

# For the Love of France:

## Père Antonin Jaussen in Jerusalem, 1914–1920

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*Except for an occasional genius like Louis Massignon, there were no French Lawrences or Sykeses or Bells.*

—Edward Said<sup>1</sup>

An abundant number of works have been written about British intelligence in the Middle East during World War I, and even more about T. E. Lawrence, who proved to be an earlier version of the more contemporary 007.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, not much has been written on other intelligence services operating during the war in the Middle East. A few works have been dedicated to the Ottoman *Teşkilat-i Mahsusa* and German intelligence; even less has been written about French intelligence in the Middle East during the war.<sup>3</sup> One reason for French intelligence to score low on historical narratives is that French politicians and policy makers were not so much concerned with the Middle East as they were with the Western Front; another reason is that it appears the French lacked a solid network of local spies they could rely upon. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to consider French intelligence completely absent from the region. As I was researching the French archives in Nantes, I came across a rather puzzling signature over a large number of documents: *PJ*. Eventually I discovered that the author of these numerous and very detailed reports was Father Antonin Jaussen (Père Jaussen), a Dominican priest attached to the École Biblique in Jerusalem prior to the war.<sup>4</sup> During the years 1915–1918, Jaussen became actively involved with the British and French intelligence services at work in the Middle East during the war. He did not possess the classic physique du rôle often associated with modern spies;<sup>5</sup> however, he proved to be a rather efficient



Père Jaussen (Copyright École Biblique Jerusalem).

agent capable of gathering and analyzing relevant material, particularly coming from Palestine. Before delving into Jaussen's activities, it is rather important to look at the historical context that helped the transformation of Jaussen from a Catholic-clergy intellectual into an intelligence agent.

## Historical Context

From the time of the seventeenth-century capitulations, France had assumed the role of protector of Catholics in the Levant.<sup>6</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire's weakening position meant that the system of the capitulations gave France an increasing hand in determining the fate of Catholics in the region. France's Republican ideas became current among Ottoman intellectuals in the nineteenth Century through the prolific translations of men such as Rifa'ā al-Tahtawi and Hoca Ishak Effendi.<sup>7</sup> While these "internal agents" of modernization respected the French historical trajectory, the Christian communities adored it. France had a particular effect on Maronites in Lebanon, who summed up their relations in the slogan *vive la France, vive le Liban*.<sup>8</sup>

While the French government of this period was certainly directed by men of less religious persuasions than its British counterpart, it nevertheless upheld the notion of France as protector of the Holy Land.<sup>9</sup> As one war-time colonial lobby's newspaper put it:

As to the incorporation of the German colonies [while] an increase in tropical savannahs could be desirable, we could never equate this to the affirmation of our hereditary titles to the country of the Crusades.<sup>10</sup>

As C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner point out, whereas the British cabinet assumed direct control over imperial policy, French policy directed by Georges Picot and Jules Cambon "stressed . . . not the resolve of the . . . government but the demands of the Colonial party."<sup>11</sup> Colonial war aims were the result of an admixture of economic, political, and cultural voices.

On the macro-political level, the late nineteenth/early twentieth century period was typified by great power competition. France had suffered damaging defeats at the hands of the Germans and was entering a period of closer relations with the British in contrast to their adversarial relations of the early nineteenth century. Nevertheless, Franco-British relations vacillated throughout the period. French policy makers were worried of the dangers posed by potential British hegemony on one hand, and the emerging powers of Germany and Russia on the other. The British, obsessed with keeping gains in Asia, were keen to maintain the fragile "balance of power" status quo.<sup>12</sup>

