

Passionate Histories: Romancing Saladin

One of the guilty pleasures of doing history, whether social, cultural, or (in my case) literary, is the emotional connection we may feel to the past. Premodern Mediterranean writers themselves often mobilize their passions in the pursuit of history. Abu Shama (1203-1267), looking back from the first turbulent years of the Mamluk dynasty at the deeds of Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din, seizes upon the past as a kind of passionate friendship. In the prologue to the *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, [The Two Gardens], he writes love poetry to his source books, and speaks of seeking the lost pass in passionate congress with a former age:

The book that I read is an intimate friend whom I cherish more than a mistress

And as I study it, the centuries revive in my sight, present, though their greatness
has been extinguished.¹

In the *Rawdatayn*, Abu Shama interweaves three lost epochs with deep nostalgia: the lives of Salah al-Din and Nur al-Din, and the lives of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions, and the first four Caliphs, ignorance of whom Abu Shama laments at the onset of his double history. This comparison is high praise for the two counter-crusading leaders, who, whatever their accomplishments, were Orghuz Turkish and Kurdish in origin, and thus seemingly not apt for channeling the ultimate springs of Arab Islam. Salah al-Din's Kurdish roots, the comparative brevity of the Ayyubid dynasty that he founded, and his rise to power through service in

¹ Abu Shama, *Al-Rawdatayn*, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, Historiens Orientaux* v. 4 and 5, tr. A. C. Barbier de Maynard (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1897) ; Abu Shama, *Kitāb al-rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-dawlatayn al-Nūrīya wa-al-Salāhīya*, 5 vols, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Zībaq (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1997)

particular seem to have discouraged Islamic writers after Abu Shama from lauding him much as a cultural hero. While never quite forgotten, as a counter-crusader he was replaced by other exemplary warrior-leaders, such as the Ottoman Sultan Baybars, and he does not attract much Arabic literary recapture until the nineteenth-century.²

In a recent study of the historical troping of Abu Shama's history (static, exemplary, and revivalist) vs. that of his contemporary, Ibn Wasil, Konrad Hirschler argues for Abu Shama's revivalist appeal to subsequent readers.³ In his view, Abu Shama sequesters the two panegyrically walled gardens of Nur al-Din's and Salah al-Din's reigns from previous and subsequent dark ages, by constellating them with the first communities of Islam – those of Muhammad and his Companions, the Muslims of Medina, and the early Caliphs. In so doing Abu Shama invests Salah al-Din with an enormous nostalgia with the power to cross centuries and provoke new forms in Islamic sovereignty within the context of twentieth-century nation-state building. It is through the power of this revivalist nostalgia that Salah al-Din lives as an exemplary figure whose affective charge leaders such as Egypt's Gamel 'abd al-Nasr and Iraq's Saddam Husain are eager to lay claim to.⁴

²Some exceptions are Mujir al-Din's (1462-63) history of Jerusalem and Hebron, and the nineteenth-century Egyptian chronicles of al-Jabarti and 'Ali Mubarak: Stefan Heidemann, "Memory and Ideology: Images of Saladin in Egypt and Iraq, in *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, ed. Christiane Gruber and Sune Haugbolle (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013), 57-81; Carole Hillenbrand, "The Evolution of the Saladin Legend in the West," *Mélanges Louis Pouzet*, Beirut, 2006, 1-13.

³ Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors as Actors* (London and New York: SOAS/Routledge, 2006).

⁴⁴ Heidemann, "Memory," 57-81.

However, more surprisingly, Salah al-Din attracts such emotional attachments not only from Mamluk-era chroniclers such as Abu Shama and Ibn Wasil, but also from the descendants of his enemies in the Latin Christian Mediterranean and Europe. These attachments alter over time but actually intensify and ramify as proximity to the historical figure and crusading experience diminishes. John Tolan argues that Salah al-Din's image improves with time and distance in Latin Christian Europe until he comes to exemplify not Muslim threat but rather chivalric valor and sovereign generosity.⁵ As an example, he cites the story of the Saladins of Anglure. In the late thirteenth century, the lords of Anglure, Champagne, incorporate the Muslim emir into their very family, adopting a coat of arms that includes bells and crescents and naming a son Saladin every generation until 1731 and intermittently after that. They trace this practice back to a family legend of capture and the forgiveness of ransom in 1191, but there is no evidence that the Anglures took part in the Third Crusade.⁶ Thus, a century after the loss of Jerusalem and as the last foothold, Acre, was slipping from Latin Christian hands, a family in France was staking an emotional claim to the chivalric history of a successful enemy, and perhaps, through him to the holy sites he had possessed, in the name of his kindness to their ancestor. Geraldine Heng also sees Salah al-Din as a site for marking claims, but explores grimmer racial fantasies surrounding Saladin's whitewashing as a proto-European and crypto-Christian. In her reading, Saladin's half-European ancestry (shown in the thirteenth-century *La Fille du comte de Ponthieu*) and his assimilation into western chivalric romance culture (in the fifteenth-century *Roman de Saladin*) make him the exception that proves the rule of anti-

⁵ John Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages* (Gainesville FL: University Press of Florida, 2008), 79-100.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

Muslim racism.⁷ I think there is more to be said on the subject given the plethora of Saladin texts that don't fit these frameworks. Even these texts make the affective riddle of Salah al-Din an ongoing question that fantasies of assimilation do not answer, especially since "Europe" and "White" were in a continual process of notional formation and forgetting throughout the period, and even "Christian" was riven from within despite claims to hegemony.

Launching from the *Rawdatayn*, this paper explores the emotional legacies of Salah al-Din, as channeled through his contemporaries, to writers around the Mediterranean and beyond. I will draw upon Barbara Rosenwein's and Sara Ahmed's work on affect theory in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Svetlana Boym's discussions of nostalgia as a historical emotion, and Jacques Derrida's analyses of hospitality.⁸ I will pursue three key affects surrounding Salah al-Din, each of which has the capacity to cross cultural and confessional lines and provoke admiration, affiliation, and love in surprising places. Each of these affects draws on the historical roots of Salah al-Din's political self-representations, crucial to his survival and effectiveness, as he fostered images of himself as pious Sunni Muslim, exemplary sovereign, and effective military commander. Mediterranean Saladin legends bespeak the power of the past itself as lost opportunity and occasion for generative nostalgia, gift-exchanges, and kinships that remains intimately tied to a variety of future-creating historical chronotopes, up to and including our own.

⁷ Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 138-40

⁸ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd edition (New York and London: Routledge, 2014); Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001); James A. Schultz, *Courtly Love, Love of Courtliness and the History of Sexuality* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

These three affects speak both among and across the confessions most concerned with the afterlives of this figure, particularly Sunni Islam and Latin Christianity, as well as discourses of toleration for Judaism. The first affective area is nostalgia, which pervades Abu Shama's account in *Rawdatayn*, I will argue that the title echoes of the Qur'anic story of the Two Gardens in the Sura of The Cave with its lessons of historic loss, mourning, and submission to God, and I will draw upon Svetlana Boym's recent study of the powers of nostalgia to generate utopic or devastatingly dystopic futures. The second is hospitality and gift exchange: rooted in the sensoriums of bodily endangerment and relief, and creating intimacies always tinged with the threat of imbalance, hostility, and violence. Here I will draw upon gift exchange theories of Marilyn Strathern, and discussions of hospitality/hostility by Jacques Derrida, as I explore the strange intimacies fostered in Latin Christian remembrances of Salah al-Din. The third affects take root in discourses of family, genealogy, and kinship, which emerge provocatively in evolutions of the Story of the Three Laws in Boccaccio and Lessing's *Nathan der Weise*, in the context of toleration for Jews in medieval and German enlightenment milieus. All these affects touch in different ways on the even larger affective concept of *home*: its loss, shifting thresholds, survival and change over time.

While I explore each of these affects in a different confessional literary genealogy, however, I want to stress that they are mutually invasive. Nostalgia, gift-exchange/hospitality, and kinship/family interweave inseparably within Salah al-Din narratives. There is not time here to do more than sketch at these meshings, but I will argue that they speak to the communicability of these affects across confessional lines. These interwoven affects not only capitalize upon the mutual intelligibilities that mark Mediterranean transactions in the work

that Sharon Kinoshita and Brian Catlos have inspired through the Mediterranean Seminar, but also extend those intelligibilities well beyond them to both Europe and the Near East. They engage the larger question of how writers of many times, geographies, and confessions made themselves at home in the Mediterranean over a long and changing *durée*.

The remembrance of things past: contemporary sources and the affective politics of self-representation:

Working between contemporary or near contemporary sources and the more distant literary shapes Salah al-Din took – underscores the ways that significant historical details are traceable across time and distance appearing transmogrified in other texts. One of Salah al-Din's most thoughtful and erudite recent biographers, Anne-Marie Eddé, usefully reminds us that these historical details are significant whether they reflect the truth about Salah al-Din's character or not. She also reminds us that the one part of the figure that we cannot get at is his emotions:

Behind the sovereign is the man, his aspirations, his emotions, his tastes, his shortcomings, his fears, and his suffering. This is the hidden face of Saladin, the most difficult to grasp and the least known to anyone not satisfied with the portraits drawn by his panegyrists . . . The Saladin I have had the occasion to discover, based on all the materials collected, is therefore the man and his world, the man in his world. Indeed, to set out to find him is to go in search of a

personality that exists for others before existing in itself. Readers are thereby warned. It is now up to them to participate in the discovery of the true Saladin.⁹

Eddé highlights that what historians cannot see, the “hidden face” of Salah al-Din, is precisely how he felt and how those feelings drove him. Thus, in himself and impossible of access, he is an affective black hole, but as a man in his world, he reshaped the Dar al-Islam, promoted himself as a pious, merciful, and, above all, generous Sunni Muslim sovereign, seized Jerusalem out of Latin Christian rule and almost finished Nur al-Din’s work in destroying the Latin Christian Outremer kingdoms, leaving them only a narrow coastal foothold. These legacies make him an apt site around which both panegyrists and detractors could build affective universes – and they do. For my purposes, it doesn’t matter so much who Salah al-Din “really” was. What mattered was what people thought of him, why (in so far as we can find out) they thought it, and how the powerful affects they attach to him resonated across centuries of Mediterranean cultural mythology.

Salah al-Din himself did as much as he could to control how people thought of him. His many enemies spread malicious but often plausible accusations about him – that he had treacherously assassinated the Fatimid Caliph, that after Nur al-Din’s death he had betrayed his lord, al-Salih Ismail al-Malek, the young heir of Nur al-Din, by conquering “rebel” cities in his name, under his seal, and as his mamluk (servant), until he had enough of a power base to confront him directly and then forced him to accede, that he sought power by any means necessary, including marrying Nur al-Din’s widow, and provoking those loyal to Nur al-Din to

⁹ Anne-Marie Eddé, *Saladin*, tr. Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 10.

confront him so that he could wipe them out. [For a brief account of how Salah al-Din came to power in Egypt, Syria, and the Kingdoms of Jerusalem, see the Appendix.] As a result, Salah al-Din throughout his rise and reign engaged in vigorous campaigns of counter-propaganda, and the most urgent ways he could turn peoples hearts to obedience and love was by affiliating his image to 1) conservative Sunni ideals of piety, learning, and devotion, 2) the highest ideals of sovereignty, including generosity, forbearance, and courtly culture, and 3) military prowess: securing the loyalties of a strong network of kin and allies, by waging war, safeguarding them by waging it cannily and without risking them unnecessarily, and rewarding them handsomely for service by distributing spoils and gains, rather than amassing them for himself. Each of these representations (pious Muslim scholar, merciful sovereign, chivalric captain) was already heavily encoded in the multi-ethnic landscapes Salah al-Din transected as he redrew the borders of Egypt, the bilad al-Sham, and the Fertile Crescent, and established the double Sultanate of Egypt and Damascus. Piety, magnanimity, and chivalry were not just feelings but organizers of what Barbara Rosenwein calls emotional communities whose outlines can be traced in historical sources:

“Emotional communities [are] groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value—or devalue—the same or related emotions. More than one emotional community may exist—indeed normally does exist—contemporaneously, and these communities may change of time. Some come to the fore to dominate our sources, then recede in importance. Others are almost

entirely hidden from us, though we may imagine they exist and even see some of their effects on more visible groups.¹⁰

Rosenwein traces the synchronic interactions and diachronic changes between emotional communities of the western Middle Ages and early modern periods. She analyses the systems of feeling that complicated emotional experience, and spawned ethical discourses with a high degree of recognizability, intelligibility and appeal: including courtly love, spiritual friendship, and virtuous passion. Islamic cultures create their own emotional communities, in which connections to traditions, ongoing discussions of innovation, court culture, and scholarly dispute all play their parts.

