

**The Religious Role of the Sufi Movement in Al-Sham in
Resisting the Crusades
(1095-1291).**

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المُلخَص:

يُنَاقِشُ هَذَا الْمَقَالُ تَطَوُّرَ الْحَرَكَةِ الصُّوفِيَّةِ وَدَوْرَهَا خِلَالَ الْغَزْوِ الصَّلِيبِيِّ لِبِلَادِ الشَّامِ بَيْنَ الْأَعْوَامِ ١٠٩٥م-١٢٩١م.

المواضيع الرئيسية التي تمّت مناقشتها في المقال هي الدور السياسي للحركة الصوفية كحركة دينية، والتأكيد على دور قيادات الحركة في تشجيع الناس على الجهاد وكعامل وسيط بين الناس والحكام. بالمصطلحات الحديثة، يمكن ملاحظة أنّ الصوفيين قادوا جزءاً كبيراً من الدعاية الحربية ضدّ الصليبيين. كما أشرت في المقال إلى طبيعة أراضي بلاد الشام وتميّز موقعها الجغرافي كبيئة خصبة لنمو الحركة الصوفية، كما وأشرت إلى الظروف التي ساعدت الحركة الصوفية على التّهوض. زد على ذلك، كانت الحركة هي الملجأ من الفوضى التي حلّت في بلاد الشام زمن الحروب الصليبية، وتعطّش الناس لتلك الحركة والانضمام إليها. لعبت الحركة الصوفية دوراً مهماً خارج أراضي الشام، على سبيل المثال وقوف الصوفيين في أفريقيا ضدّ الفرنجة. أضف إلى ذلك، تطرّق المقال إلى دور المرأة المسلمة وانضمامها للحركة الصوفية، وهذا الدور تطرّق له القلة القليلة من الكُتّاب والمؤرّخين، كما لعبت زوجات الحكام في تلك الفترة دورهنّ في بناء المؤسسات العامة والدينية، إذ كان للمرأة دوراً رئيسياً في تنمية الحركة الصوفية وتشجيع الحركة. المفاهيم المفتاحية: الصوفية، بلاد الشام، الجهاد، الفرنجة.

abstract

This article discusses the development of the Sufi movement and its role during the Crusader invasion of the land of Al-sham between the years 1095-1291.

The main topics I discussed in the article are the political role of the Sufi movement as a religious movement, emphasizing the role of the movement's leaders in encouraging the people to jihad and as a mediating factor between the people and the rulers.

In modern terms it can be seen that the Sufis led a considerable part of the war propaganda in the Crusaders. I also referred in the article to the nature of the Al-sham lands and the uniqueness of its geographical location as a fertile environment for the growth of the Sufi movement, in this article I referred to the conditions that helped the Sufi movement rise as a refuge from religious chaos and as a new religious elite at that time. The thirst for religious authority on the part of the people and the need for sympathy on the part of the rulers who developed the status of the Sufi as an intermediate segment of society.

The Sufi movement played an important role beyond the lands of Al-sham, for example the Sufis in Africa sided with the war against the Franks.

An important tier I addressed in the article is the role of women in Sufi movement, and this is a topic that few historians have addressed, I discussed the wives of the rulers who preceded the construction of public and religious institutions, these women played a key role in cultivating Sufi movement, and encouraging Sufi movement.

Keywords: Sufis, Land of Al-Sham, Jihad, Franks

The purpose of the article:

The proposed article discusses the religious role of the Sufi movement in the lands of al-Sham in the face of the Crusader invasion. In order to explore this issue, my article will focus on the following question: What was the contribution of the Sufi movement to the Muslim resistance to the Crusader invasion?

In order to discuss the subject in depth and broadly, I will focus on three main aspects that are important for understanding the role of the Sufi movement in opposition to the Franks between 1291-1095 but have not been studied in depth in the academic literature: First, the uniqueness of the Sufi movement in Al-sham. Second, the role of the Sufi sheikhs who were born and raised in the lands of Al-sham, where they learned and received the Sufi religious knowledge, in opposition to the Crusader invasion. I will examine how they used religious authority and messages to influence the mood at that time. In addition, the songs that were written at that time and addressed the opposition to the Franks will be discussed. It can be said that the Sufis learned the role of a kind of mediator between the people and the rulers, and that they played a central part in the anti-Crusader propaganda. In this context, I will also discuss the conditions that helped the rise of the Sufi movement as a refuge from religious chaos and as a new religious elite at the time. Third, the article will discuss the role of Muslim women who sided with the Sufi movement in opposition to the Franks. I intend to gather and analyze the relevant sources in order to learn about their role in designing, promoting and strengthening the Sufi movement.

Introduction

The proposed article will examine three key issues related to the development of the Sufi movement and its role during the Crusades. To substantiate the questions of the article, I will present here a reference to the role of the Sufi movement in resistance to invasion and Crusader rule while reviewing modern research literature related to the questions of the article. This chapter will focus on presenting a general picture of

existing literature. In order to present the status of the existing article, I will first address the factors of the rise of the Sufi movement in the lands of Al-sham, and then move on to the presentation of the existing literature discussing the activity of the Sufi vis-à-vis the Franks.

