a medico-sexual discourse constitute an illustration of the possibilities of resistance. Foucault describes in the excerpt above the complex nature of discourse, simultaneously encouraging and disrupting itself: it both "reinforces [power], but also undermines and exposes it", working for itself and against itself with one and the same set of possibilities. Foucault illustrates this Janus-like operation of discourses:

> There is no question that the appearance in nineteenth-century psychiatry, jurisprudence and literature of a whole series of discourses on the species and subspecies of homosexuality, inversion, pederasty, and 'psychic hermaphroditism' made possible a strong advance of social controls into this area of 'perversity'; but it also made possible the formation of a 'reverse' discourse: homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or 'naturality' be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified.[7]

Homosexuality in the nineteenth century fought for legitimacy, not on terms of another discourse, but within the confines of the same discourse that defined it as unnatural. The effort to valorize homosexuality was grounded in "the same vocabulary" and "the same categories" that constructed it as illegitimate. Resistance employs the discourse it purports to reject: it is a reversal of direction within a discourse, or the recombination of discursively approved and hence conceivable categories so as to produce a different

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[6] Foucault, Michel, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction,* Trans: Robert Hurley, New York: Vintage Books, 1990: 101.

[7] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* 101.

conclusion from the same elements. The reuse of discursive vocabulary in a resistance against that discourse illustrates Foucault's assertion that resistance is "inscribed" within discursive power relations.

I use Foucault's notions of discourse and resistance to form a theoretical armature for this thesis, upon which I will hang my analyses of the Zionist-Crusader analogy as one expression of the larger discourse framing understandings of the Israel-Palestine conflict. This is to support my argument that challenges and reactions to the analogy's deployment are interpreted and constructed within the confines of the discourse, and that, ultimately, argument within the discourse, while it features a diverse set of approaches and critiques, never manages to surpass the discourse itself. Rather, arguments for or against the legitimacy of the analogy and interpretations of its political implications are discursively constituted and thus serve to perpetuate the analogy itself: the phenomenon I describe is an intra-discursive conversation, save perhaps for one voice, that of American anthropologist Adrian Boas, whose quips on the form of the discourse rather than its content suggest he speaks from a location partially removed from the analogic discourse itself. He is, to be sure, imbedded in a separate discourse and thus spared the existential terror of being entirely outside all discourse—although Foucault's theorizing of discourse mercifully does not allow for an extra-discursive existence—but Boas' instance is one at least slightly external to the analogic discourse home to all other voices cited in this thesis.

Foucault's location of agency, however, does not find a place in this argument, as he places agency in the discursive institutions themselves: discourse acts on itself.

Concepts and vocabulary are agents in discourse, not individuals. Individuals, rather, are subjects of, in the Foucauldian sense of "subjected to", discourse. Thus, they are not shapers of discourse but followers in the paths cut by agentive categories. Individuals are observable manifestations of discourse, demonstrative of changes and resistances occurring on a discursive level, subjects of discursive power, but not full actors on the discursive stage. The argument I extract from my sources, to the contrary, places agency firmly—but not exclusively—within the individual. The ideas of Pierre Nora, a prominent theorist of the relationship between history and memory, and the historical example of Egyptian novelist Farah Antun, both discussed in the next chapter, outline a discursive event brought about by agentive individuals. In this light, I offer this pair as a counterargument to the Foucauldian subject and the limitation of agency in the individual, although this is, regrettably, not a point I have space to dwell upon here.

This brings me then to the meaning of history, which I have found to take a different form in my sources than I anticipated upon beginning my research. Each of the sources discussing the Crusades and Salah ad-Din was, quite simply, discussing events of a distant past. Even more recent sources such as Amos Oz's intervention discussed above, which are political opinion pieces and commentaries on events in the contemporary Levant, demonstrate a deep grounding in history that informs their interpretation of the modern-day situation. My anticipation, then, was that the answer to what these sources were about was straightforward: sources on the past are about the past, and sources on the present are about the present. Texts on things in the past are historical, and writings about contemporary events are political. But of course, nothing—especially not in academic

pursuits—can be reduced to a simplistic understanding. I find now that all of my sources that fit within the analogic discourse—recall, all save for Boas, whose placement is less clear to identify—are about the future in one respect or another, and the past is deployed as a rhetorical device in political debates today as a means to legitimize different agendas in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict. As with all archaeology in Israel regardless of the period, statements as to the facts of the past are inherently and intensely politically charged, as all facts are immediately placed within a historical narrative that is used to "reveal" the truth of past occupants of a debated land. It is a prime illustration of Jean Baudrillard's comment that, "What we are after is no longer glory but identity, no longer an illusion but, on the contrary, an accumulation of evidence — anything that can serve as a testimony to a historical existence…".[8] Past approaches to history, says Baudrillard, focused on the cultivation of grandeur—of a glorious past for a people that presented not the truth of their ancestral origins, but a sense of their power and fated authority. A change has occurred, however, and history has ceased to concern an "illusion" of mythic ancients. Now, we take history as the "true" narrative of our past: who we are, our identity, says Baudrillard, is drawn from who we were. Efforts to construct a valid identity in the present, then, turn to the past; history becomes the selection and compilation of past moments that form a present sense of self. History is the "accumulation of evidence" for an identity now, for to exist today we must first prove beyond the shadow of scientific—read, contemporary—doubt that we existed in the past. Archaeological evidence, chronicles from centuries ago—in short, artifacts and primary

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[8] Baudrillard, Jean, *The Illusion of the End*, Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1994.

sources on the past, become things that "can serve as a testimony to a historical existence", and validate the identity of a people today.

This is much in line with the present state of archaeology in Israel-Palestine, a disciplined practice infamously prone to participating in or sparking political controversies. Archaeology and narratives of Israel-Palestine's history are perceived as movements toward a land claim; the legitimacy gained by history and archaeology's scientific and procedural methodology is transferred into political legitimacy for an assertion of the ability of the State of Israel to continue existing, or for supporting the Palestinian right to return. While this thesis will not cover all periods of archaeology and hence, will not discuss debates over Jewish civilization of the Antique period and the notion of "original occupants" of the land, it will focus on the meaning of Crusade history and present analyses applicable to studies of the politics of other periods of archaeology and history.

Thus, history in the context of the analogic discourse is about the future: it is a study of the events of the past and the construction of a narrative from them that allows for the possibility or impossibility of a course of succeeding events. Walter Benjamin discussed the relationship between the past and the present, and, while not about the future, Benjamin's theorization of the "dialectical image" is applicable to this thesis's analyses of the historical narratives produced within the analogic discourse. Benjamin writes:

> It is not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, an image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words: image is

> dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is purely temporal, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: not temporal in nature but figural [*bildlich*]. Only dialectical images are genuinely historical ….[9]

Only dialectical images are genuinely historical, he writes. An image, according to Benjamin, is the intersection of past events and the present ones. He differentiates, however, between "the past" and "what has been", and this distinction correlates to his understanding of "dialectics". With "the past", Benjamin refers to the material facts, the "truth" of the events. When we discuss the past we create an "image" of what has been: there may be perfect overlap between the truth and the constructed narrative, or there may be little, but Benjamin's vocabulary distinguishes between the image of what has been and the actuality, known or lost, of the past. Discussions of the past, then, are "dialectics": it is similar to Foucault's notion of discourse in that it is a social reality apart from a physical one, as well as a realm or a body of dialogue and ideas on a thing—in this case, the past. Dialectics are the streams of thought on things, be they past or present; they are discourses that, seen in a diachronic manner, appear to be moving throughout time in a changing and winding way. When dialectics on the past—what has been—and one on the present—what is now—intersect, an image is formed that connects the two moments. This connection, existing in the dialectic image, is the locus of history: a conjunction of human narratives on the present and the past.

Benjamin's assertion that "*only* dialectical images are genuinely historical" casts history as a human construction; it is a practice preeminently involved with constructed narratives and perceptions of truth. Furthermore, the terminological differentiation

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[9] Benjamin, Walter, *Arcades Project*, [N3, 1]: 463.

between “the past” or “present” and “what has been” or “now” puts in relief two distinct types of relationship, which Benjamin terms “temporal” and “dialectical”. Temporal relationships are not dialectical: this is the relationship of the past and the present, two concepts representing the truth behind the parallel dialectical constructions of “what has been” and “what is now”. Benjamin’s nuancing between temporal and dialectical relationships, and his assertion that history occurs only along dialectical exchanges—between *perceptions* of temporal events—may be extended to a discussion of the future. The future, then, is a temporal entity, and exists (or will exist) in a temporal relationship with the present and the past; the dialectic partner for “the future”, drawing inspiration from Benjamin’s theorizations, is “what will be”. And, the dialectic of “what will be” is, of course, a question—indeed, an anxiety—at the heart of the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Authors within the context of the conflict engage with “what has been” as a means of creating a dialectic on “what will be”; the “now”, meanwhile, acts as a mediator through which the two dialectics must pass. The past is viewed through a lens of the present such that “what will be” is understood as a laboratory for addressing concerns of the “now”; the form of “what will be” is thus negotiated such that the needs of the “now” will be accounted for in the future. History, here, is still a dialectical practice, but it concerns the relationship between “what was” and “what will be”, with the “now” as a locus of discourse that guides both assumptions and techniques for shaping the dialectic of the future. It is on this basis, then, that I argue for a theorization of history as a practice using the materials of the past to build an image of a future. History, as a dialectic and discursive practice in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, is about the time to

come. The Crusades, then, are one of several poignant events in the past the offers a fertile ground for cultivating a dialectic of "what was" to interplay to a desirable outcome with the analogic discourse of the "now"; the result of this is an intervention in the course of the future as predicted by other extant dialectics and a substitution of a "what will be" more acceptable—from the perspective of preference or probability—to the historian performing the dialectic work.

Chapter 2: Historiography of Salah ad-Din, 1187 to 1914

Carole Hillenbrand and Modern Scholarship on Salah ad-Din

In 2005 Carole Hillenbrand wrote an article on the genealogy of Salah ad-Din's legend in the West, tracing appearances of his figure in literature from contemporary twelfth century chroniclers to contemporary appearances in texts, media, and debates.[10] In this article, "The Evolution of the Saladin Legend in the West", Hillenbrand constructs a timeline of Salah ad-Din's legendary self. Her analysis treats three central topics of this "instance of cultural transfer" between East and West: depictions of Salah ad-Din by contemporaneous Western authors, the subsequent development of a European legend of Salah ad-Din, and an explanation for Salah ad-Din's "remarkable posthumous fame" in Europe. These three divisions map onto the main movements in Hillenbrand's essay. Accordingly, after discussing the treatment of Salah ad-Din in the texts of Frankish Crusaders during his lifetime—notably William of Tyre and Ernoul, Balian of Ibelin's squire—Hillenbrand continues her chronology with Dante (d. 1321), Boccaccio (d. 1375), Gotthold Lessing (d. 1781), Sir Walter Scott (d. 1832), and the final broad swath of "twentieth-century Orientalist scholarship". In this movement she identifies the Salah ad-Din of legend in the West as a man "of no ordinary mettle" but of fantastic virtue and power,[11] a man so honorable and heroic that he inspired awe and demanded esteem from

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[10] I take Hillenbrand to mean Christian Europe when she writes "the West", though she never directly defines the term and leaves it, consequently, to be nebulously understood at best.

[11] Carole Hillenbrand, "The Evolution of the Saladin Legend in the West", 12.

his troops and his vanquished Frankish foes alike. Having finished her timeline in the twentieth century, Hillenbrand concludes with a final set of thoughts on Salah ad-Din's legend in the West, emphasizing Europe's "deep-rooted" "fascination" with him.[12] This seems an apt end to an article on Salah ad-Din's image in the West, but the next and final paragraph reverses direction and opts instead for a discussion of Salah ad-Din's legendary form in the modern Middle East. Indeed, she gives the last words in her article to a point ostensibly off-topic. She writes:

> By a curious irony, the Muslim Middle East discovered or rediscovered Saladin only rather late, in the nineteenth century. By a circuitous route Muslims learned of this great hero of the nineteenth century at the dawn of the colonial period when Christian Arabs translated European writings on the Crusades and told their Muslim fellow-Arabs about the exploits of Saladin. The Muslim world then embraced him and has subsequently re-created him in the image of the charismatic leader who will unite the Middle East against the forces of external aggression. Many modern Arab heads of state aspire to be the second Saladin.[13]

Hillenbrand spends her last line referencing the emulation of Salah ad-Din by modern Arab politicians**.** Two examples of this phenomenon immediately come to mind. The first: Gamal Abdel Nasser, Egyptian president in the 1950s and 60s, explicitly aimed to be a new Salah ad-Din in the interests of pan-Arabism.[14] And the second: Yasser Arafat, who headed the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority from the 1960s till his death in 2004, was lauded as a second Salah ad-Din for his efforts at gaining a Palestinian state in place of Israel.[15]

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[12] Ibid., 13.

[13] Ibid., 13.

[14] David Ohana, *The Origins of Israeli Mythology: Neither Canaanites nor Crusaders,* translated by David Maisel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 132-133.

[15] Amos Oz, "The Specter of Saladin", *The New York Times* (New York: 28 July 2000): A21.

These men, then, are illustrations of Hillenbrand's sparse closing sentence.[16] But all this begs the question of relevance: why does Hillenbrand end her article on the life of a legend *in the West* with comments on its presence in *non-Western* politics? She credits Christian Arabs with the transmission of the Western Salah ad-Din legend to the Middle East, noting that from there Muslim Arabs recast Salah ad-Din as a hero suited to their particular political needs. Hillenbrand frames this transference as a "curious irony" whereby Muslims drew a political hero from a European legend. However, lurking behind this claim is an imperialistic urge to claim the myth of Salah ad-Din, due to its significant growth in a European context, as a European development; Arab efforts to reclaim Salah ad-Din as an anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist resistance tool are an "irony" only in that they imply a failure to follow the expected power hierarchies in an imperial system. What Hillenbrand calls an irony, thus, I see as the genuine efforts of anti-imperialist forces in the Middle East to reclaim Salah ad-Din as a myth to figurehead their struggle. Furthermore, the "circuitous route" of translation and retranslation of the myth of Salah ad-Din is an explanation that glosses over the myth of Baybars in the Middle East: rather than offering a reason for why Middle Eastern authors focus less on Salah ad-Din's myth between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, Hillenbrand labels it an "irony"—something unexpected, contrary to what is proper, and perhaps an academic excuse for dismissing a topic that should not be dismissed—and skips ahead to the modern day. Back to the myth of Baybars, then, and two simple counterpoints to Hillenbrand's paragraph. First, Salah ad-Din was not simply dropped by Middle Eastern

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[16] Carole Hillenbrand, "Saladin in the West", 13.

sources following the defeat of the Crusaders, as he continues to appear in non-European writings throughout the period Hillenbrand blocks off as the "European centuries" of the myth. Specifically, Salah ad-Din remains mythologically potent in regional politics in the Levant, and sources continue to interact with the memory of his acts in the battles with the Franks. One such source, al-Maqrizi's fifteenth century history of Salah ad-Din, is developed as a counterexample later in this chapter. Second, a decrease in references to Salah ad-Din may also be influenced by the increase in relative importance of the myth of Baybars, the fourteenth century founder of the Mamluk dynasty who achieved considerable victories against the Franks in Egypt. Salah ad-Din was not, thus, forgotten by Middle Eastern sources and only casually remembered—or "discovered", as if these authors never knew their own—in the nineteenth century, but was partially supplanted by the myth of Baybars as the latter proved more resonant to Middle Eastern authors.[17] Thus the presence of Salah ad-Din in nineteenth century Middle Eastern sources was, far from the accidental or tardy reappearance described by Hillenbrand, a deliberate reclamation of an indigenous historical figure and a purposeful refashioning of his memory into a useful politicized myth.

To read Hillenbrand as a history of developments of a legend culminating in its

[17] I will not provide further discussion of Baybars, as my primary concern is tracing the appearances of Salah ad-Din rather than analyzing his absences. It is sufficient for my argument to note that there was not a total absence of references to Salah ad-Din from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and that any reduction in the amount of these references may be explained in part by a preference for Baybars.

current presence in Arab politics I believe is a misguided step.[18] I offer instead this study, which proposes to build upon the lacunae in Hillenbrand's argument I have outlined above and to provide a discussion of the development of the Salah ad-Din legend in the Middle East. My hope is that, in light of Hillenbrand's text, this chapter will elucidate the formation and various manifestations of the Salah ad-Din legend across centuries and countries, provide insights into its existence today in Muslim Middle East, and analyze the deployment and significance of this one historical legend in certain arenas of Arab politics today. In short, after framing Hillenbrand's article as one portion of a wider history, this chapter proposes to answer two questions: How did the legend of Salah ad-Din acquire its current connotation as unifier and liberator in the Muslim Arab Middle East, and how and to what ends is it being mobilized by Middle Eastern politicians?