Salah al-Din's self-representations intersect with Islamic emotional communities. The allures of piety and learning, sovereign magnanimity, and effective military prowess can be deeply affective, across both geographical and historical distance. For Salah al-Din they worked politically, galvanizing emotions of Sunni nostalgia at a time of dynastic turmoil and intra- (and inter-) confessional struggle. Both his new subjects and his enemies could be solicited, as he invited them to both admiration and opportunism, fostering cultures of mercy and loyalty while appealing to his subject's self-interest in profiting from his ongoing military success. These are the very qualities for which Salah al-Din is lauded across the board by his court officials who left panegyric biographies building them up. It seems logical to assume that this

¹⁰ Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 2; see also Rosenwein's *Generations of Feeling: A History of Emotions 700-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); and Barbara H. Rosenwein and Riccardo Cristiani, *What is the History of Emotions* (Cambridge UK and Medford MA: Polity, 2018).

public performance of affective charisma was a strategy for securing not just fearful obedience, but a heady combination of love and self-interest.

This amounts to an emotional enactment of power that relies as much on provoking feelings of affiliation and admiration as it does upon creating effective networks of command and control. So how do such emotional communities actually work? Sara Ahmed discusses the powers of emotions to recreate societies around complexes of fear, hatred, shame, love, and resistance to social norms. In her view, emotions are neither interior nor exterior, but rather are interfacial – they are sites where impressions are made (tactile metaphors work here, based on the senses) and then reinforced into reactive patterns. Something cuts us, scars us, frightens us, attracts our love, greed, or hate. We remember certain impressions and forget others, but those we remember lay a boundary that creates both us and the world that administers such impressions. Through such emotional interfaces we come to experience ourselves as separate from “the world” but we also learn to organize the world into bigger, composite social bodies we can inhabit as if they were ourselves (us-es and them). Emotions circulate not by transmissions of thought or common biological codings of expression but rather through the objects – signs – gestures – discourses – that amass histories of impression worked into legibility. These emotional objects are neither pre-coded, nor naturalized but rather re-negotiated within and across culture in rituals, customs, and habituses that range from the intimate to the occupational to the ecumenical. Within any given culture, feelings objects that circulate rapidly and intensely digging passing impressions into furrows through repetition, eventually become “sticky” galvanizing feeling even when we struggle against their effects. These sticky reiterated objects are where passing emotions harden into socially generative

affects, that organize groups by pain, hate, fear, shame, love, (Ahmed) hospitality, hostility (Derrida), and family (kinship, the homely, the uncanny: Freud). Thus, we can receive impressions, organize them into emotions, and circulate them again by channeling them into objects that become “sticky” with such histories: say, African-American hair styles, Jew-badges, slogans such as “Make America great again.” As these sticky objects circulate, they organize us through identifications and disidentifications: by mutual feedbacks of belonging and rejection.¹¹ As these objects and signs circulate and change, they can new impressions, drawing lines in the sand between people who emerge as races, classes, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, through emotionally laden dyads that exert ethical force: human and monster, safe and threat, homely and uncanny. We can trace some of these emotional dyads in action in the texts that Salah al-Din organized to create his memory and image in his world and for his constituents, particularly in the panegyric biographies of Baha’ al-Din and Imad al-Din, and the later *Rawdatayn* of Abu Shama, as we will see below. Baha’ al-Din ibn Shaddad was an important fāqih from Mosul who travelled with Salah al-Din’s armies, and Imad al-Din al Isfahani, was a Persian historian, scribe, and poet, who served Salah al-Din in Egypt and on campaigns.

However, Salah al-Din’s spin-control was not complete. The staunchest Arabic historian, Ibn al-Athīr, is more dubious. Ibn al-Athir was a Mosulite and Zengid loyalist who also travelled briefly with Salah al-Din’s troops. His monumental *al-Kāmil fi t-tarīkh* (*Complete History*) marks the death of Salah al-Din with the customary encomium, praising him as a “rare individual in his

¹¹ See Eileen Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2004).

age” for his piety, religious learning, hadith transmission, humility, openness, forbearance with the mistakes of his subjects and servants, and above all for his generosity:

He gave away much, not hesitating about anything he gave away . . . During his stay at Acre facing the Franks he issued, 18,000 mounts, either horses or mules, apart from camels. As for cash, garments and weapons, that is beyond counting. When the ‘Alid dynasty came to an end in Egypt he took all sorts of things from their storehouses, more than could be counted, but he distributed all of it. ¹²

Ibn al-Athir is one of several who transmit the anecdote of how Salah al-Din’s generosity left the royal treasury at his death with only a forlorn Tyrian dinar and forty Nasiri dirhams in it.

However, when one compares Salah al-Din’s postmortem panegyric to Nur al-Din’s it pales beside a much longer list of virtues, more numerous and abundant, “than this book can contain.”¹³ And Ibn al-Athir’s disapproval emerges in the sections describing how Salah al-Din gradually conquered the holdings of Nur al-Din, at first as Nur al-Din’s servant [*mamluk*], and then in the name of his young heir, and then finally openly in his own name. But Ibn al-Athir’s most direct indictment comes right at the beginning of Salah al-Din’s career, after Salah al-Din has just seized power in Egypt. Here, Ibn al-Athir digresses to ponder a historical curiosity: that the founders of many families and even the best dynasties transmit their sovereignties not

¹² Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kamil fi’l-Tar’ikh, pt. 2: The Years 541-589/1146-1193: The Age of Nur al-Din and Saladin*, tr. D. S. Richards (Farmham, Surrey and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2010), 409.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 222-23.

directly through their sons, but through the sons of their brothers. He speculates why and concludes that it is form of divine punishment:

The person who is the first of a dynasty takes extreme measure [*yukthir*, or in one mss. *yukthir al qutl*: “does much” “overreaches” or “does much killing”] and seizes power, while the hearts of his predecessors are deeply attached to it.

Therefore God, as a punishment for him, denies it to his descendants and those for whose sake he acts.¹⁴

While Ibn al-Athir never says so directly, it is clear from his narration that to him Salah al-Din was as an ambitious Kurd who destroyed the Fatimid Caliph and usurped the Zengid sultanate after the death of his Nur al-Din, seizing power in the name of Nur al-Din at the expense of Nur al-Din’s heir.

It is probable that Salah al-Din was so active in self-propaganda precisely because he took power through such opportunistic means. He had to promote the success of his new double Sultanate (always with deference to the Caliph at Baghdad), while clearing new distributions of power among the incipient Ayyubid dynasty. Continuing Nur al-Din’s battle against the Franks of the Kingdoms of Jerusalem, therefore, was not simply counter-crusade against Christianity but a way to seize an important continuity with his Zengid predecessor, while putting at a disadvantage other powerful rivals, by amassing trophy-lists of recent conquests. As a result, many features of Salah al-Din’s public character were modeled on those of Nur al-Din. He *had* to convince his people, including those loyal to his Zengid or

¹⁴ Ibid., 179.

Fatimid predecessors, that either he was deserving of his title, or too strong to resist, and they should accede to his rule. He particularly had to enlist support from the unruly war leaders and local confederates who fed his armies, and even fractious opportunists in his own extended family. The most effective way he found to do this was by building ongoing military successes into a perpetual motion machine drawing new local support as he extended his realm with the promise of yet more future success and self-enrichment. Therefore, he engaged in energetic propaganda, coopted local alliances, and mobilized the resources of his extended family, disbursing holdings and spoils among them, and fostering the unruly family confederacy that would become a hallmark of Ayyubid rule. Salah al-Din's famous generosity to his followers and affiliates was thus also an effective tactic that kept his constituents loyal, right up through the reverses inflicted on him during the siege of Acre (1191), the battle of Arsuf (1191), and the battle of Jaffa (1192) during the Third Crusade, when decreasing willingness to persist among his chieftains induced him to fight the war of attrition that eventually led to truce.

For these reason, as Eddé's biography makes clear, it is useful to assume everything Salah al-Din did, his ceremonies and demonstrations, the records he kept, and the disbursements he made, was to serve this public image, and to draw his subjects after him emotionally, to move hearts and minds as well as troops and garrisons. This is the public management of affect. How did Salah al-Din and his ministers do this? The emotional tactics are multiple. First Salah al-Din assumed the championship of Islam itself (a bigger than all of us kind of role) – and in so doing not only appropriated figures like Caliph 'Umar, and Muhammad, but also enacted them on a political stage and thus gave them a tangible and vivid local habitation and a name. He fostered a revivalist vision of an Islam that valued good rule,

generosity, and the strictures of Islam itself. And he strove to represent orthodox Sunni Islam, with the dedication that Pierre Bourdieu has described as a “mystery of ministry,”:

Group made man, he personifies a fictitious person, which he lifts out of the state of a simple aggregate of separate individuals, enabling them to act and speak, through him, “like a single person”. Conversely, he receives the right to speak and act in the name of the group, to “take himself for” the group he incarnates, to identify with the function to which “he gives his body and soul”, thus giving a biological body to a constituted body.¹⁵

There is evidence that Salah al-Din even used symbolic alignments in a kind of emotional warfare against his enemies, whose impacts could also be read to validate his friends, For instance, he timed the surrender of Jerusalem so that it would be handed over on a Saturday, an irony the writer of the *Libellus de Expugnatione Terrae Sanctae per Saladinum*, reads exegetically, lamenting: “The city was destroyed on the day of the Sabbath [Saturday], and the infidels mocked the Sabbaths of Christian hearts.”¹⁶ Imad al-Din’s rhetorical tour-de-force describing Salah al-Din’s conquest of Jerusalem leaves no affective stone unturned. He recounts how Salah al-Din became a bridegroom wooing forlorn Jerusalem as bride (explicitly offset by a gleeful description of the mass rape of the Christian women unable to pay their 5 Tyrian dinar ransom and thus sold into slavery). Imad al-Din also describes the reformation of

¹⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, tr. Gina Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 106

¹⁶ For the timing of Sunday see *The Conquest of the Holy Land by Salah al-Din: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Anonymous Libellus de Expugnatione Terrae Sanctae per Saladinum*, ed and tr. Keagan Brewer and James H. Kane (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), p. 215, n.

the city shrines and holy sites to Muslim parameters as a liberation from slavery, and a return to the vigorous springs of early Islamic devotion.

However, more important than rhetoric was timing. The surrender was sealed on Friday, 27 Rajab, or October 2, the feast of the *mi'araj*, the visionary night journey of the prophet Muhammad first to the "farthest mosque" *al-masjid al-aqsa*, that came to be identified with the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, and then to heaven itself on the back of a magical flying beast called al-Buraq. Baha' al-Din, Imad al-Din, and later Abu Shama all underscore how, in the week most apt for its celebration, Salah al-Din's victory coincided with the anniversary celebrations of Muhammad's *mi'araj*. Salah al-Din thus restored for the first time in decades the stone that bears the prophet's imprint in the newly cleansed Dome of the Rock. Baha' al-Din's account makes particularly clear how far the symbolism resonated among the 'ulama:

Observe this remarkable coincidence, how God facilitated its restoration to Muslim hands on the anniversary of their Prophet's Night-journey. This a sign that God had accepted this proffered obedience. It was a great victory, witnessed by a vast crowd of men of religion, Sufis, and mystics. The reason for this was that, when people heard of the conquest of the coastal lands that God had effected at Saladin's hand and his intention to move against Jerusalem became widely known, the ulema from Egypt and Syria made their way to him,

so much that no-one of any note failed to be present. Voices were raised in shouts and prayers, with cries of “There is no god but God” and “God is Great.”¹⁷

For many Sunni Muslim sultans, this rousing of public approval from the ‘ulama, the large and amorphous class of religious scholars, jurists, and men of letters, was a crown prize of success – for there is a marked Sunni culture of divestment from state power among scholars who accrued religious authority to themselves, dating from early Caliphal politics (in opposition to than the earlier Shi’i pattern of vesting religious authority with the Caliph).¹⁸ It was probably in search of this approval that, after the battle of Hattin, Salah al-Din had decided to attack Jerusalem in the first place, when he could have gone after Tyre, by far the greatest military threat. In terms of the creation of emotional community (though it backfired militarily), Salah al-Din’s choice was a massive triumph.¹⁹ He made sure that his commanders and regional ministers across his realm in Egypt and Damascus knew about it, sending out letters celebrating this victory not just for him but for God and Islam, that gain a guarded approval even from the Coptic patriarch in Egypt who was not otherwise his greatest fan.²⁰

The symbolic work the conquest of Jerusalem did for Salah al-Din was decisive for all subsequent representations, though they can index very different systems of feeling. This is

¹⁷ Baha’ al-Din ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, tr. D. S. Richards (Aldershot UK and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2002), 77-78.