Factors of the rise of the Sufi movement in the lands of Al-sham during the Crusades

During the Crusades, the Sufi movement in the lands of Al-sham was strong, active and widely spread, and present in the hearts and minds of the people. The most prominent religious development was that of the Sufi movement, this movement stood out and soon spread in the lands of Al-sham and developed in a way that prevailed over the other religious movements at that time. This development of the Sufi movement was caused by the social, economic, political and geographical circumstances and because of the religious chaos that caused the multiplicity of religious movements and the rifts between them.¹ All the crises that befell the Shamite society led to the prominence of the Sufi movement and tens of thousands of people joining it. On the other hand, Carol Hillenbrand emphasizes the material well-being that prevailed in the Al-Sham lands at that time and that the Muslims' response to the fall of Jerusalem was indifferent. One of the main reasons for this indifference, according to Hillenbrand, is the tragic events that befell the region in the decades before the invasion, and the Muslims' preoccupation with internal conflicts that exhausted them and drew their attention.² The context in which the movement grew will be discussed at length in the proposed work.

¹Shakir, Mustafa. Palestine between the Fatimid and Umayyad eras, the Palestinian Encyclopedia. (Beirut, 1990), p. 295; Shaker, Mustafa. Endowments and Science in Jerusalem. (Journal of Islamic Civilization), Part 3, p. 124; Shaker, Mustafa. The Old and the Righteous, (Tlass Publishing House, Damascus, 1997), p. 32.

²Carol Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999) pp,150.

The following are the main factors that paved the way for the rising of the Sufi movement:

The religious factor

During the Crusades, Muslim society was characterized by respect for two main establishments – the religious establishment and the military establishment. The religious establishment and its power were expressed in support of the clergy and Sufis and in the relationship between them and the rulers, as well as the establishment of numerous mosques and "Zawaya" for two main purposes: the first is the study and assimilation of Sunni Sharia law. The second role played by these institutions was to address the need to encourage professional and mercenary fighters and to persuade them to come out against the Crusader invasion. Religious messages and the study of religion were means of strengthening jihad and raising morale, and formed part of the resistance itself.³

Since the policy of the Zanj rulers was focused on encouraging the Sunni through resistance to Shia and the Franks alike, Sufism received much support from them, as this movement distanced itself from conflicts between different streams and stood out in contrast to the other four streams.⁴ In the proposed work, the role of religious institutions as platforms for the promotion of political moves will be discussed at length, and there will be a reference to how the Sufis used religion as a basis for encouraging opposition to the Franks.

The political factor

³Shakir, Mustafa. *The Old and the Righteous*. pp. 33–32.

⁴Ibrahim, Khatib. *The role of education in the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis during the Ayyubid era*. (Amman, 1993), pp. 55–51;

The political atmosphere prevailing in the Islamic countries during the Crusades was an atmosphere of weakness and chaos, mainly due to the presence of various political forces in the Muslim East, for example the Sunni in Baghdad and the Shiites in Egypt, and internal conflicts between them.⁵

The weakness of the caliphate and their inability to prevent the Crusader invasion was a factor that encouraged the people to turn to religion, and specifically to the Sufi movements, driven by feelings of guilt and the thought that distance from religion is what caused the situation, especially neglect of jihadism. This claim is confirmed by primary sources such as the writings of Ibn Alathir (1239–1163) and Ibn Kathir (1373–1301), and is also accepted in modern research, for example in the book "Dhar al-Islam" by Ahmad Amin (1954–1889).⁶ The proposed study will discuss in detail the political atmosphere during the Seljuk and Ayyubid periods, and how the political chaos and rifts between different Muslim groups increased sympathy for the Sufi movement, as a body that would bring the people back to the path of religion and unite them. Ibn Jabir (1217–1145) mentioned that during the Crusades in the lands of Al-sham, the conflict between the Sunnah and the Shia was at its height. This conflict weakened the Islamic nation and the people noticed this weakness, so they turned to Sufism who stayed away from any conflict.

The social factor

In the sixth and seventh centuries, the prevailing social order was the manner of land management, the "Iqta"- exclusivity of a small group on the landowners and the people on these lands. Another interpretation of the term is a political-economic structure that relies on land control and the organization of the relationship between

⁵Nasr, Seyyed. *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestation*. (1997, New; York: Crossroad Herder). Pp,194.

⁶Essam, Rizk. Sufism's Khanaqat in Egypt in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Era (Cairo, 1997), Part 1, pg. 46; Ahmed, Amin. Islam is back.

the master, the subject and the government.⁷ This social order first passed to Andalusia during the Bohemian period,⁸ and as a result many lands were given to military men and princes. When the Seljuks took over Baghdad from the Bohemians in 1055 the mode of land management continued, causing a rift in society between people who welcomed and wanted to continue the mode of management and those who opposed it, and who were mostly from the lower and poor class. Opponents of this economic order were drawn to Sufism as a way out of the current situation, in order to avoid the formation of a rift in society as well as out of feelings of frustration due to the unchanging social situation and feeling that they were defeated in their social systems.⁹

The author and scholar Ahmad Amin argues in his book "Dhar al-Islam" that many people who experienced failure in their lives turned to Sufism,¹⁰ and it seems that the many economic crises that befell Al-Sham countries during the Seljuk period led many to turn to a life of asceticism and religion.¹¹ Under these conditions, the

⁷Azhar, Ghazi Matar. *Al Iqta' System in the Ayyubid Period*. (Diyaly University, 2016), p. 425.