Medieval Sources: Contemporary Muslim Accounts

There exist today several Medieval sources on Salah ad-Din's character and acts, as biography or campaign chronicle, from contemporaneous Muslim authors. Here, I have selected three authors for their diversity of literary style, relationship to Salah ad-

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[18] As much of this study will be discussing "Arab politics" and the "Arab world", I wish to pause and define my terms. More accurately, I wish to defend my use of "Arab" in these senses, as they may seem at first a gross generalization and an unjust marginalization of non-Arab groups lumped into that term. Rather, my use of "Arab" in this thesis is an attempt to provide an alternative to the language of the "Middle East", which is potentially problematic if its reinforces the notions of the West--understood as Northern and Western Europe and other loci sharing in that culture--as the center of the world. In short, "Middle East" can beg the response "middle of where and east of what?". However, as many individuals self-identify as "Middle Easterners" I will not cease entirely my use of "Middle East" language; I have defined "Arab", therefore, as an alternative for moments that I believe potentially problematic for "Middle East". That said, my use of "Arab", is not to be understood as an ethnic identifier but as a cultural one. *Al-Nahda*, or "Arab Renaissance", a period of intensive production of Arabic-language literature and drama in the early twentieth century, created a shared culture in the set of lands populated by Arabic speakers. This culture, in reference to the link of Arabic language established during *al-Nahda*, I am calling "Arab", even though many of the individuals participating in it are not ethnic Arabs.

Din, and—as political writings often go—the degree of flattery and underlying intent in their records. From among such figures as Ibn Abi i-Tayy, Abu Shama, Ibn al-Athir, ‘Imad ad-Din, and Baha’ ad-Din, I have chosen for discussion the latter three, all eye witnesses and all contained, in part, in Francesco Gabrieli’s *Arab Historians of the Crusades*. The first of these, ‘Izz ad-Din Ibn al-Athir (555/1160–630/1233),[19] is primarily known for his universal history of the Muslim lands, although the quality of that work—both in its scholarly tone and coverage of an expansive range of topics—has established Ibn al-Athir as one of the key Muslim sources on twelfth and thirteenth century Crusades. His passages on Salah ad-Din’s defeat of the Franks in the Third Crusade, and the attendant reconquest of Jerusalem, provide compelling fodder for enthusiasts of Salah ad-Din’s modern mythology; I too, for my part, jump eagerly at these chapters. The second, ‘Imad ad-Din al-Isfahani (519/1125–597/1201), worked under Salah ad-Din first as secretary and second as chancellor, and left a large oeuvre of poetry and historical writings as his legacy. Of the latter category, I have made use of his volume dedicated to the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Salah ad-Din; this account, as with that by Ibn al-Athir, details material highly relevant to modern Jerusalem-centric rhetoric on Salah ad-Din as liberator. The third author, Baha’ ad-Din Ibn Shaddad (539/1145–632/1234), provides a different perspective on Salah ad-Din, as his source comes in the form of a biography of his Sultan and master. Baha’ ad-Din served Salah ad-Din and his household for five years; his description of Salah ad-Din’s personality forms both the first section of

[19] I have listed the authors’ dates first in the Hijri calendar format, and second translated into the Gregorian equivalent, with which I am more familiar. Each of these years has been gratefully retrieved from Gabrieli’s volume. That said, when writing on events generally, rather than referring to specific personages or quoting from sources, I have opted solely for my preferred Christian format.

his biography and a corollary to the narratives of war and conquest in Jerusalem provided by the two previously listed authors. His work is distinguished, in Gabrieli's words, for its reliability as a historical source and for constituting "the most complete portrait we have of Saladin as the Muslims saw him".[20] This accuracy as a Muslim perspective — according to Gabrieli — is particularly pertinent to my study of depictions of Salah ad-Din not drawn from or dependent on the Western chronicles discussed in Hillenbrand's article.[21] It also marks Baha' ad-Din's source as an appropriate launching point, keeping in mind meanwhile that I am seeking historical content to place into dialogue with the content of Salah ad-Din's modern political legend, and thence to tease out the relationship between today's memory of Salah ad-Din as unifier-liberator and his depiction in these sources.

By way of beginnings, then, I bring an overview of Baha' ad-Din's chapter on Salah ad-Din's character. The portrait begins with an introduction to his legacy, which—and I type this with a wry entertainment—is actually constructing his legacy rather than reporting it; operating as a narrative frame for the ensuing sections in the portrait, the introduction is populated with religious rhetoric that begins with a broad statement on canonical Islamic theology and immediately situates Salah ad-Din proudly and properly within its realm. After naming the five pillars of Islam and reinforcing them with the authority of *hadith*, Baha' ad-Din names Salah ad-Din in the next sentence as "a man of firm faith, one who often had God's name on his lips". And again, a few lines later, it is

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[20] Francesco Gabrieli, ed., *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), xxix.

[21] Namely Medieval Frankish chroniclers like William of Tyre and Balian, as well as later authors including Dante, Boccaccio, G. E. Lessing, Sir Walter Scott, and certain Orientalists of the last two centuries.

written: “His faith was firm, within the bounds of health speculation, and it had the approval of the highest authorities”.[22] Of prime importance to an understanding of Salah ad-Din, then, is the fact of his strong and *orthodox* faith. Baha’ ad-Din’s Salah ad-Din is more than pious, although he is certainly that: he is pious, and his “approval” by those outranking him implies both a respect of and cooperation with an established hierarchy as well as a certain interest in social stability and order on his part. From the discussions of Salah ad-Din’s faith we receive a personality that is simultaneously an epitome of orthodoxy and a bulwark against social disruption, a role model for his subordinates and a good servant of his superiors: both corroborate Baha’ ad-Din’s depiction of Salah ad-Din as the exemplary Muslim. The introduction continues to expand on this theme, confirming that Salah ad-Din upholds the five pillars and lives in the path of Islam.

From there, the portrait splits into sections on specific traits of Salah ad-Din. These are: justice, generosity, courage and steadfastness, “zeal” in holy war, “endurance and determination to win merit in God’s eyes”, humanity and forgiveness, and finally, as conclusion, “his unfailing goodness”.[23] It is an unerringly laudatory portrait if ever there was one. Again, we see themes of excellence in religious matters, as well as an interjection of positive qualities of the more mundane type: generosity and clemency are mentioned multiple times in the sections, as well as prowess in war. This last is often juxtaposed with religious language, serving as praise not solely for skill at human war but also for holy war. After all, Baha’ ad-Din paints holy war as Salah ad-Din’s favorite kind: he writes, “Saladin was more assiduous and zealous in this [the Holy War] than in

[22] Gabrieli, 87, 88.

[23] Ibid., 87-113.

anything else".[24] Even passages describing Salah ad-Din as such things as "brave, gallant, firm, intrepid in any circumstance" contextualize admiration of him in Islam; the sentence preceding this list of virtues claims, on the authority of the Prophet, that "God loves courage".[25] Another attribution to Salah ad-Din, again made in a military context, comments on his ability to create "a sense of unity" among his troops, a comment I found noteworthy in light of the adoption of his legend today as a political symbol of the desire for unity within the Muslim and Arab worlds. It is one of many references to the unifying power of his presence.[26]

If that, then, is Salah ad-Din, then let his portrait stand up to accounts of his deeds in Jerusalem. Ibn al-Athir writes of the battle for Jerusalem in 538/1187 and emphasizes, like Baha' ad-Din, the dynamic of holy war infused in the motivations and thoughts of all in attendance. Of the Christians at Jerusalem he states that each "would choose death rather than see the Muslims in power in their city" and that great sacrifices were "a part of their duty to defend the city". The Muslims as well "looked on the fight as an absolute religious obligation". The intensity of religious devotion underpinning the battle insured that it was a bloody and hard engagement; in the words of Ibn al-Athir, the "fiercest struggle imaginable". Continuing in the vein of holy war, Ibn al-Athir records the death of certain Muslims as a loss to the faith and acknowledges the fallen as martyrs.[27]

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[24] Ibid., 99.

[25] Ibid., 97.

[26] Another is found on Ibid., 141, and says of the Salah ad-Din's soldiers that they "charged like one man" and as a result, managed a successful attack on the Franks.

[27] Ibid., 140-141.

The climactic moment in the battle—which is, perhaps, marked with a slight emotional spike to signify narrative climax, for Ibn al-Athir's prose carries a level tone throughout—starts with the breaching of the walls and their "fill[ing] with the usual materials" and culminates, in a great catharsis, with the fall of Jerusalem to the Muslims. The Franks had grown "desperate" and weary of the Muslim army, which is described as "busy", "effective", "continuous", and "violent", such that the very language has a rhythm that pulls the reader through the passage with a forward motion to imitate the great momentum and force of the conquering troops. It is a quiet move on Ibn al-Athir's part, but his prose truly carries the audience through the moment of conquest as the force of faith—and Greek fire—carries the Muslims through the walls of Jerusalem. Overpowered by Salah ad-Din's army, the Franks request safe-conduct in return for their surrender of the city. Salah ad-Din refuses. With a continuation of the fast narrative pace and thus the excitement from the previous scene, Ibn al-Athir relates Salah ad-Din's response to the Franks: '"We shall deal with you," Salah ad-Din said, "just as you dealt with the population of Jerusalem when you took it in 492/1099, with murder and enslavement and other such savageries!"'.[28] It is a merciless response, and the straightforwardness with which Ibn al-Athir relays it conveys a flippant satisfaction and the desperation of the Franks. There is a certain pleasure in the author's choice to begin the paragraph on the terms with a note on the prowess of the Muslim army, markedly linking the Franks' fear—synonymous with respect for that passage's purpose—with their acknowledgement of "how violently" the Muslims attacked, plus several other words of

[28] Ibid., 141.

praise on the Muslims' performance.[29] The narration of Salah ad-Din's refusal of the Franks' initial terms, then, is a dramatic announcement and a satisfied relation of the dispensation of justice.

So, Salah ad-Din's is a merciless response, true, and one that contradicts Baha' ad-Din's mention that Salah ad-Din "was never irate",[30] but it is also an act that simultaneously corroborates 'Imad ad-Din's thoughts on "humiliation" after the events at Hattin. The Battle of Hattin, enacted in the hills by the Sea of Galilee to the north of Jerusalem, was both a previous victory against the Franks and a sister battle in prestige to the Siege of Jerusalem. Of it 'Imad ad-Din writes:

> This defeat of the enemy, this *our* victory occurred on a Saturday, and *the humiliation proper to the men of Saturday was inflicted on the men of Sunday*, who had been lions and now were reduced to the level of miserable sheep.[31]

From the comparison of the "miserable" Franks to the Jews, a group Gabrieli notes was "despised", and 'Imad ad-Din's personal pride a the success he describes as "ours", it is hard to imagine 'Imad ad-Din does but approve of Salah ad-Din's victory and the humiliation of the Franks it caused. Frequently does the theme of revenge against the Franks appear, above as in Ibn al-Athir's version of the terms scene, and again as in 'Imad ad-Din's "rejoicing" at the execution of the defeated Templars, the defiling and abuse of Franks departing from Jerusalem, and the "celebrat[ion]" of the removal of the "hellish Franks" that constituted the "purifi[cation]" of the holy city.[32] And ever present

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid., 99.

[31] Ibid., 134. Italics added.

[32] Ibid., 138, 163, 161, and 163, respectively.

in the descriptions of these events is Ibn al-Athir's ringing proclamation of the "memorable" day of conquest "on which the Muslim flags were hoisted over the walls of Jerusalem": the Franks would trudge, weary and harassed, under the waving banner of a collective Muslim success—of "our victory".[33]

Thus, while the strain of anger is divergent from Baha' ad-Din's portrait of Salah ad-Din, it is highly consistent with reports of Salah ad-Din's zeal for holy war. Furthermore, rage is not at all at odds with the vengeful pleasure with which other Muslim authors beheld the fall of Christian Jerusalem; rather, vindictiveness is a strong theme in the chronicles of Salah ad-Din's campaign to retake Jerusalem. From Baha' ad-Din's portrait we can understand the significance of Islam in Salah ad-Din's legacy, and specifically of the orthodox piety that saturated and informed, and indeed even enabled, all he did in his life. And from 'Imad ad-Din and Ibn al-Athir's accounts we receive a memory of a fierce, religiously mandated battle and a victory accompanied by joy for the rescue—the redemption—of the holy city and celebration of the humiliation of the Franks.

To step back for a moment: it is worth noting that the broad themes of Salah ad-Din's early legacy as portrayed by these three authors are his orthodox piety and his justified humiliation of the Franks. The thirteenth century, then, knew Salah ad-Din differently from the twentieth which, as Carole Hillenbrand notes, prizes the memory of Salah ad-Din who liberated Jerusalem from the Christians and Salah ad-Din who successfully unified diverse and warring Muslim populations in a common cause. The

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[33] Ibid., 142.

theme of liberation is present in thirteenth century sources, but more often the fall of Jerusalem is portrayed as a "purification" of the city of the unclean influence of the Franks. In this way, the reclamation of Jerusalem and its refashioning as a Muslim city are framed as a conquest over another power; the language of "liberation", meanwhile, emphasizes a disempowered community throwing off the oppressive burden of a more powerful people. The event in both cases is similar—the transfer of Jerusalem from Frankish to Muslim hands—but the construction of power dynamics differs: in the thirteenth century, there is a battle between equals with Salah ad-Din *conquering*; in the twentieth, the battle is between unequals with equality as the objective of the disenfranchised, thereby connoting a relationship of oppression. The implications of this "importation" of a modern power dynamic into a historical moment will be discussed at length in the following chapters; for now, this point is important in that it brings to the fore the suggested power dynamics that background the writing of a text, like 'Imad ad-Din's or Ibn al-Athir's, that uses the language of "purification" and "conquest"—the language of power seizure.

Al-Maqrizi, the Cairo Citadel, and Hillenbrand's "Silence" Thesis

After the initial round of chronicles mentioning Salah ad-Din there arises the question of the presence of his personage in Middle Eastern sources that stretches from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. Hillenbrand writes that the myth was located in Europe during this period, and that Europeans performed the primary work of developing the myth in these centuries. The Middle East, then, handed off the myth to the Franks

after they returned from the Crusades with Salah ad-Din's legacy encoded in their chronicles. After these years, the myth returned to the Middle East in the nineteenth century and ended the six century hiatus of Salah ad-Din from the Arab world.

This argument, however, I disagree with, both on an ideological level — it has imperialist undertones — and a factual one. I have addressed the former in my above discussion of her use of "irony"; the latter concerns sources that challenge Hillenbrand's portrait of a period lacking in mentions of Salah ad-Din. As a counter-argument, then, I offer two mentions of Salah ad-Din in Arab sources in the years she marks as silent on Salah ad-Din.

The first comes in a fifteenth century[34] chronicle by Taqi al-Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn 'Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammad al-Maqrizi (766/1364 – 845/1442), an Egyptian historian writing two centuries after the death of Salah ad-Din.[35] The majority of al-Maqrizi's numerous works focus on the history of Egypt and show the Fatimid Dynasty a favorite topic of the author's. His most famous and long-lived work, the *Khitat*, however, spans the years from the beginning of Islam to his day and includes a portion on the Ayyubid kings, plus the catalogue of Cairo's monuments for which this text is remembered as an Arabic classic today.[36] Here he discusses policies and acts

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[34] Humphreys, Stephen R., Review of *A History of the Ayyubid Sultans of Egypt* by Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, R. J. C. Broadhurst. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 103, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1983): 450. Humphreys broadly describes al-Maqrizi's *Khitat* as a "15th-century chronicle", but gives no more specific date. I have been otherwise unable to find a reference to when al-Maqrizi wrote his *Khitat*, so I am using Humphreys dating although I am unsure, from the context of its usage in his article, if Humphreys is literally asserting a fifteenth century creation date for the text or was broadly characterizing al-Maqrizi's life (1364 – 1442), and hence his book, as fifteenth century.

[35] Rosenthal, F., "al-Maḳrīzī", *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Eds. P. Bearman et al, Brill Online, 2014, <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-makrizi-SIM_4838>.