¹⁸ Patricia Crone, *God’s Caliphs: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

¹⁹ Especially after Salah al-Din allowed the inhabitants of the Jerusalem after ransom to depart with all their possessions and they flocked to Tyre, where they organized for ongoing resistance and the attack on Acre that would bedevil Salah al-Din a year later.

²⁰ The retelling of the conquest reported in the *History of the Patriarchs of Egyptian Church* by Sawirus ibn al-Mukaffa is particularly detailed and excited even across confessional lines (he was not particularly happy with the Latin Christian conduct of sovereignty and their high taxation of pilgrims): <https://sites.google.com/site/demontortoise2000/hist9-htm> (accessed 2/7/2020).

made clear in the description of the anonymous Christian cleric who wrote the *Libellus de expurgatione* who was very likely present in the city and heard the same cries, with a very different affective reaction:

Then the *fuqaha* and *quda* [alphachini et cassini], ministers of that wicked error, that is, bishops and priests according to the belief of the Saracens, first went up as if for the sake of prayer and worship to the Temple of the Lord—which they call *bayt Allah* [beith halla], and from which they have great assurance of salvation—thinking that they were cleansing that which they polluted with filth and horrible bellowing, shouting out the law of Muhammad with polluted lips [pollutis labiis]; “Allahu akbar! Allahu akbar!” [Halla haucaber, halla haucaber!²¹

The Muslim call to prayer here becomes a potent emotional object in Ahmed’s sense, whose circulation reshapes polity as it moves into unaccustomed spaces. What is purity and the joyful restoration of ecumenical community to one set of auditors, is danger and the pollution of ecumenical community to the other. The *Libellus*’s mix of anxious cultural translation and denigration is particularly striking in the emotional work it does. Just as Baba’ al-Din voices the familiar calls of the Shahada and the call to prayer to signify a celebratory gathering of religious unity, the *Libellus* wants the foreign words to be at once understood and experienced outlandish, raucous, and strange: Halla haucaber!

²¹ *The Conquest of the Holy Land by Salah al-Din: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Libellus de Expurgatione Terrae Sanctae per Saladinum*, ed. and tr. Keagan Brewer and James H. Kane (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 216-17.

The alignment with Muhammad's mi'araj is not the only gesture that creates affective community: there is a more recent historical alignment as well, that Imad al-Din's lengthy, *saj*-ridden, and almost unreadably emotional account brings out.²² When Salah al-Din purified the holy places with rosewater, restored the Temple Mount edifices and the Dome of the Rock itself, and forbade the churches being pulled down, he was reperforming the first Muslim capture of Jerusalem by the second Rashidun caliph 'Umar I (637) in ways that his followers, and, later, Abu Shama read very clearly. Salah al-Din thus also aligned himself with the caliph famed for accommodating the non-Muslim inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Jews and Levantine Christians.²³ This alignment between Salah al-Din and 'Umar might have reassured regional Christians and Jews repopulate the city by assuring them a measure of safety.

Another form of Sunni Islamic alignment was Salah al-Din's performance of piety, his solicitation of hadith scholars and faqihs to his courts and battlefields. While cultivating the most excessive reputation for mercy to enemies and allies alike, he also took care to enact some spectacular demonstrations of conservative forms of Islamic law and punishment for crimes. During his Syrian campaigns he punished a thief by publicly cutting off his hands. He publicly demonstrated his fidelity to oath-keeping and the punishment of treachery after the battle of Hattin, while visiting the captured Frankish leaders, when with one hand he theatrically executed Reynaud of Chatillon (who had sworn and broken a non-aggression pact

²² Imad al-Din, *Kitab al-Barq al-Shami*, most of which is lost, but parts survive because abridged by Ibn al-Athir and al-Bundari, as well as later by Abu Shama, who tones down the rhetorical free-wheeling, reins in the *saj* rhyming prose while preserving the description of events. Parts of book 3 and 5 are published as *Conquête de la Syrie: et de la Palestine par Salâh ed-dîn*, ed. Carlo de Landburg (Leyden : E.J. Brill, 1888); Francisco Gabrieli translates excerpts from Imad al-Din, including the description of the conquest of Jerusalem in *Arab Historians of the Crusade*, tr. E. J. Costello (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969).

²³ This was before later, more punitive, codifications of dhimmi treatment and obligations such as the Pact of 'Umar later attributed to him were enforced.

with him), while offering ice water to a parched Guy of Lusignan with the other. The care with which he performed the ritual fasts, prayers, and charities, that he was actually trying to make up lost fasting days when he died, all accord both with sincere personal devotion, and a clear political need to model Islamic submission to his followers, and the admiration provoked by these fidelities clearly emerges from all the accounts, including Ibn al-Athir's.

However, a final practice was to ensure Salah al-Din's most enduringly remembered affective trait: his generosity not just to his family, friends, and household but also to his enemies. Magnanimity was a performance much in vogue among Mediterranean sovereigns, crossing centuries, geographies, and conventions. It was a complex practice with many strategies. For instance, remaining open to negotiation with adversaries could lay the groundwork for ongoing information-gathering and surveillance. Learning another's motivating desires by satisfying them to an extent can allow more predictable judgments later. The diplomacies of gift exchange and hospitality could lay foundations for later leverages. Salah al-Din did not treat with his Frankish enemies personally, but he often sent his brother, Saif al-Din al-'Adil as a kinder, friendlier ambassador, to divert, delay, and assess Richard I's possible plans. Al-'Adil and Richard had such a good rapport that the author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* becomes nervous about a too-seductive friendship.

Saphadin entrapped the overly credulous King with his shrewdness and deceived him with smooth words, that at last they seemed to develop a sort of mutual friendship. The king was happy to receive gifts from Saphadin and messengers kept running back and forth between them bearing little present from Saphadin

to King Richard. His people felt that the king was open to considerable criticism for this, and it was said to be sinful to contract friendship with Gentiles²⁴.

We will examine later how the luxurious sensorium of royal benevolence communicates across diplomatic lines. Here I would simply stress that this affectionate performance of friendship was not (only) good heartedness but rather what Brian Catlos has called *conveniencia*: liaison with the added benefit of spying and information gathering, while safeguarding against risks of too much ceding of military advantage oneself.

As a result of all this semiotic management, Salah al-Din's self-fashioning propaganda campaign was very effective: consistent, well-executed, and enduring. When thirteenth-century romancers and story-tellers commemorate events from the chronicles of the Third Crusade, or Saladin's wars in Egypt and Syria, they produce webworks of cultural fantasy, whose guylines are often rooted in these affective historical performances and experiences.²⁵ In the romance of *Richard Coer de Lyon*, for example, Richard I inadvertently discovers that eating Saracen flesh is his best cure for the illnesses incurred by crusading in a foreign climate. He then terrorizes Saracen ambassadors by theatrically eating the decapitated heads of their hostages and sons. The rich metaphoricity of cannibalism aside, Richard's Levantine illnesses are well documented by many chronicles, both Latin and Arabic. He also beheaded 270 Syrian hostages after the fall of Acre in the full view of Salah al-Din and his captains, and exhibited the heads to Salah al-Din's armies, which tremendously demoralized the Syrian leaders and sparked

²⁴ *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade: The Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, tr. Helen Nicolson (Aldeshot and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 1997), 273

²⁵ Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 63-114.

Salah al-Din's tactics of attrition. The historical undergirding makes the poetic extremism of the romance all the more arresting.²⁶

Similarly, in the fifteenth-century Old French *Saladin* romance, Saladin gains lordship over Egypt after a futile siege of Cairo by a shocking stratagem. He feigns defeat, and in a show of submission, has himself saddled and driven on all fours before the Caliph. Once he is close enough he suddenly draws a knife from his saddlebags and stabs the Caliph through the heart – turning self-abjection into terrorizing victory. Historically, Salah al-Din was involved in his uncle Shirkuh's execution of the Egyptian vizier Shāwar, taking him into custody and presenting him to his uncle, who killed him personally. Rumors circulated in Latin chronicles and in the Coptic *History of the Patriarchs* that he killed the Caliph as well, but most Arabic sources do not agree. Both the romances of *Richard* and *Saladin* magnify details from twelfth-century chronicles. However, both stories also depart freely from histories – Richard did not slaughter Salah al-Din's armies with a gigantic cudgel, did not, as far as we know, ever eat executed hostages, and never met Salah al-Din, let alone tourney in single combat against him. Salah al-Din became Sultan of Cairo not by siege and sudden assassination but politically in a slow coup largely masterminded by his uncle, Shirkuh, and his commander, the Zangid Sultan, Nur al-Din.

This capacity both to preserve and to reframe, capitalize upon, and deploy significant historical performances in subsequent Salah al-Din narratives, allows us to examine how emotional entrainments of the sultan spin out over time and in far-flung places. Lives of Salah

²⁶ Though the cannibalism scenes may have been interpolated later in an effort to implicate Richard and criticize crusading ideologies; see Marcel Elias, "Violence, Excess, and the Composite Emotional rhetoric of *Richard Coeur de Lion*," *Studies in Philology*, 114.1 (2017): 1-38.

al-Din, variously expressing or reworking his triple whammy of affective Islamic self-exemplarism, sovereign magnanimity, and military chivalric prowess, thus themselves become emotional objects, in Ahmed's sense. As they circulate they accrete and complicate an affective history with the capacity to align hearts and minds at every new iteration.

Nostalgic affect in Abu Shama

Abu Shama's introduction to the *Rawdatayn* frames interest in Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din within the context of the writer's own bent toward religious biography and hadith-studies. He laments the current state of history studies, where ignorance reigns:

Indeed, the one who ignores history is like a traveler on a blind mount and a groping path. He attributes to the ancients that which belongs to the moderns, and vice versa; he brings no reflection . . . All that he knows is the life of his holy prophet is that he was sent by God. What can he know of the Companions and of the first generation whose memory rejoices the soul and dispels dismay?

(p.8)²⁷

As this self-validating declaration suggests, Abu Shama was a gadfly within the scholarly circles of Damascus. Konrad Hirschler traces his biography in mid-thirteenth-century Damascus, as part of the more obscure scholarly circles, who inveighed against taking payment for scholarly expertise, but when offered more prominent postings, in the *Rukniya* Madrasa and the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiya, he took them and their salaries without qualms.²⁸ His performance of

²⁷ Translations are mine from the French with reference to the Arabic.

²⁸ Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography*, chapter 3, "Social Contexts."

disinterest in scholarly fame or court patronage, then, was less a career abandonment than an alignment with important systems of feeling for the 'ulama, tying him to early traditions of state-independent scholarship, and thereby claiming a kind of historic prestige. Abu Shama got a bad reputation among other scholars in Damascus, for self-aggrandizing his own accomplishments while criticizing those of others, and he was actually murdered by two fellow scholars in Damascus. He prided himself on his eccentricity to the court, and the prominent scholarly circles of his day, but networked eagerly within his own circles of teachers and students, including issuing *ijazas* for the *Rawdatayn*, so that in the next generation it was copied and fell into the hands of more important scholars, resulting in nine surviving manuscript copies from the next century.