⁸The Boyahim: Their grandfather is ShujaaBoya, he had three sons: Ali, Hassan and Ahmad, who were known for their military excellence and reached high ranks when Ali conquered Karak, Hassan conquered Atsfahan and Ahmad conquered Bagdad. For more information see Abu al-Farah Gregory, Ibn al-Ibri. *A Brief History of Countries* (Beirut, D.N) p. 14; Shaheen, Riyadh. *The Great King Issa 1180-1227, his domestic and foreign policy*. (PhD, Sudan, 1994), p. 32.

⁹Safi al-Din, Al-Khazraji. *Biography of the saints in the seventh century AH*. Investigation: Mamoun Yassin, Effat Hamza, (Beirut, Dar Al-Fikr), p. 65. Mohamed, Zaghoul. *Literature in the Ayyubid Era*. (Dar Al-Maaref, 1998), pg. 69; Abu Ali Ahmed bin Yaqoub, Miskawiyeh. *The Experiences of Nations and the Succession of Determination, achieved by Hassan Qasraweyeh*, (Beirut, 2003), part 5, pg. 288.

¹⁰Jihad Suleiman Al-Masry. *Education in the Levant in the Ayyubid era 1250-1174*. (Master's Thesis, Al al-Bayt University, Mafraq, 1999), pg. 49; Ahmad, Amin. *Dahr al-Islam*, pg. 13.

¹¹Najeeb, Atwi. *Ibn Al-Farid*. (Beirut, 1994), pg. 13; Jamal, Al-Badawi. *Travelers to God*. (Egypt, 1997), p. 75; Jihad Suleiman, Al-Masry. *Education in the Levant*, p. 49.

considerable sums of money that various rulers invested in Sufi institutions must have encouraged many to adopt the Sufi Mishnah.

The environmental factor – natural disasters

It seems that the natural disasters that befell the lands of Al-sham were perceived by the people as a punishment and test from God and caused them to draw closer to religion. The people of the land of Al-sham linked these disasters to their sense that they lived differently from what religion obliged them to,¹² and the prominent religious current to which the people turned as a refuge that would satisfy the need to approach religion was Sufism. Thus, it can be said that natural disasters would have brought the people closer to the Sufi movement and adopted the Sufi religious ideas as discussed in the proposed study. The following are the main natural disasters that have befallen the area:

Earthquakes: During the Crusader invasion of the land of Al-sham, a number of devastating earthquakes occurred. On Wednesday, December 30, 1097, the first year of the Crusader invasion, there was an earthquake that was interpreted as a celestial sign of control of the Temple Mount.¹³ In addition, Crusader historians claimed that celestial signs such as a beam of light in the form of a cross were observed, and used the event to inspire their fighting spirit and convince their warriors that they were God's messengers.¹⁴ Fatal earthquakes struck the area several times in the twelfth

¹²Ahmad Awad. Earthquakes in the Levant in the Era of the Crusades, (Egypt, Ain for Studies and Research, 1996), p. 43.

¹³Youssef, Al-Ghawanimah. Earthquakes in the Levant, (Oman, Dar Al-Fikr, 1990), p. 25.

¹⁴Riad, Hashish. The Sufi Movement in the Time of the Crusades, (Khan Younis, Southern Central Library, 2005), pp. 103-97.

century and the year 1139–1138 knew a number of deadly earthquakes some of which lasted for several days.¹⁵

Diseases and epidemics: The period of the Crusades knew of several waves of epidemics that resulted in the deaths of large numbers of people. Thus, for example, in 1147 a throat-borne virus spread in the lands of Al-sham and many died because of it.¹⁶ In 1153, diseases spread that modern historians have not been able to diagnose, but Ibn al-Laklansi (1160–1071) describes the diseases as fatal and states that patients did not survive more than a week.¹⁷

The Sufi streams in the lands of Al-sham

Below are the main viewing currents and their characteristics, the differences between the different currents and the modes of action in the various factions of this movement.

1– The Ju'iya Stream, Damascus

This stream was located mainly in mosques, where prayer and learning sessions were held. The current offered its members a way appropriate to the nature of Sufis in the lands of Al-Sham, with the main sources on which it relied being the interpretation of the hadith and the reading of the Koran. This stream bore the title of hunger (Ju'), and its members were called al-Jua'a (the hungry), this is because they

¹⁵Khaled Younis, Khalidi. Earthquakes in the Levant from the first century to the thirteenth century AH, (Gaza, the Islamic University, 2012), pg. 76; Abdullah, Al-Ghwaim. Earthquake Record, (University of Jordan, 2014), p. 132.

¹⁶Suhail, Zakar. The Comprehensive Encyclopedia of the History of the Crusades, (Damascus, 1995), part 23, p. 210.