[36] Al-Maqrizi. *A History of the Ayyubid Sultans of Egypt: Translated from the Arabic of al-Maqrizi*. Trans. and Ed. R. J. C. Broadhurst. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1980.

undertaken by Salah ad-Din as the first of the Ayyubid dynasts in Egypt. The presence of Salah ad-Din in al-Maqrizi's history proves the vitality of Salah ad-Din's legacy. Clearly, the myth was not absent from the Middle East, as Hillenbrand suggests, nor was Salah ad-Din forgotten until Christian Arabs translated Western sources and thereby allowed the Arab world to "remember" him.

Beyond challenging Hillenbrand's "silence" thesis, however, the *History of the Ayyubid Sultans of Egypt* contains descriptions of Salah ad-Din very much in line with the portraits by Salah ad-Din's medieval contemporaries. Many of the same traits mentioned by Ibn al-Athir, Baha' ad-Din, and 'Imad ad-Din appear again in al-Maqrizi's text, and thus suggest a continuation of the original construction of Salah ad-Din's character. In the beginning lines of the *History*, al-Maqrizi offers an introduction to Salah ad-Din. His birth date and place, his early life and family, his entry into the service of Nur-ad-Din Mahmud ibn-Zangi, and the growth of Salah ad-Din's authority in Egypt are all recorded. Emphasized, meanwhile, are Salah ad-Din's orthodox Sunni piety—important especially in the case of Egypt which, at the time of Salah ad-Din's arrival hosted the Shi'i Fatimid caliphate—and his expertise in statesmanship and military matters. These qualities, depicted as well in the twelfth century sources, are fundamental to the memory of Salah ad-Din. After two sentences relaying the year and place of Salah ad-Din's birth, al-Maqrizi notes that Salah ad-Din's upbringing was marked by "all the signs of good omen".[37] Then, the author follows in the next sentence with the note that a shaykh and imam wrote for Salah ad-Din a comprehensive collection of knowledge on

[37] Ibid., 36.

Islam, and concludes the anecdote with an announcement of Salah ad-Din's passion for this manual on religion.[38] "So great indeed was [Salah ad-Din's] enthusiasm for [the manual]," writes al-Maqrizi, "that he taught it to his young children and himself made them recite it back to him." Immediately following this, al-Maqrizi testifies to Salah ad-Din's frequent attendance at communal prayers, naming him "conscientious" in this endeavor. It is, in sum, an argument for Salah ad-Din's piety offered to the reader as an elaboration on the "good omen" statement. Salah ad-Din's religiosity is a "good omen", used to suggest that his later successes in Egypt—outlined in the next few paragraphs of al-Maqrizi's text, *after* the comments on piety—are connected to or somehow facilitated by his religious zeal. Indeed, according to a nearby note that his (a Sunni) successful ousting of the (Shi'i) Fatimid dynasty was "aided by God", introduces the notion of divine appointment or sanction of Salah ad-Din and his campaigns.[39]

In discussing the campaign at Damietta against the Franks, al-Maqrizi includes the second key feature of the medieval memory of Salah ad-Din: his cleverness and skill in military and political matters. According to al-Maqrizi, Salah ad-Din "managed the situation [at Damietta] most excellently" and caused—with the "aid of God"—the defeat of the Franks and the complete destruction of their army, such that "not a trace" of the Crusaders remained.[40] After this victory and the removal of the Franks from Damietta, al-Maqrizi states that Salah ad-Din was "now well established in Egypt", as if defeating the

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[38] Although the exact breaks in sentences and word order in my translated copy may differ from the original text, any differences should be small enough as to maintain the author's meaning. Furthermore, my argument is based on general proximity, not specific syntactical analysis. Regardless of sentence breaks, the discussion of piety is still *close to* the introduction of Salah ad-Din's character, and hence my argument that the two are connected based on proximity is still valid.

[39] Ibid., 37.

[40] Ibid.

Crusaders was one of several steps to solidifying total authority.

Notably, however, the focus in al-Maqrizi's text is firmly on Salah ad-Din's engagements in Egypt, in his involvement with the Fatimid dynasty and the birth of the Ayyubid state. The Crusaders in this introductory section are mentioned when they appear in relation to Salah ad-Din's military campaigns, as that in Damietta, and are quickly left in favor of a return to Fustat. This reinforces the reading that Salah ad-Din's image at this time, as in the earlier texts on him, emphasizes his orthodox piety, skill and charisma as a leader, and ultimately his candidacy as the ideal of a Muslim prince. In short, priority is given to the benefits he bestowed on the Sunni Muslim world rather than to his defeat of the Franks.

If anything, there may be seen in the *History* a diminution of the Crusader episodes of Salah ad-Din's career in favor of his work in Egypt and Syria, compared to the greater emphasis on interaction with the Franks displayed in texts by Ibn al-Athir and 'Imad ad-Din. This may be due to al-Maqrizi's greater personal interest in Egyptian history, to the significantly weakened presence of the Franks in the Levant in the fifteenth century as compared to the thirteenth when Ibn al-Athir and 'Imad ad-Din were writing, or to the al-Maqrizi's being a *Mamluk* historian and hence interested in Egypt for reasons of political or scholarly patronage. Regardless, al-Maqrizi's *History* continues the medieval chroniclers' construction of Salah ad-Din as ideal Muslim prince. While other sources from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries may remember Salah ad-Din differently, al-Maqrizi's usage suggests one possible understanding of the Salah ad-Din myth in the centuries Hillenbrand marks as her "silence": Salah ad-Din continues to be

depicted as pious and charismatic, the ideal Muslim prince, but with a rising focus on his relation to Muslims and a fading emphasis on his dealings with the Crusaders. This would be in keeping with his depictions in nineteenth and twentieth century literature by authors Najib Haddad and Jurji Zaydan that focus, respectively, either on his entire life with the Crusaders constituting only a single episode, or on his dealings with the Assassins.[41] Choice of the Assassins as a framework for writing on Salah ad-Din's life is telling because of Salah ad-Din is famed for both being a pinnacle of Sunni orthodoxy and for returning Egypt to Sunni Islam. Interest aside, it is consistent with the continuity of the legacy contained in al-Maqrizi's fifteenth century *A History of the Ayyubid Sultans of Egypt.*

Furthermore, I offer an architectural reference to Salah ad-Din: the Cairo Citadel. This monument, also called the Salah ad-Din Citadel, is a fortress in Cairo which Salah ad-Din fortified in the twelfth century against the Crusaders.[42] After the defeat of the Franks in Egypt and the foundation of the Ayyubid dynasty, the Citadel became a central locus of Egyptian government, and it remained such until the nineteenth century. Oral tradition, such as that naming the citadel as Salah ad-Din's, indicates a living memory of Salah ad-Din in the centuries that saw the citadel as a house of government. These years, the thirteenth through nineteenth centuries, are notably those that Hillenbrand characterizes in her article by their absence of contribution to or memory of the myth of Salah ad-Din.

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[41] The Assassins were an organization of Ismaili Shi'i Muslims (in)famous for assassinating their political and religious rivals.

[42] Raymond, Andre, "Cairo under the Ayyubids", *Cairo*, Trans. Willard Wood, Harvard University Press, 2001.

I offer, then, the Cairo Citadel and al-Maqrizi's *Khitat* as the core source of my critique of Hillenbrand's "silence" thesis. While my discussion of the Citadel is brief and limited in depth, I require it only to demonstrate of the continued presence of Salah ad-Din in the period Hillenbrand characterizes by his absence. The fact of its existence, rather than its content, is the salient element to my argument. This is also applicable to my use of the *Khitat*, whose existences is in itself a counter-example to Hillenbrand. I have, however, exceeded this application and offer the *Khitat* as evidence of the continuation of medieval characterizations of Salah ad-Din's legacy. While this is the only piece of textual evidence I will discuss, I expect it is far from the only reference to Salah ad-Din between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is, of course, no way to prove this claim beyond finding said sources, although I suggest that al-Maqrizi would not have devoted an entire volume of his Khitat to Salah ad-Din's dealings in Egypt had Salah ad-Din been entirely unknown. His treatment in the *Khitat* as a notable influence in Mamluk history, then, speaks to Salah ad-Din's legacy at the time al-Maqrizi wrote.

Nineteenth Century: Najib Haddad, Jurji Zaydan, and Farah Antun

In his article "Le saladin de faraḥ anṭūn: Du mythe littéraire arabe au mythe politique," French scholar Luc-Willy Deheuvels discusses the form of Salah ad-Din's myth in nineteenth century Egypt and Levant; this is the moment Hillenbrand identifies as the "rediscovery" of Salah ad-Din in the Middle East after Christian Arabs translated

Western sources on his legend into Arabic.[43] Deheuvels argues that a mutation of the Arab myth of Salah ad-Din occurred in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with the literary and cultural event of the "Arab Renaissance"; in this period, the content of the myth shifted from Salah ad-Din as the ideal Muslim prince, a legacy constructed by authors such as Baha' ad-Din, Ibn al-Athir, and 'Imad ad-Din, to Salah ad-Din as a modern political symbol of Arab unification and liberation from the unwanted influence of Western powers. To carry this argument, Deheuvels provides a detailed analysis of one particular appearance of Salah ad-Din's myth in nineteenth century Arabic literature. This manifestation, the 1914 play *Salah ad-Din and the Kingdom of Jerusalem* by Farah Antun, is key to understanding the transformation of Salah ad-Din's myth. While not the first mention of Salah ad-Din in the "Arab Renaissance" of the previous century, Farah Antun's play resonated with contemporary cultural and political concerns in the Arab world and, in writing Salah ad-Din within that politico-historical context, significantly influenced the development of a politicized myth that responded to the contemporary situation of the author and the audience. On a theoretical level, Deheuvels' article discusses the influence of the author's political and historical environment on the author's work and, within that context, offers by example an invaluable framework for understanding the way a society's use of historical myth may be conditioned by contemporary circumstances and, particularly, the way in which such myths may be politicized and employed in literature or other arenas of discourse in the interests of

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[43] Luc-Willy Deheuvels, "Le saladin de faraḥ anṭūn: Du mythe littéraire arabe au mythe politique. (abstract: The saladin of faraḥ anṭūn from the arab literary myth to political myth.)", *Revue Des Mondes Musulmans Et De La Méditerranée*, 89-90 (2000). In English, the title reads: "Farah Antun's Saladin: From Arab Literary Myth to Political Myth".

furthering an agenda.

Before treating Farah Antun, however, Deheuvels introduces two other authors working with Salah ad-Din. The first is the Lebanese playwright Najib Haddad, who in 1898 introduced Salah ad-Din to the "Arab Renaissance" with his play *Salah al-din al-ayyubi*.[44] This play consists of five acts and several sections of song, the most striking of which Deheuvels identifies as the dramatic song in Act III which runs "Si je suis [porte-étendard] de l'armée…".[45] This particular number was so popular, says Deheuvels, that oftentimes the performance troupes would play only the third act to their audiences; there was neither request nor need for the other portions. Najib Haddad's play, or song, was performed annually from 1905 until just before the beginning of World War I. The second is novelist Jurji Zaydan, who followed soon after with his historical novel, *Saladin and the Assassins' Ruses* (1913). Like others of Zaydan's works, this novel focuses on Salah ad-Din's dealings with the Fatimids; this places the action in the novel firmly in the years after the reconquest of Jerusalem.

The classic features of the anti-colonialist Salah ad-Din legend of the twentieth century, namely the preoccupation with the Crusaders and the victories at Hattin and Jerusalem, are neither mentioned outright nor alluded to in Zaydan's novel.[46] These two works represent the reappearance of Salah ad-Din in Arabic literature, but not his use as a politicized myth in the manner of the coming years. It is noteworthy, however, that Salah ad-Din's memory was first invoked, post-"hiatus", in the Middle East and not in the anti-

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[44] Ibid., 191.

[45] Ibid. In English: "If I am the standard bearer of the army…"

[46] Ibid.

West or pan-Arabist sense that he came to have only later. Rather, his early appearances in Haddad's and Zaydan's works emphasize his skill and virtues as a leader and his efforts toward jihad—understood in connection to piety, not militant political action—and are, therefore, more in line with Baha' ad-Din's portrait. In Deheuvels' words, Salah ad-Din was in these works "the ideal prince establishing a unified power, the champion of a just jihäd"; his transition to a "hero of great contemporary Arab causes" occurred after.[47]

Farah Antun, born in Lebanon in 1874, moved to Egypt in 1897 where he worked as an essayist, journalist, and novelist. Many of his writings were political in nature and served to disseminate ideas on Arab socialism and, later, nationalism. In 1914 he authored a play, *Salah ad-Din and the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, that marks a transitional moment in the mythologies of Salah ad-Din. This play bridges the thirteenth and twentieth century images of Salah ad-Din and introduces the form of Salah ad-Din as a political legend into the pre-existing tradition of Salah ad-Din as ideal Muslim prince. The play's action takes place between 1187 and 1189; these are the years covered in depth by the three medieval chroniclers discussed above, and are, as such, closely connected to the memory of Salah ad-Din's great victories over the Crusaders at Hattin and Jerusalem. These sources portrayed Salah ad-Din as the ideal prince, emphasizing his piety and skill in both military and leadership matters. However, as Deheuvels points out, more than being tied to Hattin and Jerusalem, these two years were "celles des plus grands succès d'un Saladin unificateur et libérateur, triomphant pour la gloire de tout

[47] Ibid., 189.

l'islam".[48] Thus, in setting his play in 1187-1189, Farah Antun depicted Salah ad-Din fostering cooperation between various fractionalized Arab political groups and using the combined forces to defeat the Franks. Farah Antun, in short, depicts Salah ad-Din as a unifier and a liberator in the Middle East and, furthermore, one who works for the glory of all Islam.[49]

In the preface to a previous work of his, Farah Antun includes a note on the genre of historical novels, claiming, "Ce que nous visons avec les romans historiques… c'est remplir les vides de l'Histoire".[50] If "filling the voids" is Farah Antun's express intention in writing his historical novels, and furthermore his understanding of the purpose of the genre as a whole, then one must extrapolate this conscious recrafting of history to his treatment of Salah ad-Din in *Salah ad-Din and the Kingdom of Jerusalem*. That Farah Antun focuses on the moments in which Salah ad-Din delivers great "humiliation", to use 'Imad ad-Din's word, to the Franks speaks volumes, as it implies Antun found history lacking sufficient instances of this. Since Antun's statement of purpose is to "fill the gaps in History" through historical novels, then the content of the novels he writes to that end may be understood as the set of memories and moments *not present* in history but greatly desired there: they were missing, and Farah Antun "filled" the voids with material from his novels. It is a poignant illustration of an observation described by Pierre Nora, theorist

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[48] Ibid., 193. In English: "those of the greatest successes of Saladin the unifier and liberator, triumphing for the glory of all Islam".

[49] Ibid., 194.

[50] Ibid., 192. In English: "What we aim to do with historical novels is to fill the voids in History". From *La Jérusalem nouvelle (The New Jerusalem)* (1904).

of the relationship between memory and history.[51] Nora writes of the solemn self-consciousness with which modern individuals approach history—the schism drawn between history and memory, the loss of a single and sacred Truth, the newly developed "historiographical consciousness" that commands an anxious awareness of the constructedness, the arbitrariness, of history. It is one story among many possibilities: the selection of a dominant narrative by the scientific rationale that characterizes modern Western means of legitimization, and the identification of 'a "true" memory".[52] This consciousness is the distancing of the individual from the history she holds to be true, and the challenging of this single truth constitutes a larger rupture—an "awakening", writes Nora—within the fabric of a world that once held history and memory equivalent. Nora locates this tear, this shift, this "split", at the heart of discussions of nationalist historical narratives. Of this topic, so close to Farah Antun's project, Nora observes:

> History, especially the history of national development, has constituted the oldest of our collective traditions: our quintessential *milieu de mémoire*. From the chroniclers of the Middle Ages to today's practitioners of "total" history, the entire tradition has developed as the controlled exercise and automatic deepening of memory, the reconstitution of a past without lacunae or faults.[53]

History, in Nora's theorization, is the careful creation, piece by piece, of a whole and perfect past. His vision removes history from the realm of academic discourse, from an intellectual pursuit pristine in its mental exercise; Nora's history is a tarnished practice, and he reveals, in this passage, the farce of history's pretensions to innocent good-will. It is, in less conniving and cynical terms, a process of building, rather than

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[51] Nora, Pierre, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire", *Representations*, No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989): 7-24.

[52] Ibid., 9.