Abu Shama's method for sparking interest in the great lives of past virtuous men is to get intimate with them, through as many trustworthy sources as he can find: the *Rawdatayn* actually preserves in summary accounts from several sources otherwise lost. Not only did he write love poetry to his source texts (see p. 1 above), but he makes clear that to him doing history is to become virtuously and delightfully conversant with the illustrious dead. He conveys two anecdotes about a hadith scholar who is questioned whether solitary studies are boring: "'Boredom?' he cried, 'when I am with the Prophet and his Companions!'" (7). Abu Shama presses further about the sociability of history: its study does not simply imply speaking to the dead, but also actually reviving them, sharing their life: "I've seen that to study the history of men of the past is to become contemporary with them, and that when you think of their lives and their words, this is to become their witness and interlocutor. This kind of study substitutes for long life should death hasten to us (6)." Study of history becomes a form of life-giving love:

the past is a well of human experience that historians can share, recompensing a possibly short future with a long sociable past. This passionate friendship with the past, however, is not only backward looking. It ramifies forward to remind people of the great lives they can emulate as well as study, embodying the past within the present in another form of cohabitation. This brings historiography into the orbit of a powerful affect: nostalgia, the longing for a home that never was.

Nostalgia is not simply a form of escapism; its longing is generative. Like Abu Shama's practice of history, it strives to bridge time, knowing the impossibility of bridging time, but that awareness of loss and futility only sharpens its present enforcements. Svetlana Boym discusses nostalgia as an epiphenomenon of sudden and traumatic change and intrinsic to the experience of modernity, but her description of its pleasures and its dangers implicates Abu Shama's model of historiography in significant ways:

Nostalgia is not always about the past; it can be retrospective but also prospective. Fantasies of the past determined by needs of the present have a direct impact on realities of the future . . . Unlike melancholia, which confines itself to the planes of individual consciousness, nostalgia is about the relations between individual biography and the biography of groups or nations, between personal and collective memory.²⁹

Nostalgia is a historical emotion in Boym's analysis, driven by and frustrated by an acute awareness of historical change. To Abu Shama, writing the *Rawdatayn* in the chaotic early

²⁹ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xvi

years of Mamluk sovereignty, the two reigns of Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din are at once enduringly exemplary and utterly evanescent: "Most holy God willed that we be the people who came last; he made known to us the history of those who preceded us, so that we could take from preceding ages a salutary lesson, a lesson to which we should "give an attentive ear. Do you know a single one of these peoples who remains still today?" (7).

The lesson is historic devastation – even the great pass away: and Hirschler eloquently shows how Abu Shama's consciousness that history fades "like a dream" or "heaps of ashes" (7) leads to a peculiar but enduring historical emplotment: that of Stasis. Static histories are caught in the dialectics of Golden Ages and their devolutions: they run on nostalgia, and nostalgia ensures their enduring appeal. History becomes monitory: it teaches simultaneously 1) that we must strive to equal the deeds and virtuous of the great past leaders, and 2) that they are so exemplary that they can never be equaled. Yet by constellating great periods – say those of Muhammad and his Companion, with decades later the early caliphs, and with centuries later Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din, historians renovate historiography as revivalism.³⁰ This gives exemplary history an ongoing affective and reenactive function, that is never merely reenactive, because these figures are bound by their piety and sovereign virtue but different in their modes of governance and the historical exigences they negotiate: they feed different presents with regenerative virtues.

By writing history as revivalism, Abu Shama enlarges and makes a process of learned study and meticulous scholarly recovery a process that goes on daily in the lives of Muslim believers. One of the key services that religious devotion can offer its adherents is that of

³⁰ Hirschler, *Arabic Historiography*.

reliving, representing, enacting great eras by weaving them into the ritual lunar year: that repeats and shifts across the solar year, reminding believers that God's work in history is continual and making it intimate to everyday life. The anniversaries of the flight to Medina, the Isra and Mi'araj, the bonding over food that weaves between family and community during Ramadan, even the daily rituals of prayer transform exemplarities driven by a sense of loss into technes for living in the present: time comes to signify resilience as its scales change from centuries, to a year, to the prayers one performs in a single day. In this way, historical nostalgia becomes an affective practice that reshapes daily life. To a reader of Abu Shama's history these timescales can interweave. The day that Salah al-Din took Jerusalem can be commemorated, beside the Prophet's night journey, the next time the 27 of Rajab (in some Sunni calendars) rolls around. For these reasons, the consciousness that things pass is not simply a gate to a nostalgia of stasis; it is an obligation of continual submission to God that touches the feelings in the present and stretches continuities into a future that will always change.

A story in the Qur'anic sura of The Cave, that of the Two Gardens (a different word for gardens, *Janaynatayn*, recalling Eden, *Jana*) shows how nostalgia is a means to an end: it teaches submission to God and the lesson that you cannot compare anything – wealth, status, the securities of flourishing possession – to God. In it two men (perhaps brothers) live side by side, and one owns two gardens, and the other has no land and is poor. God causes the gardens to flourish and a river to issue between them, watering both, and the gardens bring forth fruit and the owner's family grows. The owner of the two gardens walks there in the evening and boasts to his neighbor, saying "I'm mightier than you, and I have more children. I do not think this will ever end." His poor neighbor chides him, reminding him that he owes

everything to God and that perhaps, times will change, the river will abate, and the gardens will die. All power is in God, and he should never place any other value next to God. Sure enough, the river dries and the gardens are laid waste. The man laments wishing that he had never placed any value next to God, for God was now all he had left.³¹ Despite the different words for “garden,” I cannot think but that Abu Shama remembered this story when he gave that title to his history. Remembering Eden and the Golden Age of Islam in their governance and virtue, and foreboding Judgment Day in their dissolution, the two reigns of Nur al-Din and Salah ad-Din become a historical lesson in both the vivid remembrance and the disappearance of the past.

In the disjunct between the regenerative doing of history and the acute transience that drives that doing, the great affective glue is mourning, as an ongoing process of living with the dead, of doing history as continual remaking of history. Mourning holds the historical universe together. In his description of Salah al-Din’s death Abu Shama conveys a dream in which the Prophet comes with his Companions to bow before the grave of Salah al-Din. He seals the reign of Salah al-Din by conveying in full Imad al-Din’s long versified lament. It cries out across time, full of its own historic parallels. But the hopelessness of the narrative is precisely what takes it into the future: Salah al-Din’s own self-conscious reliving of Muhammad and ‘Umar, give Abu Shama a constellation/cohabitation to pursue and fill out, and it becomes a longing that future people can try to fill – and do – both as tragedy and farce (as Marx suggests). Baybars soon replaces Salah al-Din in the collective memory: but historical exemplarism isn’t a zero-sum game, because Salah al-Din isn’t forgotten. He’s there in his tomb, where pilgrims can

³¹³¹ *Qur’an*: Sura al-Kahf, 18:32.

pray for him as they pass into Damascus. For centuries that tomb waited for presidents to build him a cenotaph, at which Kaisers can pray, airmen can be buried, and portraits can be painted.

Abu Shama's *Kitab al-Rawdatayn* circulated widely enough in both court and scholarly circles to have survived in twenty manuscripts, the last one of which was copied in the nineteenth century. When printing was initiated in Ottoman territories in the nineteenth-century, it was serialized in a Beirut publication also named for a garden, *Hadiquat al-akhbār*, *The Garden of News* (founded 1858). Through such disseminations, Abu Shama's Salah al-Din proved inspirational to early Pan Arabism thought, as well as to later twentieth-century Islamic nationalism.³² The nineteenth century Arab writers and historians in Cairo, Beirut, and Damascus, in the grip of a postcolonial Arabic cultural renaissance, the Nahda, rescued Saladin from historiographical obscurity, and made him a champion of Islam. Twentieth-century Egyptian nationalists, such as Gamal Abdul Nasser, used Saladin's clearing of the Crusader states from Palestine, to galvanize pan-Arab unity, and adopted "the Eagle of Saladin," as a symbol for the Egyptian revolution of 1952. A now famous early film by Youseff Chahine, *Al-Nasir Salah al-Din*, channels the Egyptian president's life through the Sultan's deeds.³³ Salah al-Din's eagle was later also adapted at times into the coats of arms of Iraq (1963), the Federation of Arab Republics under Muammar Gaddafi (1984) and briefly into the Libyan Arab Republic in 1969. Saladin probably never saw the eagle that inspired this symbol of Arab nationalism – it derives from a carving that was mounted (probably after his death) onto the enormous Cairo Citadel (fortified between 1176 and 1183) that he had built to protect Cairo and Fustat in the

³² Hirschler, *Arabic Historiography*; Carole Hillenbrand, "The Evolution of the Saladin Legend in the West," *Mélanges Louis Pouzet*, Beirut, 2006, 1-13.

³³ Heidemann, "Memory," 58-64.

aftermath of Amalric of Jerusalem's (1136-74) invasions of Egypt (1163, 1164, and 1168). In 1898, German Kaiser Wilhelm II visited and eulogized the recently excavated and monumentalized cenotaph of Salah al-Din, complete with turbaned portrait, that Ottoman sultan 'Abd al-Hamid (1876-1909) had erected for Salah al-Din in 1878. During the first gulf war, in Iraq, Saddam Hussein, who was born, like Salah al-Din in Tikrit (but had very different feelings about Kurds), began to cultivate Salah al-Din as an avatar for nationalist propaganda and pan-Arab solidarity against Israel, analogizing the U.S. attacks and Israeli control of Palestinian territories to the invading or occupying Franks of the crusading twelfth-century; he even issued a postage stamp that placed himself beside Salah al-Din, with the Dome of the Rock and the Iraqi flag flanking the two leaders.



Syrian leader Hafiz al-Asad also adopted Salah al-Din for nationalist state building, in more specifically Syrian style, building an enormous monument in 1992 in front of the Citadel in Damascus. Ridley Scott's Muslim-friendly film, *Kingdom of Heaven* (2005) cast the well-known Syrian actor, Ghassan Massoud, as its Sultan, and played to mixed review in the U.S. in the divided politics of post-9/11 culture, while amassing enormous approval in the Middle East, particularly Syria.

This brief sketch of the stranger afterlives of Salah al-Din demonstrates the generative power of nostalgia, the ways it can be mined to create imagined communities, through circulation of sentiment laden objects, with varying degrees of success. Reading Abu Shama's *Rawdatayn* in the light of later appropriations shows that study of the past has a number of deep affective and aesthetic appeals: 1) it is virtuous: inhabited by the Prophet and the Companions, the Rightly Guided caliphs, the two 'Umars, and 2) it is organizable and can be made orderly by searching out transhistorical correspondences – say, between Muhammad and the early caliphs, or between 'Umar I and 'Umar II and their cross-time avatars, Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din: Because of this capacity of great lives to cross time and inspire, for good and ill, future visions of Eden, visions of the two gardens, that pass, and grow and pass again, Abu Shama's exemplary history offers enormous reassurance that the good and the great are never truly lost. Virtue lives, even in a time of devolution and change, and by remembering them, historians gain the power to inspire new enactments in the future.³⁴

A Sherbet for King Ricard: hospitality, food, and detente

While nostalgia focuses on trans-historical transactions that create new, radical, opportunistic reclamation of the past for the present and future, the systems of feeling surrounding hospitality, diplomacy, and gift exchange can renegotiate transcultural relations in the present. It is helpful here to think why these issues are so emotional – why issues of hospitality, from border-control to refugee cities – become such an engine for affective social

³⁴ Thus my reading of the *Rawdatayn* is more optimistic than Hirshler's, which explores the employment of Stasis within Abu Shama's history, forcing Nur al-Din and Salah al-Din into an exemplary isolation so profound that it can never be equaled or imitated: the future is dark.

engineering. Jacques Derrida locates an intrinsic self-conflict in figurations of hospitality stemming at least from the ancient Mediterranean world of Greek philosophy, which ramified throughout Islamicate cultures, both through translations of Aristotle. Thought on hospitality was also common across trans-Mediterranean cultures, embedded at all social levels. Derrida (characteristically) locates a self-conflict in the idea of hospitality. It is riven by a double imperative: 1) an idealizing imperative to offer hospitality to all strangers whatsoever who cross cultural thresholds, and 2) a pragmatic need to establish limits to what can be offered, what should be accepted, what can't be claimed, and what can't be withheld. Both urgencies are needed: the hospitable ideal inspires and legitimizes pragmatic protocols for implementation of hospitality, while the pragmatism negotiates between local politics of plenitude and fear to allow any implementation of hospitality at all.³⁵ The affective corollary of this double imperative is an intricate interplay of love and fear, universal outreach and anxiety, playing between families and neighbors, cities and country sides, across regional sovereignties of the Mediterranean. Offering hospitality plays with the utopian possibility of undoing all boundaries, acknowledging we all are born commonly onto the earth, and owe each other welcome in whatever parts of it we inhabit: engendering affects of love and welcome. However, implementing hospitality soon engenders fear because hospitality also depends on the idea of a home, a space the host controls, with limited resources. The two gardens of plenty can always dwindle. What if there is not enough? And who is this stranger anyway: how can they be made to account for themselves? Thus while nostalgia is a longing for a home that no

³⁵ Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle, *On Hospitality*, tr. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

longer exists (and probably never did), hospitality creates love and fear at the threshold of a home one is continually trying to fabricate and maintain.