¹⁷Hamza bin Asad, the son of Al-Qalanisi. The tail of the history of Damascus, edited by: Zakar, Suhail, (Damascus, Dar Hassan for printing, 1983), p. 330.

did not eat anything beyond what they needed in order to live.¹⁸ Members of this sect claim that its founder is Abu Suleiman Aldarani (831–758)¹⁹ who said, "The key to this world is satiety, and the key to the next world is hunger, and the source of all good in both worlds is the fear of Allah."²⁰

2– Al-Rifa'iyya Stream

A sect founded and led by Imam Ahmad al-Rifa'i (1182–1118), of Arab descent,²¹ who founded the sect in Basra. This current passed to the lands of Al-Sham through its disciples and fans who wandered throughout the Muslim world and established a strong bond between the Islamic lands. This current spread in the lands of A-lsham and the number of its fans and devotees increased. The motto of Al-Rifa'iyya stream was: "My way is religion without Bida'a (innovation), diligence without laziness and soul without desire."²²

3– Al-Sahrudia stream

¹⁸Al-Tusi, Al-Lama', p. 184; Abdel Hakim Abdel-Ghani, Qassem, Sufi sects and their schools, (Cairo, Madbouly Library, 1999), p. 159.

¹⁹Aldarani is a 'Abd al-Rahman' AttiaAlensiAldarani, a well-known ascetic, one of the members of the Ju'i stream, he is called Aldarani as a reference to Darna, a village on the outskirts of Damascus, died in 215 of Hijra. For more information see Abu Al-Naeem, Al-Hilyah, Volume 9, p. 254; Ibn Khallikan, Fiyat, vol. 3, p. 363.

²⁰Ibn al-Jawzi, Sifat al-Safwa, Volume 4, pg. 439

²¹Imam Ahmad al-Rafa'i is FaqihShafi'iSufi, who has a number of nicknames such as the community teacher and the Sheikh of the Streams. Died in 1181 AD in Baghdad. For more information see: IbnTaghriBardi, Al-Nujoum Al-Zahira, Volume 7, pp. 18–15.

²²Al-Jilani, Al-Ghaniya, pp. 13–12; Qassem, Sufi Schools, pg. 167.

A stream founded by Abu Najib al-Saharudi (1168–1097),^{۲۳} a native of Sahrod who came to Baghdad in his youth, engaged in Hadith and studied Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh). Followed the Sufi way and loved solitude, he broke away from people and then went back to preaching among people. He went to the lands of Al-sham in 1161 AD in order to visit Jerusalem but this was not possible for him due to the breach of the ceasefire between the Muslims and the Franks. He turned to Damascus and was honored by Sultan Nur al-Din (1174–1118). The stream was called the Saharudi, and they had a unique Zawiya.

4- The Ahmadiyya stream, Al-Badawi

Al-Badawi stream is so named after Al-Sayed Ahmad al-Badawi (1276–1199),^{۲۴} who studied the Qur'an orally at the age of seven and began to study Fiqh and Hadith and Qur'anic interpretations, began his career in learning and was influenced by the Rifa'i current. His journey was a journey of religious strengthening but during it he developed his current on the basis of the Koran, through the Prophet and the high moral values. Members of this current were trained in military training and sent to fight the Franks.^{۲۵}

The Sufi movement is a complex movement with different definitions due to its different currents. The proposed study will discuss the uniqueness of Al-sham countries as a cradle for part of the Sufi movement, I would like to learn what was the

²³He's Abd al-Kahar ibn 'Abdullah ibn Amuya, a preacher and Sufi scientist and Imam Shafi'i, died in 1167 AD. For more information see:IbnKatheer, The Beginning and the End, vol. 12, p. 254.

²⁴He is Ahmad bin Ibrahim al-Ghassani al-Sayed al-Badwi, the Sufi, known in Egypt and the entire Muslim world. He had many abilities, and died in 1276 AD. For more information see:Mustafa Othman, Al-Tabbaa, Ithaf Al-Azza fi History of Gaza, achieved by: Abdul Latif Abu Hashem, (Gaza Al-Yazji Library for Publishing and Distribution, 1999), Volume 2, p.

²⁵Qasim, Sufi Schools, p. 172.

uniqueness of the Sufis and the Sufi movement in the Al-sham countries compared to Sufis in the other Muslim countries during the Crusades.

Sufi activity in front of the Franks

In addition to its political activities that will be discussed in detail in this document, the Sufi movement was a social movement that played a key role in the cohesion of Muslim society in the Al-Sham countries, as well as spreading messages of tolerance, love and brotherhood among Muslims, building institutions of a social and educational nature such as the Madars (schools) and Zawaya promoted this activity and made Sufism accessible to the people.²⁶ For example, Imam 'Abd al-Qader al-Jilani (1166-1077)²⁷ took care of people who had fled the Crusader invasion, taught and educated them at his school in Baghdad and thus prepared them to be sheikhs in their countries, one of the most prominent of whom was Ibn Naja al-wa'ad' (1202-1115),²⁸ who was an adviser to Saladin al-Ayoubi, and al-Hafid al-Rahawi (1216-1141),²⁹ and Muafak al-Din bin Kudama (1223-1147)³⁰ author of the book Al-Mughani and adviser to Saladin al-Ayyubi, and his relative Al-Hafid 'Abd al-

²⁶Altaf, Mohammed, Altaf. The role of Sufism in security and social peace. (University of Punjab. Lahore - Pakistan, 2017), pp. 258-265.