[53] Ibid., 9.

discovering, the past as one needs it to be. And, as Nora claims, one needs it "without lacunae or faults". History, then, is the compiling of a perfect—a complete—past. The historiographical consciousness means awareness of the artifice of history, and rather than prompting a disillusioned abandonment of history, this vision of the "split" between history and memory becomes a space of agency and potential. For those like Farah Antun, a historiographical consciousness inspires the intentional selection and correction of lacunae in history such that an individual may guide modern memory of the past.

It is striking, then, that the gap Farah Antun identifies in *Salah ad-Din and the Kingdom of Jerusalem* is that of nationalist politics: precisely the avenue Nora emphasizes as a particularly potent *lieu* of historiographical consciousness. Deheuvels notes that Farah Antun interweaves the new elements of Salah ad-Din into the fabric of the medieval myth and creates a character that is externally familiar to the Arab audience but represents and expresses new ideas: "Revêtu de ses anciens atours," Deheuvels writes of Antun's Salah ad-Din, "il s'apprêtait à parler un nouveau langage, celui d'une identité nationale".[54] Farah Antun uses Salah ad-Din as a mouthpiece for his ideas, but more than expressing the politics of nationalist identity, his innovation re-crafts Salah ad-Din's memory into a rallying cry available for Arab anti-colonialist politics.

> Du prince musulman idéalisé par les sources arabes anciennes, Farah Antūn a fait une figure mythique de type politico-héroïque proposée aux attentes du psychisme collectif du monde arabe.[55]

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[54] Deheuvels, "Le saladin de faraḥ anṭūn", 192. In English: "Clothed in his old attire, he was prepared to speak a new language—that of a national identity".

[55] Ibid., 198. In English: "From the idealized Muslim prince of the old Arab sources, Farah Antun made a mythical figure of the politco-heroic type proposed by the expectations of the collective psyche of the Arab world".

Farah Antun's Salah ad-Din is thus more than a statement limited to his immediate historical moment. Rather, as Deheuvels explains above, Farah Antun takes the first steps in his play towards a politicized myth of Salah ad-Din and thereby offers to the rest of the Arab world a potent symbol, indigenous to the region and its history, to aid in efforts to expel foreign Western imperialist powers. In the politically fractured Arab world of the twentieth century, a unified Arab front would bring greater chance of gaining independence from the largely unwanted presence of Western imperialists and colonialists; it is no coincidence, then, that the language of "unification" and "liberation" structures and permeates the representation of Salah ad-Din.

Deheuvels argues, then, for the correlation between historical and political context and the shape and content of the myth. This is the theoretical underpinning for analyses such as the above which attempt to explain, in a Foucauldian manner, the current form of a concept by examining the historical context for its inception and thenceforth explaining the key moments of change that culminate in the present. The basic assumption of this approach is that the present exists, not at random, but in logical outgrowth from past circumstances and choices made in response to those circumstances. In the case of the development of the modern myth of Salah ad-Din, I have backed Luc-Willy Deheuvels' argument for the relevance of an author's context to the content of their ideas, and thus I support as conclusion the notion that the elements of Salah ad-Din emphasized in Farah Antun's portrait of him are intrinsically linked to those things Farah Antun found a need for in his current context. Working as one with Nora's "historigraphical consciousness", Antun intentionally filled the gaps in history and "reconstitut[ed] the past … without

lacunae or faults" such that Antun gave contemporaneous Egyptian nationalists access to a memory charged with anti-colonialist potential. Thus, thanks to his note on the philosophy of historical novels, it is clear that for Farah Antun, what the present needed —a developed nationalist identity politics—was what History lacked.

Chapter 3: Political Applications and Implications of the Salah ad-Din Myth

Two Arab Heads of State: Gamal Abdal Nasser and Yasser Arafat

From the nineteenth century to the twenty-first, Salah ad-Din's image maintained the political elements imbedded in Farah Antun's conception. Regarding the content of the Salah ad-Din myth, Deheuvels observes:

> Au-delà des variations, les thèmes essentiels qui le composent peuvent être identifiés: Saladin est l'unificateur, le chef modèle et le libérateur. L'aura charismatique qui entoura son pouvoir, et les victoires dont il fut l'artisan face aux Croisés lui conférèrent une image de héros et de souverain à laquelle plus d'un chef d'État arabe a cherché à s'identifier.[56]

Like Hillenbrand, then, Deheuvels notes the efforts of Arab heads of state to associate themselves with this politicized version of the myth of Salah ad-Din. Specifically, politicians are attracted to Salah ad-Din's status as "hero" and "sovereign", and in tapping into the wells of symbolism contained in the myth, hope to gain popular support and respect as legitimate authority. By associating themselves with Salah ad-Din and mobilizing the politicized myth, leaders aim to transfer qualities of the myth to themselves. Thus, politicians interested in unifying the Arab world or ousting unwanted influences find particular advantage in Salah ad-Din's image. Actors in the Pan-Arab movement of the 1950s and '60s, as well as in several nationalist independence movements and anti-colonialist efforts have all found Salah ad-Din a potent and

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[56] Ibid., 190. In English: "Beyond variations, the essential themes that make up the myth can be identified: Salah ad-Din is the unifier, the model leader and the liberator. The charismatic aura that surrounds his power and the victories he engineered against the Crusaders confer upon him the image of hero and sovereign, with which more than one Arab head of state has sought to identify."

optimistic symbol of unification and liberation: his medieval successes resonate with the aspirations of many in the modern era. Again, we are reminded of Farah Antun's pointed emphasis on the years 1187-1189.

Humiliation features centrally in dialogue surrounding these anti-colonialist politics. Much as the word was a favorite of 'Imad ad-Din's—recall, the "humiliation proper to the men of Saturday"—it is again, today, a key theme in discourse directed against perceived Western incursions. Scholar Jean Mouttapa elaborates on the element of humiliation in the modern myth of Salah ad-Din, writing:

> Mais le fait est que Salah al-Din a incarné le héros musulman par excellence, grand rassembleur des croyants contre leurs agresseurs, et que son mythe demeure, aujourd'hui encore, un recours contre le sentiment d'humiliation (notamment dans le monde arabe, alors qu'il était kurde...).[57]

While 'Imad ad-Din wrote that Salah ad-Din brought humiliation to the Franks by defeating them at Jerusalem and taking their prize city from them, Mouttapa observes the reverse, but related, phenomenon in the modern Arab world. Today, Salah ad-Din does not cause humiliation but protects from it: his myth acts as a "recourse against" the sentiment. I say "reverse" above to indicate not a different nature but a different direction of action encoded in the formation and mobilization of the myth. As such, in 'Imad ad-Din's text, Salah ad-Din is an offensive figure in relation to humiliation, while in Mouttapa's analysis his role is defensive. These, however, are analyses of the myth *solely* in terms of humiliation; I do not claim that the myth is inherently offensive or defensive,

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[57] Mouttapa, J. (2006), "Saladin, mythe positif", (pp. 123-125) Albin Michel: 123. In English: "But the fact is that Salah ad-Din embodied the Muslim hero par excellence, great unifier of the believers against their aggressors, and that his myth remains, even today, a recourse against the feeling of humiliation (particularly in the Arab world, even though he was Kurdish…)."

or that it is entirely of one orientation in a time period, but rather that the myth today is often employed to alleviate a pre-existing humiliation experienced by those same individuals mobilizing the myth. By contrast, ‘Imad ad-Din wrote about Salah ad-Din but did not experience the humiliation his text mentioned. This division based on military camps, then, is my understanding of “offensive” and “defensive”, with the latter occurring when those that experience humiliation and those that engage with the myth of Salah ad-Din are the same.

There are, of course, alternate mobilizations of the myth of Salah ad-Din in modern Arab politics, but I have begun this section with a note on humiliation because of the sentiment’s centrality to discussions of colonized experience. The use of the myth of Salah ad-Din as “recourse” against humiliation demonstrates the salience of the myth to anti-colonialist efforts, which often address the humiliating experience of oppression by a colonial power.

In the arena of anti-colonial resistance, then, Salah ad-Din has become today a powerful political resource for actors seeking to fortify their rhetoric with a symbol of unity, liberation, and ultimately success over a foreign power. Thus the parallel is established between the thirteenth and the twentieth century Levant, with the medieval Crusaders mapping onto modern Western imperialists—the British and French during the Mandate period in Palestine, and later America—and the State of Israel, and Salah ad-Din mapping onto modern leaders whose political ideologies poise them in supposition to the foreign, unwanted, Western influences in the Arab world. Commenting on the potency of Salah ad-Din’s modern myth in this respect, Deheuvels writes: “Celui qui avait repris

Jérusalem aux Croisés était une figure mobilisatrice, alors même que la nation arabe voyait s'établir l'État d'Israël sur ce qui était pour elle la Palestine".[58] The charged word in this phrase is "mobilizing".[59] With this word, Deheuvels suggests that Salah ad-Din, beyond being inspiring or impressive, is able to move people to action. The sense of movement inherent in the word "mobilize" reveals Salah ad-Din to be a myth employed for furthering political agendas and creating change: he has become intimately interwoven with the phenomenon of mass politics.

Gamal Abdul Nasser did significant work in developing and realizing the mobilizing potential of the politicized myth of Salah ad-Din. Nasser, who gained the Egyptian presidency in his October 1954 coup, espoused a pan-Arabist ideology and fashioned himself as the leader of a unified Arab world. Pan-Arabism, which was popular in the states of North Africa, greater Syria and the Levant, and the Arabian Peninsula, espoused the removal of Western influences in the Arab world, defined as the regions listed just above, and the unification of the Arab world into a single polity. The unity of Arab states was a core tenet of Arab nationalisms; within a pan-Arab context, however, this principle specifically emphasized the creation of a single Arab state out of the many that existed in the 1950s and 60s at the height of pan-Arabist thought. This is distinct from solutions that retain the separateness of the various Arab states in existence in the mid-twentieth century—solutions such as supporting cooperation between Arab states or encouraging a sense of Arabs in all different countries as members of a single Arab

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[58] Deheuvels, 190. In English: "He who retook Jerusalem from the Crusaders was a mobilizing figure, even though the Arab nation that witnessed the establishment of the State of Israel on what had been, for them, Palestine."

[59] "Mobilisatrice", in Deheuvels' original French.

nation. The push for removal of Western influences is, as discussed above, closely tied to colonial resistance movements and allows one to view Nasser's pan-Arabist efforts in the larger context of anti-colonialist efforts in Egypt and the Arab world. The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary appearances of Salah ad-Din presented in the previous chapter are one such example, and those from several decades before Nasser, at that.

Apart from a general targeting of Western influences, pan-Arabist ideology was greatly influenced by the establishment and development of the State of Israel, which many in the Arab world felt to be a foreign implant. In the words of scholars of the Arab-Israeli conflict Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner, the Arab defeat in the 1948 war over Israel's founding "confirmed the view of the younger generation of Arab nationalists that the old leadership must be overthrown and the Arab states modernized. Thus, upheavals occurred throughout the Arab world in the next decade." One such upheaval was the aforementioned coup in Egypt by which Gamal Abdul Nasser rose to power. As Egyptian president, Nasser set goals in direct line with pan-Arabist thought and, as a result, came to be not only a pan-Arabist politician, but a symbol of the movement itself. Specifically, as Bickerton and Klausner note, Nasser was tied closely to the pan-Arabist "determination to eradicate Israel". This, then, returns us to the starting point, in which Israel is constructed in certain lines of Arab political thought as a Western state in the Arab world. Thus, the same techniques for removing Western influences as applied to the British, French, and Americans become relevant to the struggle against Israel. Israel, then, becomes a Western *colonial* state, and elements of the fight against it take on anti-

colonialist notes.[60]

A significant result of the definition of Israel as a colonial state, beyond sparking decades of heated debate on the nature of the state and the possibility of colonialist states without a metropole—a debate which will be covered in the next chapter—is the opening of political discourse on the conflict to the repertoire of pre-existing anti-colonial rhetorical strategies. The myth of Salah ad-Din, politicized and imbued with great potential in the fight against Western colonialism by authors like Farah Antun, is one such strategy.

Nasser, to be sure, made use of Salah ad-Din's potential. 1958 saw a victory for Nasser and pan-Arabism with the creation of the short-lived United Arab Republic, formed from a political merging of Egypt and Syria under the governance of Nasser.[61] The figure of Salah ad-Din, meanwhile, had come to represent Arab unity with such emotional resonance that none other than his famous eagle motif would suffice for the coat of arms of the UAR. This move was a shrewd deployment of the myth of Salah ad-Din, as it bolstered a new Arab state, itself highly charged with and symbolic of pan-Arabism and its anti-colonialist sentiments, with a second potent symbol representative of a historical victory against a foreign European state—some say colony—in the Levant by way of a powerful unification of Syria and Egypt. The association with Salah ad-Din, however, went beyond the visual propaganda of the UAR and encoded itself in the public discourse on Nasser, who deliberately associated himself with the myth so as to fortify

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[60] Bickerton, Ian J. and Carla Klausner, *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1998: 116-117.

[61] Bickerton and Klausner, 141-142.

his political persona. Testimony to the extent and success of Nasser's self-stylization as the pan-Arab unifier in the tradition of Salah ad-Din comes in a comment made about Nasser in an Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Huriah*, in 1967 just before the outbreak of the Six Days War. The article claims that "since Salah ed-Din el-Iobi (Saladin), the Arabs have not had a leader like Abdul Nasser".[62] Notably, the comment comes six years after the 1961 dissolution of the UAR with the withdrawal of Syria. Nasser's intentional and explicit citation of Salah ad-Din in the creation of the UAR persisted beyond the existence of the UAR itself. The comparison of Nasser to Salah ad-Din as an optimistic symbol of Arab victory over and liberation from an Western power, survived in Arab thought outside the limited context of the UAR. While this does not prove Nasser's popularity across the Arab world, as the newspaper is but one voice and an Egyptian one at that, it does reveal the Salah ad-Din myth as so meaningful that a politician seeking support both on the local—Egyptian—and regional—Arab world-level would use it in framing his political image.

Thirty years later, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, too, styled himself after Salah ad-Din. Arafat emerged first as the head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1969 and later the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in 1994. Like the UAR, the PNA took Salah ad-Din's eagle as its coat of arms in direct conversation with the by then well-established rhetorical treasure trove of Salah ad-Din's legend as unifier. However, Arafat's use of Salah ad-Din draws heavily on Salah ad-Din's liberator role as well; this

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[62] David Ohana, *The Origins of Israeli Mythology*, 133.

both supports the PLO's aim to regain control of Palestine from the Israelis, and casts Jerusalem in the spotlight once more as a city occupied by a foreign, "crusading" power. The power of Salah ad-Din as invoked by Yasser Arafat is witnessed in a mournful op-ed in the *New York Times* by Israeli author Amos Oz, touched on in the first chapter. The short article appeared in the *NY Times* Op-Ed section three days after the conclusion on 25 July 2000 of the Camp David Summit, a series of peace talks following the precedent of Jimmy Carter and the 1978 Camp David Accords between Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin. The article contains Oz's response to the failure to reach an acceptable peace accord and Gaza's reception of Yasser Arafat upon his subsequent return. Oz cites the comparison of Arafat to Salah ad-Din by inhabitants of Gaza and laments this analogy for what Oz interprets as aggressive, anti-peace sentiments. Oz describes the invocations of Salah ad-Din thusly:

> I am sitting in front of the television in the living room, seeing Yasir Arafat receive a triumphant hero's welcome in Gaza, and all this for having said no to peace with Israel. The whole Gaza Strip is covered in flags and slogans proclaiming the "Palestinian Saladin". "Welcome home, Saladin of our era" is written on the walls.[63]

This is not an act of recalling history, nor an image of Salah ad-Din as the ideal prince of Haddad's and Zaydan's works, but a political event—a statement made about a contemporary situation by reference to a mythological figure encoded with anti-colonialist meaning. The political nature of Salah ad-Din is understood by all involved, from the Gazans, who knowingly confer Salah ad-Din's import on Yasser Arafat, to Amos Oz, who grasps the political message immediately and accordingly responds in his article

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[63] Amos Oz, "The Specter of Saladin", A21.

to Salah ad-Din as a modern political phenomenon. Connection with his historical existence is secondary to his political existence, and Oz treats Salah ad-Din as such by concluding his op-ed with a clear statement of his understanding of Salah ad-Din's politicized presence in Gaza. "The Palestinians", Oz writes, "must choose if they want a new Saladin, or to really work for peace".[64]