For the sake of time and your patience, I will concern myself with on only one concrete aspect of hospitality as a virtue/complex of feelings associated with Salah al-Din: exchanges of food in the diplomatic rapprochements of Salah al-Din and Richard I. There are a series of gifts of food offered – and eventually demanded -- across enemy lines during the Third Crusade: a supply of fruit and ices sent to Richard I of England by his adversary, Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyubi. These tasty embassies appear in Baha' al-Din ibn Shaddad's account of Salah al-Din. This is what Baha' al-Din says about them on July 4th 1191, eight days before the fall of Muslim-held Acre to the Frankish armies:

Three envoys came from the king of England, who asked for fruit and ice and mentioned that the commander of the Hospitallers would come out the next day, meaning Friday [5 July] to have talks about peace. The sultan received them with honor and they went to the army's marketplace, looked around and returned that night to their camp. That same day the sultan ordered Sarim al-Din Qaymaz al-Najmi, him and his men, to attack their camp. (158)

Then, near the end of the war, on the eve of the treaty of Ramla, the requests for fruit and ice become incessant, even as Salah al-Din's hidden agendas emerge more clearly.

Meanwhile, there was a steady stream of emissaries from the king of England requesting fruit and ice. In his illness, God had burdened him with a yearning for pears and plums, which the sultan was supplying him

with, while purposing to gain intelligence by the to-and-froing of the messengers. (227-28)

Within Baha' al-Din's account, these gifts occur at particularly fraught moments of the Third Crusade: in the lead-up to the fall of Acre to Richard's armies in 1191, and in the last stages of the war, when it was becoming clear that victory for either side was impossible. They have achieved semi legendary status. In his film *Kingdom of Heaven* Ridley Scott carefully included a scene of Saladin giving ice to a parched Guy of Lusignan after his capture at the battle of Hattin, buttressing accounts of the chivalric generosity of Salah al-Din to his friends and enemies alike, and helping to exceptionalize him as a rare exemplar of Muslim chivalric leadership, respected by his enemies, and spawning a legendary literary history across Latin Christendom that reaches from the medieval period to the present day. These exchanges treat food as a form of diplomatic handshake, as an urgent need, and as a cover for espionage and mutual intelligence gathering. Sent food punctuates the hostilities without ameliorating them. It turns diplomatic relationship into forms of leverage.³⁶ Whether Richard is on the verge of military victory at Acre, or of final surrender at Ramla, Richard demands food from Salah al-Din by way of creating a kind of politics of pleasure.

Why food? I think Richard is trying to maneuver in a language that Salah al-Din himself had signaled to him, in their very first exchange, at the siege of Acre.

Seeing [the Muslims'] unconquerable steadfastness and defiant
bravery, . . . the king of England sought a meeting with the sultan . . .

³⁶ Thomas Asbridge, "Talking to the Enemy: The Role and Purpose of Negotiations between Saladin and Richard the Lionheart during the Third Crusade," *Journal of Medieval History* 39.3 (2013): 275-96.

The sultan answered immediately without thought or hesitation, *“Kings do not meet unless an agreement has been reached. It is not good for them to fight after meeting and eating together.* If he wants this, an agreement must be settled before it can happen. *We must have an interpreter we can trust to act between us, who can make each of us understand what the other says.* Let this envoy be our mutual interpreter. If we come to an agreement, the meeting can happen later.

(153 – Acre]

In Baha’ al-Din’s account, food and language become parallel gestures of rapprochement. Food shared at meeting equates to hospitality, and hospitality is a long and complicated tradition that extends across Mediterranean cultures of all confessions. By refusing to meet and eat with Richard, Salah al-Din refuses hospitality to this invader from England, who seems to think he has a right to be treated as a guest. Richard and Salah al-Din will not eat together unless they have already agreed not to fight, which is not what either of them want – they both are too bent on victory to give up war. In the interim, language and diplomatic intermediaries sent across military divides will have to substitute for the final feast that marks a lasting peace.

Richard is not happy with this. Throughout the next two years of their exhausting war, Richard repeatedly sends envoys to Salah al-Din, trying to get him involved in aristocratic gift exchanges, often involving food. After Salah al-Din’s dismissal of the possibility of a direct meeting, Richard tries again. He sends an envoy offering a noble present – but with a catch:

Richard’s envoy said], *“It is the custom of princes when they camp close to one another to exchange gifts. I have something suitable for the sultan and beg*

permission to convey it to him.” Al-‘Adil [Salah al-Din’s brother and envoy] replied, “You may do that on condition that you accept a comparable present.’ The envoy was content with that and went on, “The gift is some birds of prey have been imported from beyond the sea. They are sick and it would be kind if you would bring us some birds and fowls to feed them and [156] restore their strength before we deliver them.” Al-‘Adil joked with him, for he understood perfectly what they were talking about, and said, “So the king needs chickens and fowls and wishes to get them from us on this pretext.”

I am not sure what al-‘Adil understood. Are the birds of prey an allegory for King Richard himself, who had also been suffering illness? Is this a roundabout way of Richard trying to make Salah al-Din feed him – to put him under obligation? A way to secure supplies for the armies hungry and dispirited after two years of besieging Acre? Is Richard trying to humiliate Salah al-Din by aligning him with prey animals like chickens, in contrast to Richard’s predatory hawks? In any event way, the request comes to nothing:

“The conversation ended with the envoy saying, ‘What do you want from us? If you have anything to say, then declare it and let us hear it.’ In reply to this he was told, “We did not make any request from you. It was you who asked us. If you have anything to say then speak out, so that we may hear it. “

Impasse again. Richard later sends a different kind of present, a captured North African Muslim, probably taken in Richard’s conquest of Cypress. Salah al-Din thanks Richard’s envoy and immediately frees the slave. But Baha’ al-Din is under no illusions about what Richard is trying to do: “Their purpose in these repeated embassies was to learn how strong or weak our

morale was. Likewise, our purpose in receiving the embassies was to learn how they stood in respect of the same.” (156).

Thus, even as ineffective negotiations continue through the envoys, the bestowed food becomes highly freighted with symbolic meaning: it signals pleasurable friendship, aristocratic mutual recognition, a show of power, military intelligence, transcultural manipulation. Salah al-Din seems to recognize this – he offers Richard food, but only at a distance, and he withholds substantial fare and only offers Richard dessert – the fruit and ice that Richard came to crave.³⁷ Salah al-Din’s envoys grant Richard a series of tantalizing amuse-bouche rather than a full blown brotherly feast.

In response, Richard redoubled his search for diplomatic connection. Salah al-Din eventually created a series of proxies to serve as his ambassadors, each of whom is adopted by Richard as friend and brother. In particular, across the diplomatic barriers that Salah al-Din establishes, Saif al-Din, Salah al-Din’s brother, becomes his ambassadorial prosthesis, directly sharing food with Richard, becoming his fast friend, while still operating as Salah al-Din’s trusted captain and spy.

Saif al-Din was as available as Salah al-Din was distant. He plied Richard with gifts of fine camels, a magnificent tent, and delivered the fruit and ices when Richard was feeling unwell in the summer heat. He also, spectacularly, ate with Richard and even exchanged food with him in a kind of honorable potluck, whose competitive edge Baha’ al-Din underscores. **[Slide]**

On Friday 18 Shawwal [8 November] al-’Adil went to the advance guard where a large reception tent was pitched for him. He took with him such foods, luxuries

³⁷ Salah al-Din probably got his ice from Mount Hermon in northern Syria.

and presents as are customarily brought by one prince to another. When he acted with magnificence in such a manner, he was not a man to be outshone. The king of England came to see him in his tent and was treated with great respect. With the king came some of the food that is peculiarly theirs. By way of being pleasant the king offered some to al-'Adil, who took some of it, while the king and the man who accompanied him partook of al-'Adil's food. The latter presented what he had brought and the two of them conversed for the greater part of the day. They parted in amity and good spirits as firm friends.

(Baha' al-Din, 193)

The mutual warmth between Saif al-Din and Richard is well attested by all sources. Saif al-Din even sent his son to Richard on Palm Sunday, to be knighted by him, (*Itinerarium*, 295). Baha' al-Din corroborates that other Syrian leaders sent their sons to be knighted by the Franks. In fact Richard became so friendly with Saif al-Din that his followers and allies grew nervous. A Frankish chronicle of the crusade, the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, mentions the criticism Richard: "The king was happy to receive gifts from Saphadin and messengers kept running back and forth between them bearing little presents from Saphadin to King Richard. His people felt that the king was open to considerable criticism for this, and it was said to be sinful to contract friendship with Gentiles." (*Itinerarium* 273-74).

Richard cultivated these relationships and Salah al-Din played along – but only up to a point – frequently he agreed to Richard's requests in order to call Richard's bluff. In effect, he wore Richard down with his hot and cold tactics – warm friendship without consequence and cool food without relationship. After the fall of Acre and the defeat of Salah al-Din's armies at

the battle of Arsuf, while Richard was conquering the coastal city of Jaffa and then working his way south, Salah al-Din settled down to a war of attrition, destroying the fortifications of the defensible cities in Richard's path, reoccupying cities that Richard had left thinly manned

The Third Crusade eventuated in a series of difficult compromises, due to the internal divisions and ongoing attritions that both sides suffered. Although Richard won back the coastal cities, seized Cyprus, and secured the vestiges of the Frankish Latin Kingdoms for another century, Salah al-Din's tactics of attrition preserved the interior and Jerusalem for the Ayyubids. Richard I was forced to recognize that his armies could not commit permanently to occupying Jerusalem. The commoners and foot soldiers of his army wished only to make their pilgrimage and return across the sea. Baha' al-Din describes how Salah al-Din took advantage of their exhaustion in 1192 by granting them access en masse to Jerusalem's shrines and the Church of the Sepulchre. This is another act that combines generosity with political canniness, a weaponized gift. Salah al-Din grants their desire so that they would then wish only to return home. Richard understood this perfectly well and was furious. Using every envoy at his disposal, he tried to get Salah al-Din to agree that only small parties of pilgrims should be allowed to enter the city, and that he himself should have to sign off on them. Salah al-Din ignored him and let them all in. Richard, angry and frustrated, refused himself to enter the city. The day before the opening of Jerusalem to Christian pilgrims, Richard rode to a hill overlooking Jerusalem and gazed upon it, only to return to his camp.

The terms of the 1192 Ramla settlement were these: 1) a three-year peace, 2) the crusaders would keep what they had won, except for the city of Ascalon, which would fall to whoever held it after the three years, but would in all events be de-fortified, 3) Jerusalem

would remain Salah al-Din's although Christian pilgrims would have safe access to the Christian shrines and the Church of the Sepulcher, which would be staffed by Latin Christian priests. It was a compromise settlement rather than an outright victory for either side. In Salah al-Din's non-zero-sum game, both won and both lost.