²⁷'Abd al-Qader al-Jalani, was a Sheikh Persian jurist of the Hanbali school, and one of the greatest Sufi teachers and mystics, Al-Jalani founded the Qadariya - the Sufi order that spread far and wide and preserved the original meaning of Islamic Sufism for centuries to the present day.

²⁸Abu Naja, a Sufi cleric, was a political and military adviser to Saladin al-Ayubi. Majed, Ersan. This is how the generation of Salah al-Din appeared, and thus Jerusalem returned, p. 184.

²⁹Al-Hafid' al-Rahawi cleric and adviser to Saladin al-Ayubi, see: Shams Al-Din, Al-Dhahabi. A biography of the noble scholar, p. 71.

³⁰Mofek Aladdin bin Kudama, author of the book "Al-Mu'ani", was an adviser to Saleh Aladdin Alayubi.

Ghani (1203–1146).³¹ and Al-Rabt (Sufi Institution), had a very vital role in encouraging, the Sufi students (called as Sufi Muridin) to participate in jihad and resist invasion.³²

The connection between Sufis and the political rulers in the lands of Al-sham during the Crusader invasion

The Sufi movement and its members were close to the people in the lands of Al-sham, and due to their sympathy, they also gained the closeness of the rulers and thus they formed an intermediate group connecting the rulers and the people. Therefore, the relations between the Sufi and Al-Zanj, Ayyubid, and Mamluk rulers throughout the Crusader invasion were good relations.

The article will discuss, among other things, the time of Saladin al-Ayoubi (1193–1138) who followed in the footsteps of Nur al-Din and used to visit Zawaya and approach Sheikh al-Habushani (1191–1116),³³ which Ibn Shadad (1234–1145) discussed at length and will be discussed in this work. Ali Shelby refers to Saladin's support for the Sufis as an action that comes from an understanding of the power and ability of the Sufis to motivate the people and speak for their hearts, and as a movement that can help them take advantage of the Sunni rebirth in the lands of Al-

³¹MajedArsan, Al-Kilani. This is how Saladin's generation appeared, and thus Jerusalem returned. (Saudi Arabia, Saudi Press and Publishing House, 1985), p. 115.

³²Abdul Razzaq, Al Kilani. Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani, Sheikh Al-Zahid, (Damascus, 1994), p. 172.

³³He is Najm al-Din Abu al-Barkat, was a scholar and God-fearing, miraculous "Karamat", for more information see: Shamseddine Ahmed bin Mohammed, son of Khalkan. Al-Ayyan's deaths and news of time, investigation: Ihsan, Abbas, (Beirut, 1968), part 4, p. 239; Abdullah bin Asaad bin Suleiman, Yafei. Mirror of The Committee, the placement of his footnotes, Khalil Mansour (Beirut, Dar al-Suri, 1997), part 3, p. 328; Jamal al-Din Abi Al-Muhasin Youssef, son of Tigre Bardi. The bright stars of the kings of Egypt and Cairo (Cairo, 2010), part 6, p. 105.

sham and Egypt.^{٣٤} The Sufi Jamal al-Din al-Maghrbi^{٣٥} was an associate of King Al-Nasser Dawood (1258-1207) King of Karak,^{٣٦} and there are also reports that the king of Baalbek, Al-Majed (1230-1182), was in close contact with the Sufi Sheikh Abdullah Alionini (1301-1224)^{٣٧} used to criticize him and listen to his advice.

King Al-Dahir Ghazi (1216-1172)^{٣٨} made a connection of consultation with the Sufi Sheikh Mohi Aladdin Ben Arabi (1240-1164), Ghazi used to visit him and ask for his advice and prayer, and Ibn Arabi says: "Whenever I sent him a request from the people, he hurried to answer it tirelessly, whatever it was."^{٣٩} Presenting the relationship between the Sufis and the ruling class is important in order to learn about their opinion and the nature of their action towards the Crusader invasion, as well as to understand the extent of their influence on the political developments at that time.

³⁴Salabi, Ali, *Salah ad-Deen al-Ayubi, Volume Two the Establishment of the Ayubid State*. Translated by: Nasiruddin al-Khattab. INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE.

³⁵He is Gamal al-Din bin 'Abd al-Ha'k al-Maghrbi, a judge of the Balkans, a learned man and an ascetic, for more information see: Muhammad bin Salem bin Wasil Al-Tamimi, Al-Hamawi. Mufarrej Al-Karub in Bani Ayyub News, investigation: Jamal Al-Din, Al-Shayal, (Cairo, Dar Al-Kutub and National Documents, 1957), part 4, p.

³⁶He is King Al-Nasser Dawood son of King Al-Mo'edam son of King El-Adel, was generous and wise, died in 1258 AD, for more information see: Shihab al-Din Abd al-Hayy bin Ahmad al-Dimashqi, Ibn al-Imad. The nuggets of gold in the news of gold, (Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, d.T), part 5, p. 275.