Concluding Thoughts

The myth lives on. The 2011 UNESCO publication *The Spread of Islam Throughout the World*, in its section on the Ayyubid rule of Egypt, perpetuates the construction of Salah ad-Din as a figure uniquely capable of uniting a fractured the Arab world. In the chapter on the "First Stage in the Spread of Islam", the authors included a subsection entitled "Salah ad-Din establishes his authority". This section analyses the causes of Salah ad-Din's successful control over Egypt after overthrowing the Fatimid state and has, as its conclusion, that the "Egyptians were … won over by Salah ad-Din, revered him and accepted him as their leader and commander. They supported him and rallied around his flag and in this way enabled him to move towards achieving his

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[64] For further uses of the myth of Salah ad-Din in contemporary politics, see Sayyid Qutb's *Milestones* and Emma Aubin-Boltanski, (2005), "Salāh al-dīn, un héros à l'épreuve. mythe et pèlerinage en palestine". Qutb in particular is intriguing since he deploys the myth in a way that is decidedly *not* nationalistic. Rather, he emphasizes political unification of the Arab world based on religion—unity under Islam:

> We see an example of this today in the attempts of Christendom to try to deceive us by distorting history and saying that the Crusades were a form of imperialism. The truth of the matter is that the latter-day imperialism is but a mask for the crusading spirit, since it is not possible for it to appear in its true form, as it was possible in the Middle Ages. The unveiled crusading spirit was smashed against the rock of the faith of Muslim leadership which came from various elements, including Salahuddin the Kurd and Turan Shah the Mamluk, who forgot the differences of nationalities and remembered their belief, and were victorious under the banner of Islam.

objectives".[65] If the result was the total unification of a diverse nation under a single, charismatic leader, the process for doing so, according to the authors, commences with winning the hearts of the people. The book tells of Salah ad-Din's strategic dignity, noting that he treated people with "justice, kindness and generosity", and extended his good will to both Shi'a and Copts despite the fact that Salah ad-Din's conquest of the Fatimids brought Egypt under Abbasid, and hence Sunni Islamic, control. He is praised for his religious tolerance, which the author names his "outstanding characteristic". As a result, individuals of many diverse religious traditions were unified by their "love for" Salah ad-Din. And Salah ad-Din rewarded the people for their loyalty, "exert[ing] himself on the behalf of the Egyptian people *as a whole*". Here the author heavy-handedly makes the point of the oneness of the Egyptian people under Salah ad-Din, and consequently constructs Salah ad-Din as the ruler of a unified Egypt: he intercedes not for some in Egypt or for one party or the other, and emphatically not for his own community to the detriment of others, but for all Egypt—for the Egyptian people "as a whole". Even the choice of "Egyptian" as a descriptor for the inhabitants of the land is telling, as it emphasizes a nationalist identity rather than the community-based, religious, or regional identity contemporaneous individuals would likely have favored. This is all aside from the most basic point that a characterization of medieval people in nationalist terms is anachronistic, although the presence of nationalist language in this passage and the connection to Salah ad-Din's use in Arab nationalist movements is more important to this study's analyses than an ahistorical history. The thrust of the UNESCO portrait, therefore,

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[65] *The Spread of Islam Throughout the World*. Eds. Idris El Hareir and Ravane M'Baye. Paris: UNESCO, 2011: 271.

is that Salah ad-Din earned the loyalty and love of the people of Egypt by treating them with compassion, and hence that Salah ad-Din drew his authority in Egypt from the people. Seeing people oppressed by unjustly heavy taxes, Salah ad-Din ordered that "compassion and understanding" dictate the degree of taxation; therefore, the people "took him to their hearts" and legitimized his authority with their approval. Return to the subsection title: it is "Salah ad-Din establishes his authority". Given this overview of the subsection, it is clear that the authors suggest Salah ad-Din's authority in Egypt is derived from the people. Unified by their loyalty to Salah ad-Din, the diverse people of Egypt act "as a whole" and become a single nation: the Egyptian people.

The significance of this passage is not in what it says about Salah ad-Din, as that has been said before by Nasser and Arafat and others, but *who* says it. And who says it? UNESCO, an international organization with peace, education, and science as its stated priorities. UNESCO is not a nation-state, and what engagement it has with nationalism and the special interests of a single people is not framed as "our" nationalist cause or the betterment of "our" nation. This assessment, outside an anti-colonialist or nationalist, effort marks UNESCO apart from actors like Arafat and Nasser and even Farah Antun whose use of Salah ad-Din is related to themselves and the nations they represent.

That said, while the editors of the *Spread of Islam* may be divorced from a national project via their involvement in UNESCO, they do however argue for a nationalist construction of the myth of Salah ad-Din. Thus, we see an international organization participating in a nationalist mythology. What does this mean? Does the Salah ad-Din myth have the potential to be divorced from the cause of a particular

people, from the specific historical conditions of its emergence and fashioning? Is he available to anyone's nationalist or anti-colonialist myth? Or has he been separated from the causes of nationalism and anti-colonialism? Is he no longer exclusively tied to these movements, but transferrable to different political contexts? Is he necessarily political?

Farah Antun rewrote the meaning of Salah ad-Din's legacy in his 1914 play. Antun changed Salah ad-Din into the politicized myth we have seen in the century since. But *The Spread of Islam* uses Salah ad-Din in a way outside the parameters of Farah Antun's construction. In the former's use, the myth is impersonal. Has a second alteration taken place, such that the UNESCO book displays a new mythological construction of Salah ad-Din?

Or, has *The Spread of Islam* consumed the myth frequently deployed against the Western civilization with which UNESCO, and the UN widely, is ideologically allied? Is this an imperialist power appropriating the resistance symbol its rebellious subjects deploy against it? Has Farah Antun's reclaimed Salah ad-Din been twice reclaimed by a Western force?

Reclaimed twice or not at all, the legend of Salah ad-Din remains a testament to the flexibility and vitality of historical myths.

Chapter 4: The Zionist-Crusader Analogy

Introduction: An Anecdote

R. J. C. Broadhurst, the translator and editor of an English edition of al-Maqrizi's *History of the Ayyubid Sultans of Egypt*, included in his introduction an overview of the historical content and context of al-Maqrizi's *Khitat*, of which the *History* is part. Broadhurst, in discussing the relations between Muslims and Frankish Christians in the time of the Crusades, argues for some measure, not insubstantial, of cultural exchange. He cites "intermarriage, social intercourse, commerce, and the daily routine of life" as instances that "tended to blur the distinctions of East and West".[66] He further supports his point with illustrations of political and military alliances that cross religious and ethnic boundaries, describing Frankish and Muslim princes as "equally opportunistic". After making a case for historical "Frankish-Muslim alliances", Broadhurst adds a point on "similar tendencies" today. First, he cites Israel and the Lebanese Christians, in reference to Israeli support of the Lebanese Christian faction in the Lebanese Civil War for reasons of mutual political gain. However, after this reference, Broadhurst expands his notion of cross-boundary alliances to assert that "the native-born, Arabic-speaking Count Raymond III of Tripoli has his counterpart today in General Moshe Dayan of Israel".[67] With the next sentence, Broadhurst begins a new paragraph on al-Maqrizi; there is no elaboration

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[66] Al-Maqrizi, *A History of the Ayyubid Sultans of Egypt: Translated from the Arabic of al-Maqrizi*, Trans. and Ed. R. J. C. Broadhurst, Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1980: xxiv.

[67] Ibid.

on Moshe Dayan or "Frankish-Muslim alliances".

This insertion has two results: the first is an awkward and sudden mention of a continuity between the twelfth and twentieth centuries—a move that is especially out of place considering the absence of other passages on modern similarities in the remainder of the introduction—and the second is an implicit assertion of a parallel between "Frankish-Muslim alliances" and Israeli-Arab[68] alliances. This second is of particular interest as it is characteristic of a trend that compares Israelis to the Crusaders and the State of Israel to the Kingdom of Jerusalem. For the purposes of this chapter, I will refer to both angles of the comparison as the Zionist-Crusader analogy, after scholar David Ohana, who wrote at length on it in his book, *The Origins of Israeli Mythology*.[69]

This analogy has been deployed in discourse on the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts as a rhetorical device to advance specific political agendas. The emotional value of Crusade-era history supports and illustrates statements on the current

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[68] I have generalized Lebanese Christians into Arabs for the sake of this point, but only because I suspect this to be the logic underpinning Broadhurst's statement. There is, in fact, a variety of Christian populations within Lebanon, and to collapse all under the label "Christian" diminishes differences in preference for a "familiar" paradigm. For instance, the Maronites, a Syriac Christian group constituting a n emergent distinct ethno-religious population, have substantial confessional differences from other Christian groups in Lebanon, and to call all "Christian" would encourage an assumption of confessional sameness where it is, quite simply, not there. That said, for the purposes of brevity in this point I return to the term "Lebanese Christians", fully understanding that it groups different populations and confessional practices under one label. Within the logic of Broadhurst's "Muslim-Christian" alliance, then, Lebanese Christians are Arabs. However, Lebanese Christians are neither Muslim nor unanimously accepted as Arab and hence a parallel with "Frankish-Muslim" is muddled. Based on religious alliance, the Lebanese Christians would map onto the Christian Franks—and indeed historians and geneticists have argued for Lebanese Christian descent from Franks fleeing the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem (see Pierre Zalloua, et al in the April 2008 issue of *The American Journal of Human Genetics*). This, however, would leave a "Jewish" state with a mixed religious population to parallel the Muslims. If we divide along indigenous-foreigner lines, or European-Middle Easterner lines, then we arrive at a parallel between Franks and Israelis, and medieval Muslims and modern Lebanese Christians. This also provides for the validity of a comparison of Raymond of Tripoli—who Broadhurst notes for being "native-born" and "Arabic-speaking" as if these qualities are significant and complicating in a European and hence inherently foreign man in the Middle East—and Moshe Dayan, another native-born, Semitic-language-speaking European in the Middle East.

[69] I take many of my primary sources from Ohana's text, which provides both useful analyses as well as a brilliant collection of references to the Zionist-Crusader analogy. I will, therefore, be following the characterization of these texts as developed by Ohana.

state of affairs in the Middle East, predictions for the future of Israel and the region, and, most controversially perhaps, claims on the land of Palestine. However, the constructions of this history—the historiography of the Crusades, that is—differ depending on its intended use in a political debate. Within the contexts of the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, historiography on the wider Crusade era, including all invested parties from the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries, is often shaped by the political persuasions of the author. This may seem a basic point, applicable to all scholarship—and to an extent I think it is—but I wish to push my argument a step further. In the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict and its context within a wider Middle East dynamic, the interpenetration of politics and daily life is significant enough that the histories produced are not about the past of the region but about its present and future. Recall Jean Baudrillard and Walter Benjamin from the introduction: modern identities are formulated in a dialectic relationship with the past. Conceptions of who we were shape contemporary senses of who we are, and attempts to define present identities seek recourse to past identities. With this in mind, I present my study as an argument for a theoretical reconceptualization of history: as employed within the analogic discourse explored here, history becomes a rhetorical arena for debating and constructing visions of the present and future, rather than retaining its traditional conceptualization as a transparent record of the past.

Discursive Conditioning

The Zionist-Crusader analogy is widespread and varied in its appearances and usages. As stated above, approaches to the employment and interpretation of the comparison are shaped by the political desires of the individual interacting with the analogy. Different visions of a peaceful and just world engender different reactions to the analogy, as well as encourage preference for one historical narrative over another. A selection of sources engaging with the Zionist-Crusader analogy are discussed below, with the intention of illustrating the diversity of the analogy's applications. While some sources deploy the analogy as support for their cause, others respond to these deployments. Strategies for rejecting or neutralizing political implications of the analogy perceived as threats are equally varied: some critique the veracity of a historical narrative, while some critique the very validity of historical analogy, and others yet offer moral arguments. All, however, remain contextualized within the analogic discourse. Objections and manipulations of content and significance occur internal to the Foucauldian framework presented in the first chapter; the variety of expressions demonstrates not a variety of discourses, but the possibilities allowed for within this single analogic discourse. Even arguments against the form of the analogy itself are discursively formulated, and display prescribed modes of resistance that ultimately preserve a belief in the dire relevance of the Zionist-Crusader analogy.

Israeli Scholarship and the "Crusader Anxiety"

As asserted above, manifestations of the Zionist-Crusader analogy take a variety of forms. There are, however, several trends characterizing engagement. The political organization Hamas cites Salah ad-Din and the analogy in its charter to support a historical argument for the fall of the State of Israel; Palestinian activist and author Nizar Sakhnini, too, takes this approach. Amos Oz also falls within this trend, although the prediction of the end of Israel calls from him a defensive reaction, in response to the enthusiastic support of those like Hamas. Others, viewing the Crusader states as a "prototype" of Israel, take the analogy as inspiration for historical research. Israeli historian Meron Benvenisti falls into this category, as well as his fellow Israeli scholars Meir Ben-Dov, Benjamin Kedar, and the famous Crusade historian Joshua Prawer. Of these, I will discuss only the first in depth, as it is enough to look at the titles of texts written by these historians to grasp the concern with contemporary issues working its way into academic essays on pre-contemporary eras.

Joshua Prawer, who left Poland for Jerusalem in 1936, authored *The Crusaders' Kingdom: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages*, a seminal text in Israeli Crusade history. This book directly labels the Crusades as colonialist endeavors and, via an analogy accepting a parallel between the Crusader states and the State of Israel, engages with contemporary dialogue on Israel as a European colonialist state in the Levant. Although Prawer is careful not to explicitly address the analogy in the bodies of his works, his acceptance of the validity of the comparison is documented in interviews and other sources. He states that the analogy is "worthy of respect, but not without some

qualifications". Prawer elaborates:

> There is no doubt that the State of Israel confronts problems faced by the crusader kingdom, but no conclusions should be drawn from this unless side by side with the points of similarity one places the differences resulting from the changes and vicissitudes the area passed through for a period of six hundred years and which changed its context and character.[70]

This statement represents a highly nuanced and academic approach to the analogy. Rather than accept the analogy uncritically, Prawer asserts the need for qualifications and a balanced approach that factors in differences as well as similarities. In other words, Prawer calls for the need to account for elements that support the analogy as well as those that challenge it. Despite the focus on differences between the eras, Prawer still asserts the validity of the comparison; perhaps he finds the similarities more convincing than the differences, or perhaps he finds himself too immersed in the rhetoric to move outside such a pervasive thread to discourse on the Crusades. This last view adopts a rather Foucauldian approach and argues for the analogy as a fundamental element of an Arab-Israeli political discourse today; this is the view I put forth in my study, and offer Prawer's hesitation to abandon the view in the face of counter-facts—recall, "a period of six hundred years … which changed its context and character"—as an example. Perhaps, one might claim, Prawer is unable, speaking in a Foucauldian manner, to conceive of the invalidity of the analogy. It is possible, therefore, to use his academic interventions as a theoretical subject: he may *entertain* the idea of its invalidity, but its fundamental relevance is inescapable. He discusses the analogy's import within its own discursive realm, within the sphere of those who already accept its reality.

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[70] Ohana, *The Origins of Israeli Mythology*, 144.

It is only with a move outside the immediate discourse of the conflict that we see an instance of an academic challenging the analogy without believing in it. American archaeologist Adrian Boas presents a distinct perspective when he mourns the analogy's detrimental effects on scholarship, commenting, "Such comparisons do not help us to understand either the crusades or the Zionist movement".[71] Here Boas neither accepts nor denies the truth of the analogy because he refuses to engage on a primary level with the political discourse embodied in the analogy. What he does, however, is treat the analogy on an academic level, as a social anthropological phenomena, and passes judgment on it as an example of its influence on the writing of others but not his own. This is not to suggest the perfect objectivity of the anthropologist, nor the absolute discursive independence of Boas who has achieved the fabled status of participant-observer. It is instead to argue, again following Foucault, that Boas' removal from the immediate context of the conflict enables him to contribute a different perspective on the analogy than may be engendered by those, like Prawer, working closely within the analogic discourse.