The Third Crusade's double tactics left a surprising aftermath in the way the legends of the two heroes, Richard I and Saladin developed. Despite the defeat of Richard's aims, his humiliating post-crusade imprisonment, the burdens he imposed on England for his ransom, and his ongoing investments in France rather than England, Richard retained the aura of a great English crusader. The most significant Richard romance, the Middle English *Richard Coer de Lyon* magnifies his leadership into a melee of unrestricted victory over Saladin and his Saracens. It replaces the Third Crusade's long-term legacies of disappointment, dissension, and compromise, with a fantasy of English crusading invincibility. The historical Richard who solicited Salah al-Din for meetings, for food, for cooling desserts, is transformed into a ravening cannibal – a terrorist eater of every Saracen in the world:

Whyl any Sarezyn quyk bee
Lyvande now in this cuntree,
For mete wole we nothyng care:
Aboute faste we schole fare,
And every day we schole eete
Al so manye as we may gete.
To Yngelond wole we nought gon,
Tyl they be eeten, everylkon." [3555-62]

By contrast, Salah al-Din's tactics of patience, persistence, distance, and chivalric treatment of his enemies, result in a longer term victory that is at once strategic and ideological. The historical Salah al-Din was able to exert the political and ethical power of chivalric benevolence: a literal politics of pleasure. He demonstrated this benevolence to so many Franks and Latin and Eastern Christians that even the most ideologically hostile Latin chroniclers attest to it. Generosity is Saladin's superpower, and it exerts overwhelming effects on those who observe it, and even greater on those who receive it.

I suggest that the romances and stories that commemorate these two heroes register these very different tactical histories. Where Richard Lionheart stories turn away from history to indulge in genocidal and even cannibalistic fantasies of triumph, many of the Saladin stories recognize the irreversibility of Frankish defeat and make the best of a bad lot by transforming Saladin from a Saracen tyrant to a Saracen benefactor. They modulate Saladin's combination of threat and generosity in captivity fantasies – a captor who pleases, strengthens, and benefits his captives, while responding to his captives' desires – at least to a point. I will briefly mention four of them that turn up in French and Italian sources but are also multiply attested: the *Account of the Minstrel of Reims*, the *Order of Chivalry* attributed to Raoul of Houdenc, and a Saladin tale of the Sultan and Master Torello from Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Please feel free to ask me about any of them during the question period, but here I will discuss only the most intensely hospitable of them, the story of Salah al-Din and Torello:

Boccaccio's honorably penultimate Saladin story shows how Saladin comes himself to incarnate and enjoin these family dynamics through acts of generosity received and given. The *Tale of Master Torello and Saladin* is the penultimate tale on the last day of the *Decameron's*

ten-day story-exchange – and the theme of the day is munificence – acts of overwhelming generosity. This tale makes Saladin a restorer of Christian families. In the tale, Messir Torello, a knight of Pavia, helps a stranger dressed as a foreign merchant, whom he meets on the road close to his house. This stranger is Saladin in disguise, fluent in Italian and accompanied by two of his nobles -- he is travelling across Latin Christendom on reconnaissance in anticipation of the mobilization of the Third Crusade. Messer Torello insists on giving him lodging, and then feasts and entertains him sumptuously for three days, falconing with him, and instructing his wife to have made lavish fur robes for him. All this inciting Saladin's growing astonishment at his generosity. By the third day they have become friends, and Messer Torello sets Saladin on his road with great affection, saying that he does not believe him a merchant, but will not press for any information Saladin is unwilling to tell him. Saladin promises him that one day he might have an opportunity to examine their merchandize. Despite the affection, there is an uneasiness to this relationship – its gift economy is too immoderate; requital is needed.

When Messer Torello joins the Third Crusade, he is captured at Acre amidst an epidemic that several of the Latin chronicles of the crusade attest to, and he is brought to Saladin's palace at Alexandria, where, unrecognized, he becomes Saladin's falconer. One day Saladin recognizes him through a remembered crook of his mouth, and embraces him, overjoyed: "Messer Torello, now that God has sent you here to me, you must no longer think of me as your master, but rather as your servant" (Boccaccio, *Decameron*, 804). Saladin enriches and befriends Torello, showering him with his favors and enjoying a relationship of rich and reciprocal friendship with him. But when Messer Torello realizes that his messages to his wife back in Pavia have gone astray, he panics, knowing that she might have remarried. Sorrow-

stricken but generous, Saladin promises to deliver him home to the great church at Pavia, through magic. He has prepared a lavish bed, and asks Messer Torello to drink a sleeping potion. Once Torello is sleeping, Saladin dresses him in rich robes, piles the bed with treasure, places a priceless ring on his finger, and has one of his magicians fly the bed to Pavia, where the Abbot discovers him and conducts him to his wife's betrothal ceremony just in time to stop it.

This bed richly figures how the tale entwines love and rich munificence in the tale. It is a marriage bed of sorts, weaving across the sea between husband and wife, as Saladin figuratively remarries the Torellos. But this bed is also charged with the affective intensity of Saladin's love for Messer Torello, translated (perhaps opportunistically) into wealth but also the softness of the bed and the tenderness with which Messer Torello is ensconced in it, to magically cross the desperately dangerous Mediterranean seas in perfect, oblivious safety. Saladin translates back to his own Pavian home of familiarity, in the full recognition that the two will never meet again. Like Odysseus, he returns home sleeping amid in a flurry of confusion and misrecognition, in the church in Padua. This tale, then, figures hospitality as it rewrites the borders of home, and the characters of host and guest. Home is not a static thing, and a process of hospitable exchange across many strange homes in the Mediterranean that Salah al-Din stories affectively enact explore both the loves and the fears that weave friendship across Mediterranean distances.

Family Ties: The Three Laws: from Boccaccio to *Nathan der Weise*: Discourses of affective kinship.

The family politics of the Ayyubids, like Salah al-Din's reputation for just rule, and his hospitality communicates in different ways to the west, after Salah al-Din's conquest of

Jerusalem. When he died a year later in 1193, those eyes turned to his heirs. The Ayyubids, like the Zengids before them, ruled as a loose and unruly family confederation, with sovereignty passing violently or peaceably between male sons and male brothers. Family politics become of constant concern in the wake of Salah al-Din's death, as the double sultanate was first divided between Salah al-Din's son, al-Afdal in Damascus, and his brother, Saif al-Din al-'Adil, in Egypt, and then later reunited under the sole sovereignty of al-'Adil. Could these divisions be exploited by new crusaders? Texts like the Anglo Norman early-thirteenth-century *Terre de Sarazins* draw from contemporary information gathering-expeditions to see how Ayyubid rule was developing. They paint a discouraging picture of family solidarity once al-'Adil takes the throne. The *Terre de Sarrazins* dramatizes ceremonies of family loyalty between al-'Adil's many sons and their father. The sons celebrate their father by wearing rings with his image, when they meet they perform ritual obeisance with ceremonial riding-circles ending in low bows. In return he showers the bounty of particular cities and regions upon them by distributing regional sovereignties among them. Their confederacy constitutes the entire land of the eastern Mediterranean into a single, immense, Ayyubid family home.

However, family affects may accrete around Salah al-Din not only as the founder of a dynasty, but also as a reuniter of separated families. Among his biographers anecdotes appear of a lost Christian child restored to its mother in the wake of a conquest, of Salah al-Din's release of the queen of Jerusalem, Sibylla, along with Guy of Lusignan, of a Greek orthodox princess allowed to go back to her family with all her rich possessions. His charities and waqfs include support of widows and poor families, and his own household sparks with stories of his leniency – even over-leniency with those he made his familiars.

Perhaps in response to the affective draw of these accounts, and perhaps in fear and bids for assimilation, many of the Latin Christian legends that begin accreting around Salah al-Din claim family relationships with him across enemy lines. In addition to the intricate familiarizations of the *Fille de Compt de Ponthieu*, illuminated by Sharon Kinoshita in *Medieval Boundaries*,³⁸ Raoul de Houdenc's thirteenth-century *Ordene de Chevalerie* tells the story of a Christian knight, Hue of Tabari, taken prisoner by Salah al-Din, who forces him to explain to him the Christian order of knighthood, with all its rituals and meanings, as a prelude to "adopting" him into the family of Christian chivalry. Under threat, Hue complies, going out of his way to confessionalize knighthood inalienably as Christian in every aspect of its ritual and meaning, but Saladin is not discouraged by this. Hue administers to Saladin every rite of chivalric investiture, except the final blow, in which the new-made knight is struck upon the cheek – such a blow, Hue says primly, would violate his parole as a prisoner. Saladin rewards him not only by paying part of his ransom for him but allowing him to collect it from his emirs, who give it freely, and allow him to return home quite rich. The treatise ends with an assurance that knighthood, well-executed and sacramentalized in this way, is in itself (*with or without Holy War*) a ticket to Paradise:

By the faith that I owe Almighty God, I still have to say a little more; it is given to the knight – and one should hold him more dear who pertly understands this parable that I am boldly telling you – that if he has acted according to his order, he can on no account fail to go straight to Paradise. For this reason I have taught

³⁸ Sharon Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 176-99.

you here to do what you should: to honour knights above all other men, except only those who perform the sacrament (425-480).³⁹

Knights here become almost another priesthood – but one with teeth. While Raoul's claim seems strange, given that it has followed a tale of knightly capture and compulsion, I think it works (along with the Christianizing of knighthood itself) to sew up the family borders that Salah al-Din's semi-investiture and munificence has torn open. A reinforced confessional boundary stitches up a new chivalric family relationship. It also arguably modulates a historical event during the Third Crusade. The *Itinerarium* describes how Saif al-Din, Salah al-Din's brother, as an expression of a growing rapprochement with Richard, sent his son to Richard on Palm Sunday, to be knighted by him, and that Richard, "magnificently honored" him by fastening the belt of knighthood upon him (*Itinerarium*, 295). This event, confounding to ecumenical purisms, is described with bland dispatch, as though it were not extraordinary at all; it attests to the volatile microworld of crusading intersectional relations

The story of the Three Laws, attested in many sources, goes further than the *Ordene* by transforming Saladin's forceful gift economies into more grateful ones. Here the interlocutor is a rich Jew, whom the overgenerous and indigent Saladin corners in order to exploit his wealth. This setup places all too familiar tropes of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia on a collision course – the tyrannical Saracen oppressing the miserly Jew. In order to trap his victim, Saladin asks the Jew a dangerous question: which of the three Laws -- Judaism, Christianity, or Islam -- is

³⁹ Keith Busby, ed., *The Roman d'Élies and the Anonymous Ordene de Chevalerie: Two Early Old French Didactic Poems* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 1983).

correct? After some thought, the sagacious Jew answers Saladin with a parable, concerning a great man with a very precious ring, which becomes a token of his favor and heritage for his successors. Over the years the ring is passed from heir to heir, binding all the man's descendants in a common heritage. However, one descendant has three sons, whom he loves equally and is reluctant to favor any one over the others. So he secretly orders made two replicas of the ring, indistinguishable from it in form and value, and upon his death, each of the sons receives the ring and conveys it to his own descendants. As a result, each of the lines is convinced he has the single possession of the heritage. The Jew concludes: "My Lord, I say it is the same with the three Laws given by God our Father to three peoples, concerning which you have questioned me. Each of them thinks it has the inheritance, the true Law, and carries out His Commandments; but which does have it is a question as far from being settled as that of the rings" (Boccaccio, *Decameron*, **page number**). Saladin sees that the Jew has evaded his snare, admires his acumen, and decides to come clean and simply tell the Jew his need, asking for a loan. The Jew give it to him willingly, Saladin repays him in full, and then afterward rewards him even further with gifts and honors, keeping him near him in gratitude and honor. While the medieval history of exploitation of Jews kept close by kings does not inspire confidence in the Jew's future, the tale's parable resonates beyond its tactical frame to suggest the ethical values and shared precepts that link across the three great monotheisms, reminding Saladin of his underlying likeness with his would-be victim. The parable thus informs and help incite the mutually advantageous gift economies that follow. The parable's idea of a family of monotheisms also complicates the common propaganda that Jerusalem is a solely Christian "heritage" that has been unjustly stolen. Saladin has pushed this tale's Latin Christian readers

into the position of neglected heir – like Esau, or more trenchantly, Ishmael, whom Islam regenerates and reendows. Thus, even as Christianity is figuratively Islamized, the relationships the Jew suggests between all three monotheisms as indistinguishably precious heritages, ameliorates that exile by constructing a larger, stranger, more syncretic family.