³⁷Sharaf Aladdin Alionini, born in 1224, died 1301 AD, scientist "Alem" religion known from the Hanbali current.

³⁸He 'Ghazi ibn Yosef ibn iyub ibn al-dha'ar king of Aleppo, was a king of Ehad who believed in and supported the Sufi way, died in 1216, for more information see: Shihab al-Din Abdul Hamn bin Ismail al-Maqdisi al-Dimashqi, Abu Shama Biographies of the Men of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries, Known as The Tail on Al-Rawdatain, put his footnotes, Ibrahim Shams Al-Din, (Beirut, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyya, 2002), p. 145.

³⁹Muhyi al-Din, Ibn Arabi. The Letters of Ibn Arabi, Investigated by: Muhammad Shihab al-Din al-Arabi, (Beirut, 1797), p. 25; Asaad, al-Khatib. Heroism and Redemption for Sufism, (Syria, 1995), p. 116.

Who is a Sufi: Many definitions of Sufism have been proposed by scholars and Fuqaha

The question of who can be defined as a Sufi is not simple. Over the years, and since the Middle Ages, quite a few scholars have dealt with this issue. Sheikh Muhammad Hashem al-Baghdadi (1995-1909)⁴⁰ defines the Sufi as a person who walks in the way of the Messenger of God, like the Companions of the Prophet and the early caliphs, and like the righteous and Tabi'un like Al-Hassan al-Basri (728-642), and Ta'abi Al-Tabi'un, like Al-Junaid al-Baghdadi (909-835) and his friends. Sufis according to al-Baghdadi are people with hearts and desires who are faithful to Allah, do not deviate from the straight path and do not stop their prayers. Their power comes from prayer and the work of God in faith, love and dependence, and their values are the values of the Koran.⁴¹

Al-Qashri (1072-986) defined the Sufi as a "poor person who has no material means, always with Allah at all times and places, and God does not deprive him of any knowledge, he is a Sufi".⁴² The feature of purity of heart is also mentioned by Bishir al-H'afi (842-795), and the longing to know facts and transcendence of material possessions were supported by the definition proposed by Maruf al-Karkhi (815-750).⁴³

⁴⁰He is the Sheikh Muhammad Hashem al-Baghdadi al-Qadri, lived between 1909-1995, one of the scholars (Ulama'), moved to Al-Sham in 1356 to Hijra where he studied the Qur'an.

⁴¹Muhammad Hashim al-Baghdadi, *The Constitution of the State and Maraqi al-Inaya*, (Jerusalem, 1987), p. 23.

⁴²Abdul Karim bin Horan bin Abdul Malik Al-Qushayri. *The Qushayri Message*. Investigation: Abdel Halim Mahmoud and Mahmoud bin Sharaf, (Cairo, 2010), part 2, pp. 57-55.

⁴³Abdel Halim Abdel Ghani Qassem. *Sufi Doctrines and Their Schools* (Cairo, Madbouly Library, 1999), pp. 24-23.

When Abu Ali al-Rud'bari Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Qassem, who died in 934, a Sufi Imam, was asked who is a Sufi? he replied: with the next".⁴⁴

The people of the lands of Al-Sham called Sufis "poor people" according to the Qur'an mentioned "Poor immigrants who were expelled from their homes..." (Surat al-Hashar verse 8), Altusi (988-900) in his book "Al-Ima' "said that a Sufi knows the Sharia practice.⁴⁵

The proposed study will also address Sufis in sources that did not explicitly mention them, if the description includes reference to some parameters that most often characterized Sufis. These parameters include a unique way of dress, the l'mama (a head covering that characterizes Al-U'lama'), the wearing of wool, as well as ways of behaving, principles, and manners that rely on the Koran and the Sunnah. Another thing that characterizes Sufis are their scholarship and knowledge of the Qur'an, Sunnah and Fiqih. The definitions of the term "Sufis" are different and often broad due to the multiplicity of streams as quoted in the sub-chapter "Sufis in the Lands of Al-sham", but what they have in common is the advocacy of a religious lifestyle and scholarship.

Exploring the role of the Sufi movement in resisting the Franks

In addition to the religious definition of the movement and Sufi thought, DafnaEfrat presents in her research⁴⁶ the social impact of this movement in the lands of Al-sham

⁴⁴Taj al-Din Abdul-Wahhab bin Taqi al-Din al-Subki, *Tabqat al-Shafi'i al-Kubra*, investigated by: Mahmoud Muhammad al-Tanahi, Abd al-Fattah Muhammad al-Hilu, (Hajar for printing, publishing and distribution, 2010), part 2, pg. 99.

⁴⁵Abdul Rahman Badawi. *History of Islamic Sufism from the Beginning to the End of the Second Century*. (Kuwait, Publications Agency, 2008), pp. 23-15.