The nineteenth century had also been a time of weakening strength for the Roman Catholic Church, shaken as it had been by secular theories such as Darwinism. By the end of that century, we find a church facing calls from within to adapt itself to modern realities. The various preachers and educators who voiced such concerns figured as part of a broader historical phenomenon: Catholic modernism. Those involved in calls for modernist views were of varying extraction – English (Father Tyrell), Belgian (Maurice Blondel), Austrian (Friedrich Von Hugel) and French (Alfred Loisy and Edouard Le Roy)<sup>13</sup> – and caution must be exercised to avoid amalgamating the variety of voices and views that emerged.<sup>14</sup> Yet the Vatican certainly identified a “liberal Catholic” movement different from others. By the end of the century the superficially conciliatory pontificate of Leo XIII responded to criticism by promoting several policies such as opening the Vatican Library to all students regardless of creed.<sup>15</sup>

In France, voices such as that of Alfred Loisy were not easily seduced by papal politics and remained critical. Despite being declared a modernist by the pope, Loisy refused to identify himself in such terms, writing: “more than a few readers will be surprised if I say I ignored what was said to be Catholic modernism, until Pope Pius X took the care to inform me, alongside everyone else, in his encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*.”<sup>16</sup> Loisy argued that his view of Catholicism was the same as that he took toward any other religion. Loisy’s main concern was a scientific understanding of all religions. “And on the origin of religions in the world, [there are] only contradictory hypotheses! . . . The personal point of view of such-and-such savants can be more or less narrow. Anthropology, ethnography, sociology come to the rescue of history and help it gain a better understanding of religious phenomena.”<sup>17</sup> Through Father Marie-Joseph Lagrange, a follower of Loisy, Father Jaussen traced a direct intellectual lineage leading to Loisy.<sup>18</sup> Lagrange’s *École Biblique Archéologique* in Jerusalem, to which Jaussen belonged for a long time, thus represented one aspect of a wide modernist-papal dispute. In a sense, the war began before 1914 for Jaussen: He was already a member of a modernist force fighting skirmishes against the Vatican’s dogmatic intransigence.

During the nineteenth century, France had reified its presence in the Middle East through the establishment of cultural centers exploiting the traditional role of protector of the Catholics in the Holy Land, leading the way for other imperial powers taking advantage of the weakness of Ottoman integrity.<sup>19</sup> Jacques Frémeaux has noted the penetration these institutions effected.<sup>20</sup> French schools such as the *Institut d’Archéologie Orientale*, established in Cairo in 1882, serve as examples of an increasing French presence in the Near East. Many of these cultural establishments were linked to religious orders. Alongside the example of the *École Biblique Archéologique*, we find the University of Saint Joseph established by Jesuits in Beirut (1881).<sup>21</sup> Institutions were established that offered multiple services, including education and shelter for pilgrims, as exemplified by the *Notre Dame de France* in Jerusalem (1888).<sup>22</sup>

The convent of Saint-Étienne in Jerusalem, where Father Jaussen was educated in both spiritual and scholarly fashion, was one such institution. Whilst the teaching of theology and philosophy was somewhat lacking as compared to similar programs in metropolitan France, other methods such as biblical, linguistic, and archaeological

analysis were taught by the school's founding father, Pierre-Marie Lagrange.<sup>23</sup> Besides theology and philosophy, Jaussen studied Hebrew, Arabic, ethnography, archaeology, Biblical geography, Aramaic, and other European languages: a common curriculum that was designed to provide students the tools for scientific Biblical exegesis, above all of the Old Testament. After passing his final exams in 1896, Jaussen settled into teaching Arabic, Aramaic, and theology, including extensive courses on Saint Thomas of Aquinas.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, Lagrange was the major influence on Jaussen's turn toward ethnography. Lagrange's vision of the Orient reproduced the well-established Orientalist theme of a static space. This is clearly demonstrated in an 1890 letter from Lagrange to the head of the Dominican Order in Rome in which he explains having set up a school "in order to study this Orient that changes so little and to elucidate those questions of geography and history that come so close to the faith."<sup>25</sup> Underlying this image of the Orient was the religious notion of exegesis. Father Marcel Sigrist explains how Lagrange's thought was itself a product of French Catholic preoccupations with historicizing the biblical writings.<sup>26</sup> There was a threefold pressure on Lagrange and other *exégètes* like him. First, the impact of secularism and science meant an urgent need for a Catholic reply.<sup>27</sup> Second, if the Bible continued to be seen as a transcendental book, ignoring the challenges of science, then it would be reduced to a mythology.<sup>28</sup> Finally, there was pressure to disprove the Vatican's fears of those deemed "modernists," who were seen as moving Catholicism toward agnostic practices through their use of science (archaeology, geology) and secular philosophy.