It is this strange family the Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's 1779 play, *Nathan der Weise*, literalizes. It frames the story of the Three Laws within the unfolding of a family romance that advocates mutual tolerance based on enlightenment ideas of the universal brotherhood of men (masculine gender intended) and a universal availability of God. It then seals those relationships by staging a series of hidden family kinships gradually coming to light. In *Nathan der Weise*, during Salah al-Din's rule, a kind, wise Jew called Nathan has adopted and raised in nondenominational monotheism a child, Recha, whom he loves tenderly and she him. While he is away on a journey, the family home catches fire, and Recha is saved from immolation by a brave but mysterious Templar knight who carries her from the flames and then disappears; she concludes he's an angel, but feels love for him anyway. Returning, and blessing God for sparing his daughter, Nathan tries to find the Templar, and locating him, seduces him from antisemitism to friendship not with gratitude but with a sharing of enlightenment ideals. The Templar, Curd von Stauffen, is the last Templar in Salah al-Din's realm – spared inexplicably from the mass executions of his fellows – he's making a forlorn living as a dragoman and guide to pilgrims visiting Mt. Sinai, and he feels indebted enough to Salah al-Din for sparing him, that he refuses to act against him when commissioned to do so by the Christian eminence grise, the conniving Patriarch of Jerusalem. Curd von Stauffen is induced to visit Nathan's house, to be thanked in person and properly chaperoned now that Recha's father has returned. He feels an

inexplicable attraction to Recha. She on the other hand, after seeing him seems to translate erotic attraction into something much calmer: his presence reassures her. Meanwhile Salah al-Din and his crafty sister, Sittah, are playing chess and trying to solve solvency problems, since Sittah has been emptying her personal treasury to keep the court running. Salah al-Din, characteristically profligate, doesn't want money for himself but for their father (Ayyub?), ahistorically still alive after the Third Crusade and feeling penury up on Mt. Lebanon (but family love is what the play is about, so Ayyub is resurrected). They hear of Nathan who has just returned from Egypt with a train full precious merchandise, and Sittah decides that he should be extorted for cash, while Salah al-Din expresses distaste. They summon Nathan to court and enact the Three Laws riddle scene as recounted by Boccaccio, except the ring now is not simply a sign of heritage, but actually magical: it renders its wearer beloved both by God and men. Yet it is still indistinguishable from its copies. Salah al-Din presses Nathan, asking him that if the rings are so indistinguishable why do Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have so many ritual differences. In rebuttal, Nathan points out that all three religions rest on historical authorities that must be received on trust, because no one should be asked to distrust their own family ancestors:

In whom are we most likely to put trust?

In our own people? In those very men

Whose blood we are? Who, from our

earliest youth

Have proved their love for us . . .

Why should I credit my forefathers less

Than you do yours? Or can I ask of you. To

charge your ancestors with

falsehood?⁴⁰(III.7) [wessen Treu und
Glauben zieht man den

Gegeben? . . . Wie kann ich meinen Vätern
weniger

Am wenigsten in Zweifel? Doch der Seinen?
Doch deren Blut wir sind? doch deren, die
Von Kindheit an uns Proben ihrer Liebe

Als du den deinen glauben? Oder umgekehrt.--
Kann ich von dir verlangen, daß du deine
Vorfahren Lügen strafst, um meinen nicht
Zu widersprechen?]

This reply goes beyond Boccaccio's retelling, which does not press against the single family ancestry of all three monotheisms. *Nathan der Weise* recenters both the problem of disputed inheritance and its solution in the transcultural intelligibility of family loyalty. The great families of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have diverged and become different, but because they are all equally families, bound by tradition, respect for the ancestors, and the claims of history, they are all equal in respect of their nearness to God. Family itself, the foundations of different bloods, identities, peoples, identity itself, is detoured to signify across confessional and cultural lines as a shared foundational ethic rooted the affects of love for and fidelity to history. And because even the magical power of the ring has been hidden by its replication, it must become a deliberately willed performance of love and belovedness towards one's own and also all the other ring bearers. Only by love could the ring be proved as genuine, not only before the judgment of one's estranged brothers but in the sight of God himself.

⁴⁰*The Dramatic Works of G. L. Lessing*, v.1, tr. Ernest Bell (London: George Bell and Sons, 1891), 307;
[http://www.digbib.org/Gotthold Ephraim Lessing 1729/Nathan der Weise](http://www.digbib.org/Gotthold_Ephraim_Lessing_1729/Nathan_der>Weise) (accessed 2-7-2020)

Salah al-Din is so delighted with this story that he rushes forth and takes Nathan's hand, gripping it tightly as if he could not bear to be parted from him for the whole remainder of the scene. Nathan then not only promises to give him his treasures but also draws Curd von Stauffen's brave deeds to his attention, and Salah al-Din orders him to be brought to court. When they meet, the resemblance to Salah al-Din's brother, Assad, is so striking that Salah al-Din adopts Curd as an avatar of his brother, calling him "my Assad."

The rest of the play then concretizes the affective bonds of family love in a way that gives even the wildest of Dickensian coincidences a run for their money, while also underscoring the grim stakes that make such bonds precious in the midst of histories of Christian violence. It turns out that Nathan adopted Recha, after the slaughter of his entire family --his wife and seven sons-- by Christian crusaders, and that he holds Recha all the more precious for keeping him from hating all things Christian. Curd learns of her adoption and cannot control antisemitic distrust of Nathan, which he betrays to the Patriarch of Jerusalem who begins plotting to have Nathan burned alive for stealing a Christian child. Meanwhile, under threat of enforced separation from his daughter, Nathan is inquiring into Recha's birth-family origins and finds that she was the daughter of a German woman called von Stauffen, who married a mysterious non-German called Oluf or Wolf of Filneck, and that Recha had had a brother, Asad of Filneck, who had died as Ascalun. Upon further inquiry, he turns up one of Oluf's of Filneck's old breviaries, full of his handwriting, and it turns out that Curd (named Curd after his uncle Conran von Stauffen), is actually Oluf's son as well, and therefore Recha's brother, Leo of Filneck. In a climactic scene at Salah al-Din's court, everyone's family ties are revealed. Suddenly the clear lines between Christian and Jew are complicated, as

Curd/Conrad/Leo acknowledges Nathan as his own foster father, embracing him, and his newfound sister, Recha/Blanda of Filneck. But that is not all, because when Salah al-Din opens Oluf of Filneck's old breviary he recognizes his brother, Assad's handwriting. He and his sister Sittah are uncle and aunt to the new-found siblings embracing in his hall, and the play ends with them all embracing in joy. A would be romantic elopement between two Christians (or a Christian and a Jewish fosterling returned to Christian roots) – in other words Christian endogamy – is revealed to be a form of incest. Meanwhile two Christian siblings acknowledge their Jewish foster-father. Finally, a Templar is revealed to have Muslim ancestry, and acquires Salah al-Din as his uncle. The play with the Templar's names reveals the shadowy persistence of family marks: Curd reminds us simultaneously of Conrad and of Salah al-Din's Kurdish origins. The Latin "Leo" remembers the Arabic "Asad," which means "lion." The Templar reminds us simultaneously of the Christian militant order and the Jewish Temple on the mount, where their headquarters had been. It turns out that everyone is intricately related to everyone else, by a complex overlay of shared blood, heartfelt adoption, and the friendships that grow out of mutual kindness, service, and obligation. And Salah al-Din returns all of Nathan's money, one of his own caravans having returned from Egypt in the nick of time. The play ends with everyone of the stage in a silent, happy embrace: an unabashedly sentimental and affective ending.

Conclusion: Always Coming Home:

All three of the Salah al-Din-related affects I've described here – nostalgia, hospitality/generosity, and family – are intimately related to systems of feeling associated with the vexed and fluid concept of *home*. Each of these underscores home's dynamism. Nostalgia,

as Boym points out, etymologically means “longing for home” but Abu Shama’s golden-age parallelisms show how images of the past as home are fluid constellations whose meaning is repurposed as present needs change. Hospitality engages the shifting thresholds of home, the changing roles of host and guest, the recognition that home is fabricated by power-laden changes of food, friendship, and détente. Family embodies home but also stretches it between generations, frays it between civil disputes between sons and brothers, estranges it through divergent rival heritages, and divided siblings. These affects and the wide range of texts they are why Salah al-Din/Saladin becomes a Mediterranean nexus by which the love and fear of a stranger, a neighbor, a familiar can be productively renegotiated. Salah al-Din texts open the doors to exploring Islam as home or lost home, the past as home or fantasy home. Salah al-Din was a Kurd who took power through service, opportunism, violence, and persuasion. Salah al-Din was therefore a stranger to most of those who became his own subjects, allies, willing instruments, and beloveds. I think Dante Alighieri placed Saladin in solitary splendor, on the threshold of hell in limbo, with the other great Muslim philosophers and scholars at a distance, because he recognized this strangeness, these threshold operations. However, Salah al-Din didn’t stay a stranger. He promoted a vision of himself as a model figure of virtuous Islamic piety, sovereign hospitality, and military power, effectively switching himself from the role of stranger at the threshold to ruler of the Dar al-Islam itself. The texts that describe these transformations establish patterns for other agencies and other, European and Mediterranean strangers to move across similar thresholds affectively, virtuously, violently, for centuries to come.

Appendix: A short history of Salah al-Din for those who want to know more but please stop reading if you're tired!:

The following account is more or less agreed upon among contemporary chronicles. Salah al-Din came to power in the service of the Zengid Sultans of Damascus, Imad al-Din Zengi (1085-1146) and his son Nur al-Din Zengi (1118-74), who rallied Syrian leaders against the Franks of the Latin Outremer Kingdoms throughout the 1160s and 70s. A Kurd by ancestry, who cultivated ties to Kurdish, Persian, Seljuk Turk, and Arab loyalties, Salah al-din's whole family is marked by transcultural lability (Eddé 2011, 13-16), with names deriving from all of these ethnicities. Salah al-Din's father, Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb ibn Shādhi, and his uncle, Asad al-Din Shirkuh (it means the Lion of the Faith – there are Lionhearts on both sides of this conflict), both served the Sunni Seljuk Turkish Sultan of Aleppo and Mosul, Imād al-Dīn Zangi (1085-1146). Asad al-Din Shirkuh and his nephew Salah al-Din went on to serve Zangi's son, Nūr al-Dīn (1118-74), who acceded to power in 1147, conquered Damascus, and spear-headed the first round of concerted jihad against the Latin Kingdoms of the Levant by moving against Antioch and retaking Edessa. At Nur al-Din's orders, the young Salāh al-Din accompanied his uncle Shirkuh on his campaigns to Egypt in 1164, to exert control over the Fatimid Caliphate at Cairo, where power was divided between the young caliph, al-'Adīd, and two warring viziers, Shāwar and Dirgham, who had ousted Shāwar. Shirkuh reinstated Shāwar, who fearing for his security sought alliances with Amalric, Frankish King of Jerusalem, who had his own ambitions for ruling Cairo, sending invading armies to Egypt in 1163, 1164, 1167, and 1169. Salah al-Din aided in his uncle's 1167 campaigns by helping win a victory at al-Ashmūnīn. William of Tyre was in the treaty party, visited the palace of the Caliph in Cairo and paints an amazing description of its

beauties and luxuries – some of which later texts and especially romances seize on and orientalize. Salah al-Din's greatest test of leadership, however, resulted in truce rather than victory, during the siege of Alexandria, where he held the city successfully under intensifying conditions of starvation with a small group of Syrian cavalry and an unmilitarized populace. After the siege came to an end in a joint truce and formal exchange of prisoners Shāwar broke the truce by taking reprisals against citizens that had supported the Syrian army. Salāh al-Dīn, who had been hospitably lodged in Amalric's camp during the negotiations, appealed to Amalric to force his former ally, Shāwar, to respect the amnesty. He and his uncle gratefully returned to Damascus.