⁴⁶Ephrat, Daphna, and HatimMahamid. "The Creation of Sufi Spheres in Medieval Damascus (mid-6th/12th to mid-8th/14th centuries)," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25.2 (2015): 189-208.

and in the Land of Israel. Efrat presents Sufism as a movement whose members are cohesive and united around their sheikhs and teachers, and which attracted the people and united the divided Shamite society despite the differences between the segments of society at that time. The closest study to our case reviews the role of the Muslim world in the resistance to the Franks in the lands of Al-sham. This study, written by Riyadh Shahin and 'Abd al-Hamid al-Farani in 2005,⁴⁷ deals with the role of the U'lama', Foqaha' and poets in opposition to the Franks between the years 1098–1291. And ended with active participation in the fighting. Another study, by Jamal Khalifa⁴⁸, deals with the Crusader invasion of Al-Sham in the fifth century of Hijra, and emphasizes the Fukha'a attitude toward the Crusader invasion, and also presents Alghazali's choice not to address opposition to the invasion in his writings, as noted above.

As for the role of the Sufis in the war against the Franks, the Sufis played a major political role and influenced the policy of the Muslim rulers vis-à-vis the Franks, they served as advisers and emissaries of the rulers and sultans and even criticized political decisions that were wrong in their eyes.⁴⁹ In their study, Ahmad Abdullah and Mukhtar Ramadan present the Sufis as key supporters who helped Nur al-Din Zangi unite the lands of Al-Sham and achieve their liberation from the Franks.⁵⁰ On the

⁴⁷Abdel Hamid, Al-Farani, RiadShaheen. The role of Muslim scholars in the resistance against the Crusaders in the Levant (491–690 AH / 1091–1291 AD). (Journal of Historical Studies, No. 119, Damascus University, 2005).

⁴⁸Jamal, Khalifa. The position of the jurists and judges of the Levant towards the Crusader invasion (492–660/1098–1262 AD): Attempts to confront the Arab-Islamic against the Crusader invasion in the Arab East. (Benghazi, National Book House, 2000).

⁴⁹Shawkat, Muhammad, and Hussein, Ahlam. The Political and Jihadi Role of Sufism in the Ayyubid Era 1171–1250. (Zakho University, Department of History and Human Sciences, Volume 3, Issue 1, 2014), p. 117.

⁵⁰Ahmed Abdallah, Muhammad, and Mukhtar Ramadan AL-FAKI, "The Role of Nour Al-Din Zengi in Unifying Bilad Al-Sham During the Crusades 1147–1174," Journal of IslamicJerusalem Studies,2018) 18.3: 165–184.

other hand, a number of scholars criticized the Sufis and argued that they had rather a role in lowering the spirit of resistance of the Muslims. For example, Najib 'Abd al-Rahman bin Khira comes out in his research against the Sufi idea. According to him, the reason for the victory over the Franks was the unity between the people and the rulers, and the Sufi movement actually contributed to the postponement of this victory.⁵¹ The Fukaha's attitudes towards the Crusader invasion also occupied Jamal Khalifa⁵² who referred to the Fukaha's activities in the opposition to the Franks, but also examined those who did not take a stand against the Franks like Imam al-'Ghazali, a senior Sufi of his generation, who did not refer to the Franks in his writings, perhaps due to the principle of Al-'Atzal (solitude) of the Sufis. In his article, Khalifa criticizes the silence of Al-'Atzal and claims that the principle of Al-'Atzal played a negative role in the case before us, leading to a reduction in military and public morale, which harmed opposition to the Franks. Although there are studies that criticize the Sufi movement and claim that its role in resistance is questionable, most historical studies attest to the central role of Sufis in opposition to the Franks.

Almost most of the studies written on this subject have focused on the military aspect of Sufi activities. In contrast, this article will focus mainly on the ideological direction and will deal with the Sufi religious thought directed towards the Muslim public through the sermons and preaching of the Sufi sheikhs. The proposed article will also present additional layers within the historical complexity of that period and of the Sufi movement as a movement with historical influence.

The role of Muslim women in the development the Sufi movement

⁵¹Najib Abdul Rahman, bin Khaira. Intellectual Security in the Levant and Egypt during the Crusades 1090–1291. 2017. (College of Literature and Human Sciences, University of Sharjah Journal, 2017), p. 246.

⁵²Jamal, Khalifa. The position of the jurists and judges of the Levant from the Crusader invasion. (The Libyan Jihad Center, 2000), p. 3–1.

Ahmad Rada' O'mar notes in his study that women played key roles in social and political life in the Ayyubid state, but early sources downplay this role. The power of women in this period was conspicuous and reached political control and the acceptance of supreme positions and even the leadership of states, as happened in the cases of DayfaKhatun and ShajaratEldor. Each of the two led a state and received recognition for their power from the rulers around them.⁵³

Other aspects through which the women of the Ayyubid elite exercised political influence were advising the rulers as well as actively participating in the management of the state and in decision-making. Moreover, among this elite there were women who acted in the Sufi movement and contributed to its development. Al-Safadi (1363-1296) presents DayfaKhatun (1242-1185), daughter of King Al-Adel Sif Aladdin and niece Saladin, as a politically influential stateswoman, and at the same time as someone who was close to and supported the leaders of the Sufi movement. Al-Hassani even goes so far as to refer to DayfaKhatun as a politician who has actively participated in running the country.⁵⁴

Despite the limitations on the contribution of women to the spread of religion, women contributed to the development of the Sufi movement and even took a central part in the development and construction of Sufi educational and prayer institutions.⁵⁵ This contribution was made possible mainly due to the fact that the women of the Ayyubid

⁵³Ahmed Reda, Omar. *The Contribution of Women in the Urban and Cultural Field in the Ayyubid Era*, (PhD Thesis, Robin University, 2016), pp. 19-25.