Benjamin Kedar is a second Israeli academic who engages, like Prawer, with the analogical discursive framework explored here. Kedar, however, has fewer reservations than Prawer. With an article entitled "Crusader Lessons", Kedar throws himself into the discursive arena and presents his stance on the analogy as one who accepts its validity and seemingly speaks to an audience of like-minded individuals. In this article, Kedar responds to Prawer's formulation of a medieval colonial state without a metropole and

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[71] Ibid., 176.

notes, much in the vein of the analogic discourse, that Prawer's thesis undercuts the argument that Israel is not a colonial state because Israel lacks a metropole. Formulations of Israel as a colonial state, used as a critique of Israel or an invalidation of its right to exist, usually emphasize the Disputed Territories as evidence of a space colonized by Israel.[72] The main approach to neutralizing this threat, therefore, is to argue for additional or other criteria for status as a colonial state. The structure of a metropole and colonies is frequently cited as a counter-argument, precisely because Israel's lack of a clear metropole may prove it is not a colonial state, and therefore has a legitimate claim to existence. Prawer, however, strips this argument of its force by providing its opponents a rebuttal: a metropole is not a necessary criterion for a colonial state, and therefore Israel's relationship with the Disputed Territories remains sufficient proof of Israel's colonialism. Thus, when Kedar critiques Prawer's historical analysis, his objection is centered on the analysis' bearing in contemporary politics. Prawer himself, as noted above, is careful to avoid drawing a direct parallel in his texts between Israel and the Crusader Kingdoms; this leaves one to conclude that Kedar himself asserted the analogy in Prawer's work, judged the content of the work by it, and treated the academic himself as one who also accepts the analogy and may be assumed to write it into all of his scholarship. Furthermore, as Ohana notes, the comparison is frequently deployed to support one side

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[72] I use "Disputed Territories" over other terms like the "West Bank", "Judea and Samaria", or "Occupied Territories" because I wish to address the way discourse surrounding these lands is heated and disputative. While I understand "Disputed Territories" often takes a pro-Israel connotation, I select it here not for that political allegiance, but for its anthropological function in describing the ways my sources—my interlocutors—have engaged with discourse on the territories. I choose it over "Occupied Territories" because the lands' status as occupied is at the heart of what my sources discuss and I do not want to interrupt the debates that forms the heart of this thesis. My interest, therefore, is anthropological, and to cast judgement on my sources would disrupt my goal of developing and analyzing trends in the discourse while ultimately leaving the question at the center of the debates unanswered.

or another in public controversies.[73] Kedar may have seen in Prawer's thesis an argument that could be used to counter Kedar's own views and, on the basis of potential rather than actual deployment, perceived a threat in Prawer's text and critiqued it. Either way, this example illustrates the pervasive sense of the analogy's critical political importance, especially in academic spheres.

Meir Ben-Dov, a prominent Israeli archaeologist known for his multi-period histories of Jerusalem's Old City, authored a newspaper article attempting, like Kedar above, to discern the contemporary relevance of the analogy. Entitled, "Religion, Army, State: The Lesson of the Crusaders", Ben-Dov's article focuses on the failings of the crusader states and exports them to the twentieth century as "morals concerning dual loyalty to religion and the state" for those currently residing in the State of Israel.[74] The Crusade past is, Ben-Dov argues, a tool for drawing insights on a contemporary problem and a source of data and argumentation for current-day life. The past is a source of advice and knowledge that may—or *should*, as Ben-Dov's and Kedar's articles lead by example—be tapped into by those wrestling with such topics today. These two scholars, in short, treat the past as a lens into the future. In this formulation, then, history becomes not the study of things before, but the moralistic endeavor to extract lessons applicable to the present such that a desired future, foreseen in the events of the past, may be achieved or avoided.

The academic world in which Kedar and Ben-Dov write assumes the basic truth of the comparison: people may argue for the similarity between Zionists and Crusaders,

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[73] Ibid., 170.

[74] Ibid., 171.

or they may argue against it, but for all people in the analogic discourse, the battlefield is charged with dire personal and political relevance. In this light, the discourse I am describing may be defined as a fundamental acceptance of the comparability of the Zionists and the Crusaders, of the State of Israel and the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and of antagonists to Israel—especially Arab or Palestinian ones—and Salah ad-Din. The discourse outlines a realm within which these elements may be compared. It does not prescribe the outcome of the comparison, but only the fact that a comparison may be made and, indeed, *must* be made. Returning to Kedar and Ben-Dov, then, this is a Foucauldian explanation for their ability to operate so deeply within the analogy without compromising their reputations—among others in the discourse—as academics, despite Boas's warnings as to the poor quality of scholarship arising from those too involved with the analogy. The discourse also allows for the coexistence of varying degrees of engagement with the analogy by Israeli scholars as well as diverse interpretations of its implications.

Ohana suggests an explanation for the sense of immediate relevance that characterizes the analogy to those within the discourse. The title of his chapter on the analogy, "The Crusader Anxiety", expresses the core of his explanation: the analogy holds such importance because it is connected at its core to a deep-seated Israeli anxiety about the future of their State. The analogy between the Crusader Kingdoms, which fell after two centuries, and the State of Israel is troubling because it appears to predict the imminent fall of Israel. Observation even of a superficial similarity between the two events is sufficient to pique this anxiety. This anxiety generated much intellectual labor,

as an attempt to flesh out the relationship between past and future, and to study the Crusader Kingdoms in an effort to uncover the potential truth of the comparison. Ohana continues with his explanation when he states early in his introduction:

> This anxiety represents a hidden traumatic fear that the Zionist project and the Israeli place might end in destruction. [The crusader anxiety] is present in the historical consciousness, because the all-too temporary nature of the First Temple and the Second Temple are historically factual. It also exists in the political consciousness of many Israelis who identify the Iranian nuclear bomb as an existential threat to the "Zionist crusaders". In many ways, it even overshadows the horror of the Holocaust, for the Israeli place, feared to be temporary and dangerous, was established as a healing response to the European place, the previous great geohistorical arena of many Jews that turned into a valley of slaughter. Is the crusader threat destined to be one of those profound myths that serve as precedents and tragically recur? Does the crusader myth suggest that what once was will always be again, only this time as a testimony to the failure of Zionism to solve the Jewish problem?[75]

In some cases, the conclusions drawn from a certain narrative construction of Crusader history inspire such anxiety about the political implications that the interpreter rejects both the interpretation and the version of history. This is true of Meron Benvenisti, an Israeli archaeologist and historian specializing in the Crusade period, to whom foreseeing the fall of Israel in history is so unpleasant that he ridicules not only the offending Zionist-Crusader analogy, but all historical analogies. He attempts to disarm this threat by invalidating all attempts at comparison and thus neutralizing all political claims that might follow from them. However, soon before criticizing historical comparisons, Benvenisti himself engages with the Zionist-Crusader analogy. This suggests Benvenisti writes within the analogic discourse itself, and thus that his meta-criticism of the analogic form is not an extra-discursive claim, but rather a resistance pre-

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[75] Ohana, *The Origins of Israeli Mythology*, 131.

conditioned by the discourse. Benvenisti's statement, furthermore, serves less as an academic critique than a political retort, as he directs his objections toward offending political agendas rather than poor scholarship. Benvenisti responds to the analogy thus: "The study of the Crusaders became, years later, fashionable, because Arab scholars began to draw parallels between Zionism and the Crusades. I was also mobilized to write a pamphlet in which I vehemently denied the validity of the comparison. All such historical parallels are political battle cries, not serious analyses, but this particular one is absurd."[76] His claim that the analogy is a "political battle cr[y]" endorses the analyses presented throughout this thesis. Benvenisti begins his refutation of historical analogies with a statement identifying Arab scholars as the source of this "absurd" analogy. This is a clear attack on the quality of Arab scholarship and the honor of the scholars themselves, as he casts them as academics willing to compromise their work by linking it to political interests.[77] He then continues his critique by stating that he recognizes the political nature of the analogy and has participated in political dialogue surrounding it—has fought on its battleground—by authoring a pamphlet. With these lines, Benvenisti submits an argument against analogies based on the fact that they are fundamentally political; their low standing as academic arguments—"not serious analyses"—is secondary to his invalidation of the analogy. In doing so, then, Benvenisti contextualizes himself within

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[76] Benvenisti, Meron, *Conflicts and Contradictions,* New York: Villard Books, 1986: 32.

[77] There is much heated debate on the origins of the analogy. Benvenisti claims Arab scholars are responsible for first drawing the analogy and thus encouraging Crusade studies. An article by Ziad Asali, a Palestinian activist, however, pins the popularizing of the Zionist-Crusader analogy on Israelis. The two stances are not mutually exclusive at all points, as both might agree that Arab scholars first drew the analogy, although from there Benvenisti argues for the Arabs' greater role, while Asali posits a larger reaction on the part of Israelis. For more, see Asali, Ziad (1992), "Zionist studies of the Crusade movement", *Arab studies quarterly (0271-3519)*, 14 (1).

the discourse of the analogy. His critique is not an academic response to another academic or politician, but a political activist's response to an opposing political activist. Once the discourse is entered through an identification of analogies as political battle cries, denying the validity of an analogy must be understood in terms of the discourse: it, too, becomes a political battle cry that targets all uses of the analogy in support of the fall of Israel.

Note, as well, Benvenisti's use of "mobilized", which recalls the earlier discussion of Deheuvels' analyses of the myth of Salah ad-Din. In the latter case, the word appears in French ("mobilisatrice") to describe the political employment of Salah ad-Din and the myth's potential to rally and engage large populations in a cause: in short, to *mobilize* them. Benvenisti, too, selects the same word to characterize the nature of his actions regarding the analogy. He calls himself "mobilized" and, once in this state, tells how he crafted a piece of political writing that publicized his anti-analogy agenda to an Israeli public. He writes "mobilized" and suggests, thereby, a fundamental involvement with mass politics, with a community of people engaged with and affected by the analogy. The myth of Salah ad-Din "mobilizes" populations to act together for a political cause; so, too, does Benvenisti write of the power of the discourse to "mobilize" against a cause. That said, in describing himself as "mobilized", Benvenisti emphasizes his position as a politically active individual: more than artistically or academically inspired, Benvenisti is politically motivated. His actions are political; his response to the comparison of Zionists to Crusaders is written by one who has been "mobilized" for a particular cause that takes issue with the analogy. The result: a corroboration of the claim that Benvenisti's political

acts are *within* the analogic discourse.

Predicting the Fall of Israel

If studying the Crusader states as "prototypes" of Israel constitutes the first key theme governing interaction with the Zionist-Crusader analogy, then foreseeing the fall of the State of Israel based on the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem is the second. As with the first theme, there are many authors and many opinions on this second, such that writings on the "Fall of Israel" thesis constitute a large body of works. Notably, engagement with the predictive power of the analogy comes from several national, religious, and political allegiances and proves this theme relevant to many people across certain demographic boundaries. In this section I discuss three sources: Eli Kavon, an American Jewish rabbi; Amos Oz, an Israeli author frequently mentioned in this study; and Nizar Sakhnini, a Palestinian activist and writer. These are, admittedly, a limited selection; I do not offer them as a representation of all possible positions on the "Fall of Israel" approach, but rather as a sampling of the variety of voices.

Eli Kavon, a rabbi in Florida and the first of my voices, wrote a May 2013 article in the *Jerusalem Post* entitled, "The myth of the 'Zionist Crusader'". In this post, he argued against the validity of the analogy, calling it a "jihadist" effort to "libel the Jewish people". From there he changes tactics and resorts to history, attempting to fight the comparison on its own terms. After presenting charged *ad hominem* attacks on the Arab opponents of Israel that emphasize their own tarnished record, Kavon writes, "But let us look at a historical reality". He signals a break in the article with this shift in tone, from

angry and defensive accusations to a calmer note. What follows is truth and cannot be debated, Kavon suggests; it is in contrast to the introductory paragraphs which were either not "historical reality", or not authoritative enough. That said, Kavon's appeal to scientific objectivity—the facts of history—has a bitter and sarcastic bite to it, coming so soon after such charged rhetoric, and it seems to chastise more than soothe.

Kavon begins his article with a short anecdote on the beginning of the State of Israel. In September of 1947, less than a year before the end of the British Mandate and the declaration of the State of Israel, the analogy appeared in the midst of negotiations for the specific purpose of justifying a particular course of action. Of this 1947 moment, Kavon writes:

> Jewish officials pleaded with the leaders of the Arab League to make peace with the emerging State of Israel.
>
> The League rebuffed the offer, claiming the Arabs would eject the Jews of Palestine as the Muslims had thrown the Crusaders out of the Middle East centuries before.[78]

The narrative may be summarized, in an admittedly polarizing manner, thus: the Jews wanted peace, but the Arabs, following in the footsteps of Crusade history, refused to make peace. It is, as noted above, a polarizing and overgeneralized retelling of Kavon's story—itself overgeneralized and polarizing—but I polarize only to emphasize the use of Crusade history. There is a theme, a trope in discourse on the conflict, of the Crusades representing a barrier to peace. Salah ad-Din receives special mention in this greater theme, as Kavon recognizes the use of politically effective mythology surrounding Salah ad-Din. Specifically, Kavon pinpoints one locus of the "barrier to peace" in the figure of

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[78] Kavon, Eli, "The Myth of the 'Zionist Crusader'", *The Jerusalem Post*, 26 May 2013, <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/The-myth-of-the-Zionist-Crusader-314432>.

Salah ad-Din, who serves as an "inspiration to destroy Israel and eliminate the West".[79] This is strikingly similar to the perception of Salah ad-Din's modern import expressed by Amos Oz in his *New York Times* Op-Ed. There, recall, Salah ad-Din was Yasser Arafat when the latter turned down a peace deal. Salah ad-Din was the antithesis of Arab peace with Israel. This trope, in Kavon's piece as in Amos Oz's, enunciates a dark proclamation for the future should the Arabs continue their interest in Crusade history. It projects a black-and-white, zero-sum set of circumstances on the conflict: either Salah ad-Din and the Crusades, or peace.

Peace, however, means different things to different parties. This goes without saying. But which peace is the peace mentioned in the last line of the preceding paragraph? Establishing a dichotomy between Salah ad-Din and peace such that the two are mutually exclusive and, furthermore, actively antagonistic toward each other, puts a clear emphasis on a pro-Israel conception of peace. The fundamentals of this peace are, as indicated by its "pro-Israel" categorization, that the State of Israel is allowed to continue to exist and that it is not at war with its neighbors. This peace says nothing about a Palestinian state, the extent of the State of Israel, the demographic makeup of the State of Israel, the treatment of Palestinian refugees and a right of return, or religious alignment of the State itself. These issues are given space to be determined in a variety of ways—as long as a State of Israel exists. In this construction then, Salah ad-Din and the Crusade history assumes the opposing position and becomes an embodiment of the challenge to the fundamental requirement of this formulation of peace. The opposing perspective,

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[79] Ibid.

which I will refer to as anti-Israel, holds peace as the absence of the State of Israel, and the Crusades foretell its annihilation. Salah ad-Din is "inspiration" for jihadists, according to Kavon; he is part of a greater "euphemism for the liquidation of Israel", says Oz.[80]

A second recurring trend is the assertion that Arab writers first became interested in Crusade history and Israelis picked it up second to respond to Arab claims. Kavon expresses this idea succinctly in his statement that the past two centuries of "Western domination of the Middle East has heightened the importance of the Crusades in Muslim eyes".[81] Meanwhile, the Jews, according to Kavon, "have never been Crusaders". In combatting the analogy and critiquing the implications of Salah ad-Din, Kavon swaps one ultimatum for another. The absoluteness of the terms remains, and the argument drags on, tracing and retracing the same path. Historical figures and events are deployed as facts and met with counter-facts and embattled belligerents fight "yes/no" wars with data from the past. The debate continues to deploy arguments and rhetoric structured by the rules of the analogic discourse, within which the content of history is interpreted for its implications on the present and the future.

Amos Oz, like Kavon, finds fault with the political conclusion of the fall of Israel based on the analogy. Oz is a prominent Israeli author and peace advocate, working for years as a strong voice for a two state solution and the Palestinians' right to a state. He

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[80] Oz, Amos. "The Specter of Saladin". *New York Times* (1923-Current file) [New York, N.Y] 28 July 2000: A21.

[81] Ibid.

was born in 1939 in Jerusalem during the British Mandate period and today, in his mid-70s, works as professor of literature at Ben-Gurion University in Be'er Sheva. While I have discussed his *New York Times* Op-Ed above in the context of the myth of Salah ad-Din, I return to it now for a discussion of Oz's stance within the analogic discourse.[82]

While overall his article laments what he perceives as the aggressive anti-piece implications of the myth of Salah ad-Din, Oz opts to challenge the analogy on political ground. This differs from Meron Benvenisti's attempts to critique all historical analogies, as Benvenisti seems to fancy himself outside the discourse in making this claim. He writes without addressing the possibility that his resistance has been conditioned by the analogic discourse itself. What results, thus, is a claim to an external criticism by one who is internal to the system he challenges. Oz's piece, by contrast, displays a high degree of self-consciousness. The tone is neither authoritative nor didactic, but chastising and threaded with a deep and frustrated sorrow, for Oz seems bitterly aware of his own subjective entanglement within the situation. He frames his challenge well within the vocabulary of the discourse, reusing the language of the myth of Salah ad-Din to express an objection to it.