Salah al-Din's appointment to Sultan in Egypt followed these complex engagements. His accession was haunted by the unexpected deaths of his father and uncle, and hedged with rumors that he had assassinated the Fatimid Caliph who had appointed him, for which there is no evidence but which later made their way into the Coptic *History of the Patriarchs*, and later into several Latin accounts and romances. In late 1168, fearing the coalition of Syria and Egypt (and the Frankish kingdoms caught between them), Amalric of Jerusalem allied with the Byzantine ruler, Manuel Komnenos, (1118-80) and attacked Damietta with an enormous crusader army. Nur al-Din sent Shirkuh and Salah al-Din with reinforcements. Salah al-Din is said to have gone very reluctantly, although Baha' al-Din stresses that this only shows that "it is possible to dislike a thing even though it is the best for you" (Baha' al-Din 2002, 43). The Syrian defenders successfully chained the mouth of the Nile, preventing a blockade, hunger overtook the besiegers and they withdrew. In Cairo, Shirkuh executed Shāwar, and then died himself, apparently of over-satiation after a feast. Salah al-Din was appointed vizier by the caliph al-

'Adīd, a controversial and possibly forced appointment, since Salah al-Din was Sunni, and the Fatimid Caliphate was traditionally Islma'ili Shi'ia. Ibn al-Athir speculates that the Caliph appointed Salah al-Din, a young, suddenly bereft commander because he would be the easiest candidate to manipulate and then discard. If so, he got a surprise. Shortly after, Nur al-Din ordered Salah al-Din to end the Fatimid Caliphate, and insert the Abbasid caliph's name instead in the *khutba* the public Friday blessing. The Caliph, fearing for his safety, begged for Salah al-Din to visit him and ensure the survival of his young children, but Salah al-Din, distrusting his intentions, declined – he said to Baha' al-Din that he later regretted that decision. Once Sultan, Salah al-Din survived several assassination attempts, quelled several revolts by a coalition of Fatimid emirs, palace mamluks, Nubian soldiers, and commoners, and established his power in Egypt. In all, Salah al-Din's early campaigns and rise to power in Egypt reveal the shifting culture of tactical realpolitik that seamed the relations between Sunni and Shi'a, Egyptian and Syrian, Frank and Byzantine, Egyptian and Frank, emirs, knights, soldiers, servitors, and populace, throughout the period of the crusades. They also leave a range of affective legacies.

In 1170, Salah al-Din began moving against Frankish holdings outside of Egypt, attacking the Frankish city of Darum and then taking Gaza and the island of Eilat as well. After campaigns Yemen, and Syria, under Nur al-Din's commands and those of his military uncle, Salah al-Din first became Sultan of Egypt and then, on Nur al-Din's death blamed the Sultanate of Damascus as well, uniting the entire region and aligning it to the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad. Over the next two decades Salah al-Din embattled three kings of Jerusalem, Almaric, Baldwin IV, and Guy of Lusignan, in his effort to complete Nur al-Din's work and drive the Franks from the Levant.

William of Tyre writes with both admiration and foreboding about Salah al-Din's effectiveness as a leader and threat to the Outremer kingdoms. He focuses particularly upon Salah al-Din's generosity as a powerful and terrifying transcultural attractor:

For he was a man wise in council, valiant in war, and generous beyond measure.

All the more, for this very reason he was distrusted by those of our nobles who had keener foresight. Even in our day there is no better means by which princes can win the hearts of their subjects, or, for that matter, of others, than by showing lavish bounty toward them; and nothing more readily attracts the minds of strangers, especially when it proceeds from princes. (William of Tyre, *History*, 1142)

This assessment proved prescient – generosity speaks powerfully across cultural lines, and as Salah al-Din's successes grew, the perceived princeliness of his valiant benevolence had an enormous impact on his followers and enemies alike. After the death of the King of Jerusalem Baldwin IV in 1185, Salah al-Din began to make real advances against Frankish holdings, capitalizing on the disunity of the Franks, and a succession dispute between a newcomer, Guy of Lusignan, and Raymond of Tripoli, who briefly allied with Salah al-Din and then rejoined Guy. After futile sieges at Kerak and successes in northern Syria, Salah al-Din caught the Frankish army in mid-march at the small village of Hattin where he won a decisive victory, capturing Guy of Lusignan, and seizing the most precious Frankish relic – a piece of the Cross that accompanied the armies and was said to ensure victory to Christians. The battle of Hattin destroyed the greater part of the Frankish army, and weakened all future coalitions without foreign reinforcements. Salah al-Din rapidly seized most of the interior of the kingdom of

Jerusalem, and most of the coastal strongholds, including Acre. At that point Salah al-Din hesitated between proceeding toward a military threat, Tyre, the strongest remaining Frankish stronghold, and a symbolic prize, Jerusalem. He chose Jerusalem, which surrendered to him after a short siege.

Even the Latin chroniclers note the generosity with which Salah al-Din treated the citizens of the city and the bloodlessness of his takeover, while as they register the despair of Christendom at the losses of the Cross, the Frankish armies, and the Church of the Sepulcher. Salah al-Din released Guy, his queen, many nuns, and many nobles from the city, allowing them to take with them their money and possessions. One released leader was Balien of Ibelin, who had previously sworn a pact of non-aggression with Salah al-Din, an oath he broke when he agreed to the city government's pleas to lead their defense. Salah al-Din forgave him and allowed him to leave after paying the standard ransom. There were a set of prisoners, however, who had also sworn not to take up arms against Salah al-Din after a previous capture – these were the knights of city's two military orders, the Templars and the Hospitallers. These Salah al-Din did not release; his previous encounters with them had convinced them that they would fight him to the death and break any oaths he exacted. He had all 70 of them executed.

The loss of Jerusalem and most of Latin Kingdom's cities electrified Latin Christendom. Pope Urban III is said to have died of sorrow at the news, and his successor Gregory VIII immediately began preaching the crusade. The exiled Patriarch of Jerusalem toured Latin Christendom, preaching in the most tragic and lachrymose terms. In what later came to be known as the Kings' crusade or the Third Crusade (1189-92) Richard I of England took the cross, in conjunction with a former ally (and sometime enemy) Philip Augustus of France, while the

Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa took the cross as well, leading an independent expedition in advance. Richard I was French in language, upbringing, and investment; he spoke little English, and was interested in his English holdings only in terms of how much revenue they might bring him. He was a fierce and quarrelsome son from a fierce and quarrelsome family. He had violently slaughtered nobles who had rebelled against his feudal sovereignty in southern France. He had joined his two oldest brothers and mother in rebellion against Henry II, and had been quelled into a nominal peace with him. He had allied with Philip II against Henry II, and with Henry II against Philip I.⁴¹ At the death of Henry II, Philip II and Richard I agreed to put their differences aside, and make war against Salah al-Din. Richard and his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine (who had crusaded with her previous husband against Zengi in the abortive Second Crusade (1147-50)) organized for their departure by levying a steep ‘Saladin Tithe’ on English holding to support the crusade. Richard departed in the company of Eleanor, meeting up with Philip in France, then again in Sicily, where Richard captured Messina and its ruler, Tancred, and then nearly came to war with Philip again, over a change in Richard’s marriage plans. While Philip journeyed to Tyre, and then continued on to swell the Frankish ranks at the already two-year long siege of Acre against Salah al-Din’s captains, Richard invaded Cypress and claimed it as a crusader state (he would later give it to the exiled king of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan, Jerusalem itself remaining in Salah al-Din’s hands). Richard joined Philip at Acre along with Leopold V, Conrad of Monferrat (ruler of Tyre) and the remnants of the army of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, who had set out for the crusade but had suffered setbacks in the journey across Anatolia, and had drowned in the river Saleph in the

⁴¹ James Brundage, *Richard Lion Heart* (New York: Scribner, 1974), 9-57.

Armenian kingdom of Cilicia. Some accounts claim that the Byzantine Emperor Isaac II, had formed an alliance with Salah al-Din to delay Frederick in return for Salah al-Din's peace. Acre was a double siege, with Salah al-Din's captains in the city, the Frankish armies pressing them in, and Salah al-Din's troops forming a blockade around the Franks. Despite Salah al-Din's efforts, he failed at blockading the sea, and the Franks continued to receive supplies and reinforcements. Richard's personal valor is described by ample sources – he is repeatedly described as almost singlehandedly rallying his men after their discomfiture by the sudden Syrian attacks, and of snatching victory from impossible odds. Both the romance of *Richard Coer de Lyon* and the *Pas de Saladin* magnify events taken from chronicle accounts of Richard's battles.

However, rivalries between the crusading nobles, and particularly between Richard and Philip, almost immediately began to erode their alliance. Although Salah al-Din refused to treat personally with Richard, Salah al-Din's brother and diplomatic emissary, Saif al-Din, plied Richard with gifts of fine camels, a magnificent tent, and even fruit and ices on a particularly hot day. Saif al-Din met so amicably with Richard that there were rumors that their friendship might erode Richard's resolve. The *Itinerarium* describes how Saif al-Din even sent his son to Richard on Palm Sunday, to be knighted by him, and that Richard, "magnificently honored" him by fastening the belt of knighthood upon him (*Itinerarium*, 295). However, all the raiding tactics of Salah al-Din's light cavalry were ineffective at breaking the siege or piercing the heavy armor of the Franks, and attempts to break their lines were ineffective. In 1191 after three years of siege, sappers undermined the city walls and defensive towers and conditions in the city became unbearable, and the troops in the city finally surrendered, agreeing, without Salah

al-Din's approval, to the crusaders' stringent terms. The surrendering warriors became hostages to the settlement, but when Salah al-Din was delayed in delivering the second of three payments of an enormous ransom, Richard summarily decapitated 270 of the hostages in the full view of Salah al-Din's army, and then exhibited their heads on pikes. Salah al-Din responded in kind by beheading all of the Christian captives he held from his raids. After taking Acre, Richard proceeded to capture Jaffa, and then worked his way south along the coastal plain taking city after city.

However, despite these dedicated antagonisms, the Third Crusade had had more than its share of high-profile defections. Frederick Barbarossa drowned en route to the Levant, the main part of his army scattered or were killed, and his son, Frederick VI of Swabia held only 5000 of the army together to reach the Levant and bury the Emperor in Antioch. Philip Augustus and Richard I at odds before they left Sicily, briefly reconciling in Cyprus only with difficulty. After joining together to take down the long-besieged city of Acre, Philip abruptly returned to France eventually to make war on Richard's territories in Normandy, leaving many of his forces, increasingly unhappily, at Richard's disposal. Richard I was a great military commander, over-daring but often fortunate, generous with largesse, and he succeeded in taking back many of the coastal fortresses from Salah al-Din's commanders. However, there was only so many resources that could be captured. His troops had been riven from the beginning by rivalries between French, English, and Germanic forces, as well as those backing Frankish rulers such as Conrad of Montferrat, the Count of Tyre (many of the French), and those backing Guy of Lusignan, exiled king of Jerusalem (many of the English). Complicating the mix further were the bulk of his infantry, who simply wanted to reach Jerusalem, make their

pilgrimages, and return to their homelands, and were thus unavailable as long-term occupiers. Finally there were the cross-currents stemming from the military orders of the Temple and the Hospital who informed policy and abetted the conflict, but were instrumental in the final recognition that holding Jerusalem would be impossible.

Such a compromise was how the Third Crusade ended. With difficulty, each side agreed to a three-year truce, leaving Richard I in control of the coastal cities, from Tyre and Acre to Jaffa, but Salah al-Din holding a de-fortified Ascalun, and all the interior territories, including Jerusalem. Christian pilgrims would be given permission to visit the common shrines and the Church of the Sepulcher and other Christian shrines unmolested and untaxed, and Christian priests were installed in the Church of the Sepulcher, but the city remained in Muslim hands. Salah al-Din returned to Damascus, securing treaties with the remaining Christian commanders at Tyre on the way, but died the following year. At his death the realm was briefly divided between his son, al-Afdal who ruled Damascus and his brother, al-'Adil, who ruled in Egypt, before reclaiming Damascus as well.