⁵⁴Al-Hassani, Salim. "Women's contribution to classical Islamic civilization: science medicine and politics." *Muslim Heritage*, < <http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/womens-contribution-classical-islamic-civilisation-sciencemedicine-and-politics#ftn15>> (accessed 3 September 2016) pp,11-21.

⁵⁵Humphreys, R. Stephen. "Women as patrons of religious architecture in Ayyubid Damascus." *Muqarnas* 11 (1994): 35-54.

elite were enabled to purchase and hold land.⁵⁶ From the review of the activities of the women and their contribution, it can be seen that they acted to promote Sufism mainly indirectly and through financial support. In addition, their proximity to the rulers probably allowed for political influence and contributed to the strengthening of the viewers' status among the government.

The historical role of the women of the Sufi movement in general and at the beginning of the movement's path in particular did not receive proper article and historical research. As Helminsky presents it, Sufi women are ruled by a treasure that has yet to be discovered and recently historians have begun to discover it. She presents the paucity of research dealing with the roles of women in the Sufi movement and refers to the few studies that point to the central role of women and especially the women of the Ayyubid elite and suggests that the study focus on these women seriously and extensively.⁵⁷

The role of women in the Ayyubid period is also reflected in the contribution of the women of the Ayyubid family to the construction of buildings and institutions of social and cultural value such as hospitals, schools, mosques as well as Zawaya, Khuank and Rabat.⁵⁸ The Sufi Institutions were an integral part of the institutions that these women worked to establish. Tarek Sultan and Ahmad Rada⁵⁹ dealt with the schools established by the Khatunites (wives of the Zhenji and Ayyubid aristocracy) and the

⁵⁶Humphreys, R. Stephen. *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193-1260*. (Sunny Press, 1977). pp.5-15; Hassanien, Rabie, *The Financial System of Egypt, AH 564-741/1169-1341* (Oxford University Press, 1972), Pp,3-42.

⁵⁷Helminski, Camille Adams. *Women of Sufism: a hidden treasure*. Shambhala Publications, (2003). pp,55.

⁵⁸Ashour, Saeed. *The Ayyubids and the Mamluks*, (Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian Library, 1994), pp. 147-139

⁵⁹Sultan Tariq, Reda Ahmed. *Schools of Khatuns and Ayyubid princesses in the Levant in the Ayyubid period 1161-1260*. (Mosul University, 2008, Journal of Researches of the College of Education, Volume No. 7, Issue 4).

Ayyubid princesses in the lands of Al-sham in the Ayyubid period between 1260–1161 AD. They present the role of women in building schools (Madars), institutions that nurtured and brought U'lama' and preachers as well as fighters who had a role in resisting the Franks, and thus women had an indirect role in resisting the Franks. The power of the women of the Ayyubid family (known as Khatun) is highlighted in the study of MunaSaad Muhammad al-Shaar¹ who, in addition to presenting the social and educational activities of these women, also highlights their political influence. But the studies presented are poor in examples. The proposed study will discuss in detail the role of women and will also address a larger number of women in order to get a broad and clear picture of the role of women at that time.

Article contribution

This article offers some innovations in the research field. The first part of the article, which links the lands of Al-sham to the growth of the Sufi movement, presents a reference to the region as having a religious spiritual charge that plays a role in the cultivation and development of the Sufi movement, which few articles have addressed. In the proposed article there is a reference to location as one of the conditions affecting the development of political religious movements, the sympathy they received and their social, cultural and political influence. The proposed article shows the importance of space and time in the design of society, which few historians have addressed.

In addition, this article presents another layer for the Crusades besides the political and military events. Crusaders focused on the causes of the wars, their events and consequences, and also focused on the military and government fighting

⁶⁰Mona Saad Mohamed, poet. Khatuns of the Ayyubid house and their role in scientific life. (College of Education for Girls, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2010).

against the Franks and underestimated the role of civil resistance and the Sufi movement and its role within all the circumstances and events at the time. As can be seen, the Sufi movement had a role in resisting the Crusader invasion that transcended the political space. The proposed article therefore discusses the religious role of the Sufi movement in this opposition, an issue that has not received sufficient attention.

The third topic discussed in the article, the role of women in the development and activity of the Sufi movement, is also a topic that few have addressed despite the role played by women in cultivating this movement, and especially women and relatives of the rulers. This historical role of women in the lands of Al-sham has not received satisfactory treatment. Moreover, not a single modern study has been found that addresses the role of women in the development of the Sufi movement, which underscores the importance of the article and its contribution. In addition, the presentation of the role of women in society at that time within historical sources is presented in a diffuse manner that requires the collection and arrangement of information as well as its analysis and presentation as a whole.

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