His critique comes not in rejecting assertions as to the content of a history, but in lampooning the moral intentions behind emphasizing certain stories from the past over others. In response to the analogy's appearance in a comparison of Yasser Arafat to Salah ad-Din, Oz laments the violent motivations he perceives behind the facade of nationalist excitement. Oz first relates the Gazan use of Salah ad-Din: this is the primary source, the

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[82] Oz, Amos. "The Specter of Saladin". *New York Times* (1923-Current file) [New York, N.Y] 28 July 2000: A21.

scene of Gaza decorated with Salah ad-Din flags. It is the Zionist-Crusader analogy, which Oz presents to his reader in his first paragraph. He leaves it unexplained, temporarily, and moves instead to announce his emotional reaction: "In silence, astounded, I watch". The reader now knows that Salah ad-Din is not an innocent image: there is meaning to this name. But without understanding who Salah ad-Din was, one may not understand what the Gazans intend to communicate about Arafat, the Salah ad-Din "of our era". Oz, therefore, conveys the content of the historical narrative. Oz writes, "In silence, astounded, I watch, and I can't help reminding myself that the original Saladin promised the Arab people that he would not make pacts with the infidels, he would massacre them and throw them in the ocean".[83] Only now does the comparison make sense: only now does the politics of the historical analogy show itself.

By exploring the historical narrative launched against him and seeking further information on the content of that element of the analogy, Oz demonstrates an acceptance of the analogy's validity and a conscious decision to understand the political implications of the comparison through an invocation of the historical narrative. This, in turn, constitutes Oz's acknowledgement of the analogic discursive fact of politicized history: he approaches a political message through history.

In relying on history to elucidate a political claim, Oz illustrates the functionality of the analogic discourse and demonstrates an acceptance of its terms. He does not attempt to neutralize the threat by discrediting the analogy through historical arguments, as if that were an act outside the analogic discourse rather than one fundamentally

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[83] Oz, Amos. "The Specter of Saladin".

analogic in nature. Oz instead addresses the political implications and critiques them on political and moral lines. He rejects Salah ad-Din because he rejects what Salah ad-Din means: “The Palestinians must choose if they want a new Saladin, or to really work for peace”. Oz’s approach is, perhaps, the most effective manner of critiquing a deployment of the analogy. It cuts cleanly to the heart of the message, lays it bare, and presents a counter-argument based not on an opposing historical narrative but on a different political agenda. For Oz, the past may inform political claims and may be used to elucidate them, but is not necessary to make them.

The writings of Palestinian author Nizar Sakhnini present a relationship between the past and politics that is satisfactorily characterized neither as “informing” nor “elucidating”, to use the terms listed just previously. Sakhnini engages deeply and enthusiastically with the Zionist-Crusader analogy and the “Fall of Israel” theme, suggesting that for Sakhnini, history supports political claims and foresees political futures. Born in Acre in 1932, Sakhnini lived through the early Zionist settlement of Palestine and through the creation of Israel and the wars that followed; he became a refugee in 1948 and since has been an activist and writer for the restoration of rights and land to Palestinians. In an article on the Israeli policies towards Palestinians in the Disputed Territories, Sakhnini outlines a historical narrative that casts Palestine as a land frequently invaded and occupied by many peoples, the Crusaders among them, and contextualizes contemporary Israelis as the most recent invaders in this chain. Within this historical narrative, Sakhnini concludes that Israel will not endure because the previous

invader states—and here he specifically mentions the Crusaders—did not last. Defining occupation as a theme in the history of Palestine allows Sakhnini to claim all instances of invasion in Palestine as analogically relevant to each other. Thus, the history of Roman Palestine, as Byzantine and Ottoman Palestine, is productive of lessons on experiences of, and approaches to, foreign occupation. Sakhnini, seeking a release from his experience of Israeli occupation, analogically allies twenty-first century Israel-Palestine with past entities in the land. It is the same rhetorical technique employed in the Zionist-Crusader analogy, although Sakhnini defines Palestine as an invaded territory and thereby expands his body of historical eras to include all occupations.

As noted above, Sakhnini emphasizes the Crusader invasion above others and shows, thus, a preference for the politically charged myth of Salah ad-Din over other eras without equally developed politicized histories. Sakhnini selects the Crusade era as his primary analogic focus because he recognizes, like Ohana, the potent rhetorical potential of the Zionist-Crusader narrative for framing predictions of the imminent fall of the State of Israel. After criticizing Israel for what he finds policies of "ethnic cleansing" regarding treatment of its Palestinian and Arab populations, Sakhnini finishes his article with a message of hope for a just future for these mistreated peoples. Israel, the latest of the invaders in Palestine, will soon be gone, and with it the suffering of the invaded population. Drawing on the Zionist-Crusader analogy, Sakhnini concludes: "The 'Zionist State' in Palestine is a mere illusion whose fate would not be better than that of the Crusaders. The Crusaders ruled for about 200 years in Palestine. The Zionist entity would

not last that long."[84] Sakhnini allots, at most, 200 years for the "Zionist entity", a number he lifted directly from Crusade history, although he marks 200 as charitable. The Latin Kingdoms existed for two centuries, but Israel, Sakhnini states, "would not last that long". It is an ominous claim for Israelis, and one that is fully in line with the political thrust of the analogy.

However, it is also a note that introduces a slight disconnect in the comparison by implicitly asserting a difference between the two eras such that the conclusions of the events will differ. The Crusade era lasted two centuries, but there is something different about the contemporary Israeli moment, for Israel will not make that age. Sakhnini, however, declines to identify the salient factor determining Israel's shorter lifespan, and his silence on this point is a silent threat. Knowing the discourse of the analogy would communicate his point beyond the extent of his words, as Sakhnini writes sparingly and lets the analogy complete his message for him.

Hamas and the "Testimony of History": A Case Study for the "Fall of Israel" Prediction

The Covenant of Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), written in 1988, outlines the group's purpose and philosophy.[85] Hamas was founded in Gaza in 1987, during the First Intifada, as an offshoot of the nearby Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt; as the 1988

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[84] Sakhnini, Nizar, "Zionism And Palestine Pre-Planned And Pre-Meditated Ethnic Cleansing And Land Theft", Rense.com: 11.

[85] The Covenant contributes to the same "Fall of Israel" theme as Kavon, Oz, and Sakhnini; however, due to the depth of the Covenant's engagement on this theme and the importance of Hamas in contemporary politics, I have accorded it a separate section.

charter states, the organization's purpose was to fight Israel for the return of all Palestinian territories and the subsequent establishment of an Islamic state in those lands. In addition to providing a center for political mobilization and religious support for *jihad* against Israel, Hamas provides crucial social services to the people in the Palestinian territories since this function is largely overlooked by the Palestinian Authority. Due to Hamas' central role in the lives of many Palestinians, the organization and its political message have become popular in the territories. Today Hamas is operative and has some support in all Palestinian territories, although it is particularly popular in Gaza: as of 2007 Hamas has been the ruling political party in the Gaza Strip.

The Covenant contains data on the Zionist-Crusader analogy — positive statements connecting Zionism with crusade — and specifically data on the politico-religious employment of this analogy in rallying Arabs and Muslims against the State of Israel. As stated above, Hamas, at this historical juncture, is largely operative in Gaza, and its focus continues to be what is laid out in this covenant: namely, to fight Israel until it ceases to exist. Furthermore, this source contains data on Salah ad-Din and his use in the analogy, in this case as a role model and heroic Muslim figure to inspire Hamas; data on religious interpretations of Salah ad-Din are here as well, as the charter connects him to the 11th-13th century *jihad* against the Crusaders and draws guidance and inspiration from him for their *jihad* against Israel today.[86]

The Covenant begins with a few quotes, one from the Qur'an and two from contemporary Muslim political figures. One of these quotes is from Hassan al-Banna, the

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[86] "Hamas Covenant 1988: The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement", The Avalon Project, Yale Law School.

Egyptian founder of the Muslim Brotherhood from which, as noted above, Hamas sprung. Aside from asserting a political allegiance between the two movements, al-Banna's quote establishes a primary focus on Israel and frames the fight against Israel in religious terms. Thus, the conflict is not a political one between two mundane powers, but one with cosmic dimensions, between Islam and its enemy Israel. The quote reads, "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it".[87] According to this formulation, Israel continues to exist because Islam has not stopped it from existing. Furthermore, al-Banna's claim that Israel will continue existing *until* Islam obliterates it is a sharp reinforcement of the cosmic nature of the battle. Islam is the only thing that can cause Israel to stop existing, and until that time when Islam obliterates Israel, Israel will exist. It puts the power over Israel's existence directly in the hands of Muslims, and charges them with the responsibility to effect the change for which the Covenant calls. The last clause of the quote, however, adds a second dimension to the fight next to the first, cosmic one: this second level is historical. While the beginning of al-Banna's line addresses charges of responsibility and the conditions for success, the end foretells a favorable outcome based on the past course of history. Thus, al-Banna tells us first that that Israel will exist until Islam ends its existence, and second that Islam will end Israel's existence because Islam has ended "others before it". Which "others" this refers to is unspecified, although it is likely meant in the Covenant as a reference to previous occupations of the land of Israel/Palestine, as the Covenant in later articles discusses the history of Israel/Palestine as a land repeatedly

[87] "Hamas Covenant 1988: The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement", The Avalon Project, Yale Law School.

occupied. It could also refer to past enemies of Islam, independent of geographic location. Regardless, the note introduces the course of history as a legitimizing element for the aims of a contemporary political and religious movement, as well as accesses certain events and outcomes in history and cites them as support for the imminent success of a cause. History, then, becomes a means for foretelling a future: Islam will obliterate Israel because it has achieved success in comparable situations before this one. This treatment of history, as a narrative on the shape of the future, appears throughout the Covenant, namely in its concluding articles entitled "The Testimony of History".

It begins, then, with an introduction to the notion of history as proof of the future, and ends with a political and religious argument in part supported by and based on this conceptualization of history. Additionally, the presence of this claim at the outset of the Covenant places it as a frame for the rest of the text, and encourages the reader to engage with the goals of Hamas as one who understands that he, as a Muslim, has both the responsibility and the ability to defeat Israel, an enemy of Islam.

In Article Two, the Covenant outlines the structure of Hamas. The Movement, according to the charter, is founded at its base on faithful Muslims. The basic function of this structure is to "raise the banner of Jihad in the face of the oppressors, so that they would rid the land and the people of their uncleanliness, vileness and evils".[88] The document elsewhere identifies "the oppressors" as "the Jews",[89] Zionism,[90] and the State of Israel; going by al-Banna's quote as discussed above, the label may be stretched to

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[88] Ibid., Article Two.

[89] Ibid., "In The Name of The Most Merciful Allah".

[90] Ibid., Article Fourteen.

include any entity comparable to Israel. And indeed, this rhetorical foundation is used in the Covenant to expand the group of opponents from Israel, Zionists, and the Jews to include the "Capitalist West", its "imperialistic forces", and, most notably, the "Crusading West". By using colonialism and imperialism as diachronic bridges, the Movement connects its regional struggle against Israeli occupation with its larger struggle against Western incursions. As a result, the Movement frames its regional concerns in the larger realms of Islam, nationalism and anti-colonialism, and generalizes its struggle to one of global political concerns in the modern world. The conceptualization of the Movement as one that is simultaneously an issue of Islam and political nationalism further extends the audience of affected individuals, as it allows Hamas to call on all Muslims for aid. The Movement makes specific use of this to align itself with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, writing, "The Moslem does not estrange himself from his father, brother, next of kin or friend. Our homeland is one, our situation is one, our fate is one and the enemy is a joint enemy to all of us". Thus, an attempt is made to form a political link via a religious one.

The cosmic dynamics of the battle are reinforced by the call to Jihad. Israel is an enemy of Islam, and must be confronted with Jihad. Note that in Arabic the term "jihad" means "to struggle" and, used in an Islamic context, often refers to a struggle against an enemy of the religion, rather than a political or otherwise worldly conflict. The struggle may also be internal, as a struggle against the will to do evil and the struggle to appropriately interpret the word of God. In this usage, as in much of the Covenant, the jihad is an external one directed at evils perpetrated by another, non-Muslim source. The

language of physical dirt as a metaphor for moral degradation, while common in religious contexts, also strongly recalls the diction of the earlier texts' discussion of Christian Franks in Jerusalem. 'Imad ad-Din, for instance, describes them as a polluting influence on the city, and celebrates their expulsion at the hands of Salah ad-Din with praise for the "purification" of Jerusalem. This is covered at length in previous chapters, but I mention it again now to emphasize the recurrence of the language of cleanliness and purity within the context of a battle between Islam and an oppressive other. The similarity in language, while it only gestures toward a continuity of religious metaphors, presents a superficial similarity of the experiences of Muslims facing an Israeli Jerusalem and those seven centuries earlier with a Frankish Jerusalem.

The analogy expands when considering constructions of the opponent in Hamas' Covenant. As noted above, the text cites Jews and Israel as enemies; in Article Seven, the label "Zionist" appears as well. This term, in addition to bringing in a direct phrasal link with the "Zionist-Crusader analogy", is used as an adjective to modify the noun "invaders". Hamas fights the "Zionist invaders". The adjectival appearance of the word is telling in this passage, as it implies a variety of possible types of invaders. Indeed, this is supported by the sections on the history of the land of Palestine, which is marked as a history of successive invasions. One may tell the story of this region through a narrative of the various polities that have occupied the land. The Crusaders are one such state; Israel is a second. To be sure, there are many that qualify as "invaders" in this sense—Rome, the Ottoman Empire, and the British being three that come immediately to mind, although a more thorough list would include such as the Persians, Phoenicians, and

Mamluks. That said, the construction of the region as a land that has been invaded in the past introduces history as a rhetorical tool in the Covenant's argument. Past invasions, then, may be relevant for dealing with or talking about the present one, as past moments and the present one are linked through their common circumstances as times of occupation.

The language of "invasion" is a repeated trope in the Covenant. In Article Fifteen, the invasion is characterized in two ways. The first is as an "ideological" one, occurring as a result of "missionaries and orientalists" and affecting people through an infiltration of the education and information infrastructures. This invasion targets the minds of people and crafts a populace that is more easily conquered by military force. Thus, the Covenant states, this first wave of invasion "pave[s] the way" for an invasion of soldiers. It does so by "upsetting [the people's] thoughts, disfiguring their heritage and violating their ideals". The integrity of a people's heritage is compromised by the introduction of another, foreign set of values; this weakened heritage, in turn, weakens the military force of a people and opens it to conquest.

The focus on an internal conquest by a foreign heritage is remarkably reminiscent of a colonialist narrative. Furthermore, the sources of this "ideological invasion" are identified as missionaries and orientalists, two types often identified as Europeans. The Covenant then constructs an ongoing modern battle that stretches beyond the cited struggle against Israel, as the language of colonialism and imperialism, especially that with a focus on European influences, suggests a conflict against European imperialism and the internal colonized mentality that underpins the stated conflict with Israel, the

Jews, and the Zionists.

In line with this anti-colonialist narrative is the recourse to Crusade history as an illustration of the Movement's views on the interconnection of Islam and Palestinian nationalism, particularly with regard to the notion of political action as an individual religious duty. Thus, the Covenant contains a sentence beginning with contemporary policy objectives—"it is important that basic changes be made in the school curriculum"—and concluding with a note that defines the ideological troubles of 1988 as the troubling legacy of the Crusades. Indeed, the Covenant explicitly says as much, writing of the Crusades' ideological residue, "All this has paved the way towards the loss of Palestine". In this vein, the moment of the 1917 loss of Jerusalem to the British under General Allenby is cast as a moment of Crusade directly in line with the 1097 loss of Jerusalem. The Covenant's narrative tells that at the moment of his entrance into the Old City of Jerusalem, Allenby declared, "Only now have the Crusades ended". The victory of the British over the Ottoman Empire constitutes, thus, the retaking of Jerusalem from Muslim hands after Salah ad-Din's 1187 victory against the Crusaders. Furthermore, the Covenant includes the legend of French Mandate official General Gouraud, of whom it is said that he spoke at Salah ad-Din's grave in 1920, "We have returned, O Salah el-Din". Allenby's quote calls for the end of the Crusades; Gouraud's announces its resumption. In both cases, the Covenant makes it point clear: the events of the 1180s, 1920s, and 1980s are all of one war, almost a millennia old. The Crusaders are ongoing, and the Movement will win this time.

European colonialism and occupation is a historical bridge between the two times:

one era of colonialism has "paved the way for" a second. This, in turn, connects to the above analysis of the myth of Salah ad-Din as an anti-colonialist subset of a politicized Crusade history. Accordingly, the Covenant engages with both anti-colonialism and Salah ad-Din. Article Fifteen, while nominally addressing education and state infrastructure as tools for combating the ideological invasion, also contains a section on the history of the Crusades. It is a brief overview touching on events relevant to the contemporary situation Hamas perceives in 1988. Thus the history is deployed in the Covenant to identify past successes, to illustrate the relationship between the challenge (invasion) and the strategy (education), and ultimately to forge a meaningful link between the two ages.

It is not a far leap, then, to draw a political conclusion from the body of Crusade history. The final sections of the Covenant are grouped under the title "The Testimony of History: Across History in Confronting the Invaders". This references the previously discussed formulation of the history of the land of Palestine as a series of invasions, but also includes the idea of a history as both inspiration for contemporary solutions and history as testament to a certain future. The section begins with a narrative of the history of Palestine, introduced as a land that, "since the dawn of history, … has been the target of expansionists". The story of various expansionists pauses at the Crusades and notes that the Muslims achieved victory only when they united under Islam. Notably, Salah ad-Din is credited as the leader under which the united and successful Muslim force fought. This repeats the later elements of the myth of Salah ad-Din in which he is a unifier and a liberator, although it emphasizes political unity under Islam rather than a secular nationalist politics as in Nasser's usage of the myth. After offering the example of the

Muslims under Salah ad-Din, the Movement reflects on the import of this historical event and concludes that, for those living in 1988, the same path of Islam must be followed. "This is the only way to liberate Palestine", the Covenant reads. "There is no doubt about the testimony of history". This idea of the relevance of history to the present and the importance of studying the past for knowledge on how to shape the future are reinforced again:

> The Islamic Resistance Movement views seriously the defeat of the Crusaders at the hands of Salah ed-Din al-Ayyubi and the rescuing of Palestine from their hands…. The Movement draws lessons and examples from all this. The present Zionist onslaught has also been preceded by Crusading raids from the West and other Tatar raids from the East. Just as the Moslems faced those raids and planned fighting and defeating them, they should be able to confront the Zionist invasion and defeat it.[91]

The Movement is deliberate and conscious of its usage of Crusade history. Hamas' 1988 Covenant establishes via the Zionist-Crusader analogy a historical parallel to the contemporary world. The Crusader past is established as comparable to the present Israeli occupation, and thus present policy may be shaped by past successes. Indeed, a study of the past is beneficial to those seeking to impact the future; in this light, the Crusade era becomes especially significant as a historical point of focus because it is perceived as analogous to the present situation. This past may be mined for insights. History in the Covenant is not an academic pursuit, but a political one. One studies for insights on strategy: it is an embattled view of the past, seeking lessons and advice in past successes. History is a source of wisdom for shaping the future, and the story of Salah ad-Din and the Crusades is especially significant in that it offers a desirable outcome in a situation

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[91] Ibid., Article Thirty-Five.

analogous to the one Hamas faced in 1988.

Conclusion

A Greater Crusade Discourse

As I have shown in this study, deployments and interpretations of the Zionist-Crusader analogy are varied. The division between different usages of the analogy does not fall neatly into an Israeli-Palestinian or Arab-Israeli order. The analogy, and the historical narrative formulated to support it, however, is indeed directly influenced by an individual's politics and proximity to and stake in the conflict. The analogy is a politicized one, as discussed at length with relation to the myth of Salah ad-Din and its usages and manifestations across history, so it is natural that interactions with the analogy would be influenced by the political perspective from which one comes. Recall Michel Foucault's notion of discourse as a theoretical realm of rules, the sum of which defines a set of the possible permutations of action, thought, and existence. I have cast the analogy as one discourse and have analyzed debates on Israel-Palestine and Arab-Israeli relations that engage with key concepts in the analogy—Zionists, Crusaders, and Salah ad-Din—as phenomena proscribed by the analogic discourse. Individuals contextualized within the discourse, then, trek the pre-established pathways when discussing the analogy. As stated above, the usages—the pathways—of the analogy are varied, but all acting within the analogic discourse share an acceptance of the fundamental validity of the Zionist-Crusader comparison. Regardless of the political ends to which the analogy is used, within the discourse the comparison remains saturated with meaning, and determining its

truthfulness stays a high-stakes endeavor.

Thus, the relevance of the analogy is a discursive fact, while the ensuing actions are permitted to vary, provided they remain within the ambit of the above discursive fact. Hamas and Sakhnini assert the analogy in direct support of their hopes for the fall of Israel; Nasser and Arafat identify themselves with Salah ad-Din, a move that, when situated within the analogic context, supports their respective efforts to unify the Arab world under Egypt and to liberate an occupied Palestine. Whereas Benvenisti attacks the use of analogies to neutralize political unease, Eli Kavon identifies certain elements of the historical narrative as the problematic features that support a conclusion of Israel's impending fall, and he critiques only these while leaving the analogy in place. Amos Oz accepts the history—even adds to it—and draws a political conclusion based on the new events in his adjusted analogy; his approach, as with Kavon's, leaves the analogy in tact and focuses on changing the political implications by altering the body of relevant historical data. Ordering the sources by their approach to the analogy highlights the way in which each author's politics is central in guiding their engagement with the analogy. Ethnic and national identities are salient solely to the extent that they influence political agendas in the conflict. An Israeli or Palestinian identity is relevant, then, only if the author understands their self-identification as a reason for their views on the conflict; thus, I leave open the possibility of ethnic and national influences on the use of the analogy, but I believe reducing analogic engagement to these factors risks an overly simplistic understanding of the phenomenon. The same is true for Arab, non-Palestinian

identities, as Nasser demonstrates.[92] Furthermore, pro-Israel and pro-Palestine, while political persuasions, are in themselves also not sufficient to determine acceptance of the analogy, nor rejection. As illustrated above, pro-Israel individuals may be Israeli (Oz and Benvenisti, for instance) or other (Kavon is American), although even those of a shared political persuasion display differing approaches to the analogy (critiquing the analogy, critiquing the history, critiquing the morals or the conclusion). Similarly, Nasser uses the analogy—of which Salah ad-Din is a subset—to support his pan-Arab aspirations, while Sakhnini and Hamas deploy it in support of the imminent fall of the State of Israel.[93] Ayman al-Zawahiri, the current head of Al-Qaeda, published a pamphlet employing the analogy as rhetoric against the West.[94] While this will be developed further in the following section, for now note that it demonstrates the flexibility and broad applicability of the analogy which, in al-Zawahiri's case, has been expanded beyond a specific relevance to Israel and operates instead as a comparison of all colonialist and imperialist powers to the Crusades. The basic comparison of Israel to a colonialist Crusading power remains, but Israel has become one among many crusading enemies. Al-Zawahiri's usage demonstrates the potential of the analogy as an anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist rhetorical tool. Najib Haddad and Jurji Zaydan recognized this as well in the analogy and employed Salah ad-Din accordingly. In this light, the Zionist-Crusader analogy is a subset of a larger Imperialist-Crusader analogy which is deployed against an imperialist power, and

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See also Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, and Ayman al-Zawahiri, "General Guidelines for Jihad". The latter will be discussed presently.
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[93] Qutb's *Milestones*, named in the preceding footnote, are also relevant here as yet another Arab perspective on the analogy: he uses it to call for the political victory of a unified Islam.

[94] al Zawahiri, Ayman, "General Guidelines for Jihad", N.p.: As-Sahab Media, 2013.

Salah ad-Din a related aspect that may stand alone—as in Najib Haddad's piece—or may act as part of the Zionist-Crusader analogy—as in Yasser Arafat's case.

It is, perhaps, trite to make a point as to the diversity and nuance of political opinions within a single ethnic, religious, or national population, although I do argue that the variety of engagements of the analogy supports this conclusion, trite or not. The greater argument I wish to put forward, however, is the conceptualization of history, contained within the analogic discourse, that underpins and enables the politicization of the Zionist-Crusader analogy. Requisite for perceiving the analogy as threatening or inspiring is the perception that events of the past are intimately connected to the future, and thus that history, understood as the study of these past events, is a means for shaping the future. This construction of history and the interconnectedness of temporally disparate events is a second discursive fact that supplements the analogy's relevance; taken together, these two constitute a discursive formation within which the comparison of two historical events becomes a political act.

Specifically, the notion of identifying in the past a situation analogous to the present allows, in this case, for the possibility of predictions for the future based on the course of the past. If this outcome is desirable—with desirability hinging on politics—actions may be taken in the present to ensure that the two situations remain analogous. If undesirable, the past may offer lessons for altering the present such that it is no longer analogous to the past, and any previous conclusions on the content of the future are inapplicable. In both cases, the writing of history and the engagement with historical events and figures is conditioned by the political situation of the author. There is deep

embedding of preset concerns in Crusade historiography, such that the politicizing of this medieval era in historiography by those within the analogical discourse creation acts, not as a history of past events, but as a history of the future. In the cases presented in this study, the past becomes a battleground for confronting conflicts of the present, and details of the past are argued over, emphasized or de-emphasized, interpreted or reinterpreted, according to the conclusions as to the course of the future deemed necessary by each political agenda. The Zionist-Crusader analogy and Salah ad-Din as a central figure thereof has constituted a discourse in the Foucauldian sense, such that it shapes both perceptions of the present and constructions of the past; furthermore, drawing from Benjamin's and Baudrillard's theorizations of history, I have argued that the analogy constitutes a discourse fundamentally linking both past and present moments in a dialectic, historical relationship. Thus, changing the narrative of one moment necessitates the changing of the other—and, as selecting a course of action for the present is often difficult, formulating policy in a past moment and exporting it to the present is a second alternative. It is a dissociative maneuver, to be sure, but one that allows the distance of time and a superficial chance in scenario and actors—while retaining fundamental comparability, based on the analogousness of the two moments—to facilitate thought on present matters. Debates about history, within the analogic discourse, become debates about the future, and strategies constructed with the actions of those from the past become the political and military policies of a community in conflict today.

Continuing Crusader Language

This thesis began with a passage by Amos Oz describing the meaning of Salah ad-Din. Offered in Gaza as a comparison for Yasser Arafat, Salah ad-Din, recalls Oz, "promised the Arab people that he would not make pacts with the infidels".[95] The introduction to this thesis discusses the figure of Salah ad-Din. The conclusion, however, will focus on the "infidel". Used in Oz's construction to represent a threatening non-Muslim, "infidel" stands in for the Israeli enemy, but, notably, gives the political conflict a religious existence. More than the conflict between two nations, it becomes a fight between two faiths: Muslims and Jews conduct a cosmic battle for a sacred land. Oz does not assume a familiarity with the Crusades in his audience, but knowledge of the era allows the quiet suggestion of religious war to seep through the lines of his Op-Ed. Perhaps Oz himself does not perceive his involvement in the conflict as religiously motivated, but he does attribute this inspiration to Salah ad-Din and, by extension, to those who take Salah ad-Din as their hero.

The language of "infidel" and religious conflict is found in a broad swath of discursive arenas, and the vocabulary of "crusading", of which I believe "infidel" a subset, is deployed for rhetorical support in conflicts perceived by combatants as between the West and the East. True as arguments of essentializing and Orientalist constructions of civilizations, not to mention Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis, may be, they are not applicable here: the aim is not to challenge monolithic ideas of "the West" and "the East" but to treat as inherently valid the interlocutors' *experience* of West and East as real

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[95] Oz, Amos, "The Specter of Saladin".

and immediate existences, for it is the perceptions of individuals I seek in this thesis, not an evaluation of the concepts populating their world.

With this in mind, then, I turn to a quote from George W. Bush, who famously made reference to crusade in September 16, 2001 statement on the terrorist attacks of five days before. Bush characterized the ensuing war against the perpetrators of the September 11 hijackings—namely al-Qaeda, who, as noted above, also participates in Crusade language—as a crusade, issuing a quote that quickly sparked a controversy among those recognizing the political implications of the analogy: "This crusade", said Bush, "this war on terrorism is going to take a while".[96] Many of those U.S. Soldiers who fought the war in the years following Bush's statement have adopted the discourse of crusade as a framework for their fight. This discursive participation may be termed the "Crusader subculture" of the Armed Forces, and constitutes a discourse in which members of the Armed Forces view their enemies as Muslims waging jihad and view themselves, accordingly, as the infidel enemy. This is, perhaps, a classic reclamation of vocabulary and the absorption of a threatening identity launched at one by one's enemy, such that the reclamation is an act of empowerment in choosing one's identity. And yet, it manifests itself in badges, user photos on online forums, and tattoos proudly labeling the wearer as "Infidel", in Roman and Arabic scripts. It is the reclamation of a threatening identity, but it is also—and more relevant to the analyses of this thesis—a perfect example of a response to a conflict within the discursive arena established by the original attack. Like homosexuality in Foucault's analysis, the "Infidel" pride and Crusade

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[96] Bush, George W., "Remarks by the President Upon Arrival", The White House, Washington, D.C., 16 September 2011, Presidential Speech.

subculture in the U.S. Armed Forces is a perfect instance of a discursive resistance that frames a challenge in the same vocabulary and same categories as used in the structure of power relations that prompted the original attack.

Similar rhetoric appears in a pamphlet published in September 2013 by Ayman al-Zawahiri, introduced previously as the current leader of al-Qaeda. Entitled "General Guidelines for Jihad", the list delivered a body of advice on tactics and motivations for those seeking to contribute to the struggle against the West. Paired with heavy use of "jihad" terminology is language of "crusade": America and the West are both treated as Crusaders, and their encroaching and coercive influence is deemed a "Crusader onslaught".[97] This language is deliberately chosen to convey a dynamic of religious conflict; this interpretation is reinforced with explicit reference to religion in phrases such as the following: "the Mujahid vanguard [must confront] the Crusaders and their proxies, until the Caliphate is established", "targeting the … western Zionist-Crusader alliance … is [the Mujahid brothers'] foremost duty", and "our resistance against the Crusader onslaught against Muslims".[98] The fight, to reiterate, is a cosmic one between the West and al-Qaeda. The language of "crusade" in this text is an instance of the broader body of Crusade-related analogic discourses within which this study contextualizes the Zionist-Crusader analogy and its Salah ad-Din component. The point, then, in discussing this al-Qaeda guide to successful jihad, is to illustrate the scope and usage of a series of discourses related to the single one forming the focus of this thesis and, thereby, to situate these analyses in a larger discursive and geographical context.

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[97] al-Zawahiri, Ayman, "General Guidelines for Jihad", 2.

[98] Ibid., 3-4.

There is a larger body of dialogue using crusade language occurring in the world today; these instances from al-Qaeda and George W. Bush are only two examples meant to suggest the diversity of voices participating in this discourse. The Zionist-Crusader discourse is one realm of crusade language, applied specifically to the context of the Israel-Palestine and Arab-Israeli conflicts. Within that context, as this thesis has shown, there is a plurality of motivations and styles with which the analogy has been deployed. The greater point, however, is not that there are many individuals participating in this discourse, but that the manner of interactions with the analogic discourse cannot be categorized meaningfully along the line of "sides" in the conflict. Israelis, thus, do not respond uniformly to the discourse, nor do Palestinians or Muslims or Arabs engage in a single manner within their group. Rather, the salient factor has been shown to be an individuals' political agenda, which is not necessarily linked to these national, ethnic, or religious identities listed above. There is a soft irony to this—albeit a pleasing one, I find—in noting that a conflict that has been so polarized between "sides" has constituted a context for the discourse in which "sides", in fact, are not the defining feature.

The emphasis on the dissociation of an individual's politics from her national, religious, and ethnic identities creates a space of agency for the individual, within which she may select her agenda rather than having it predetermined for her based on her national, religious, or ethnic identity. This is also a challenge to the phenomenon of identity politics, which takes all self-identities as political statements and, in doing so, collapses the gap I have worked to insert through this study.

The actors discussed in this text debate heated issues within the context of an analogic discourse. While the discursive framework produces the possibilities of engagement with the Zionist-Crusader analogy, ultimately I argue for agentive individuals able to navigate their political agendas *within* that framework. The myth of Salah ad-Din and the Zionist-Crusader analogy, thus, are rhetorical tools created and adopted by agentive individuals within the context of the Israel-Palestine and Arab-Israeli conflicts to wrestle with present questions and construct visions of the future in line with aspirations they themselves select.

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