But how was this "monumental" character caught up in the ineluctable iron cage of bureaucracy and nascent Middle East statecraft? How did Jaussen make the transition from a contemplative Dominican priest to become a *moine-soldat*, to borrow Dominique Avon's phrase.<sup>29</sup> Though, the Dominicans had been vociferous in the counter-reformation and in previous anti-renaissance activities, their founder, Saint Dominic, was a humble man,<sup>30</sup> and by Jaussen's time Dominicans were largely a cultural group detached from politics. Jaussen was nevertheless drawn into the wider French policy of highlighting France's cultural ties to Syria on the basis of religious protection for Catholics and the Crusader past.<sup>31</sup>

## From Ethnography to Intelligence

Henry Laurens was the first to expose the huge amount of documents signed by Jaussen within the Archives de la Marine in Vincennes.<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately his efforts have not led to English accounts of either Jaussen or the wider Dominican involvement in the First World War, which has been subject to considerable scrutiny in French historiography.<sup>33</sup> In a sense I hope to introduce Jaussen to an English audience but also aim to bring Jaussen's experience within the wider context.

Given France's troubles on the Western Front in 1914, the issue of the Middle East was low on the military agenda. Nevertheless, France's navy played a major role on the littoral of the Eastern Mediterranean, especially after the establishment of a Franco-

British blockade immediately after the outbreak of the war.<sup>34</sup> The naval route was also a practical mode for the transmission of intelligence.<sup>35</sup> The Services des Informations au Levant (SIL) was first established in Egypt at Port Said. An organogram from October 1917 emphasizes the importance of the SIL's chief of staff, noting that "informants are exclusively chosen by the Chief of Staff" and that "every fortnight, each bureau chief will provide the Chief of Staff a succinct résumé of various information."<sup>36</sup> Like British intelligence of the period, however, French intelligence was highly improvised and sought to recruit Orientalists alongside to bureaucrats.<sup>37</sup>

In spite of initial ignorance of the Sinai desert's potential as an Achilles heel for British control of the Suez Canal (so crucial for economic and political dominance), the British eventually began to make efforts at gaining knowledge of the desert's topography. In 1913, a young T. E. Lawrence, then an archaeologist, joined Sir Leonard Woolley to undertake a survey of southern Palestine.<sup>38</sup> British attempts to gather intelligence in the area began earlier, however, when Wilfred Jennings-Bramly, an officer of the Sudanese intelligence service, attached Bedouin informants to Jaussen as the Dominican was making a journey from Sinai to Petra in 1906.<sup>39</sup>

Jaussen's expertise in the region was respected and, as we shall see later, often subject to admiration or suspicion by French and British services alike due to the potential power it held.<sup>40</sup> Yet his individual involvement in the war was a rather serendipitous event. Deported by the Ottoman authorities at the outbreak of war, Jaussen and several other Dominicans, including Father Savignac, were recruited by a British officer and transported to Cairo.<sup>41</sup> The newly established French intelligence based at Port Said quickly recovered from the embarrassment of having lost their citizens to a foreign power's intelligence service and snapped up Jaussen who, being by all accounts patriotic, relished the prospect of aiding a France suffering the heaviest casualties in the Western Front. Nevertheless, one document signed by Jaussen, written on 15 October 1916, suggests that he maintained strong links with British intelligence.<sup>42</sup> Further, on 28 October 1916, a commander at British general headquarters wrote to Jaussen to thank him for providing an agent whose "information has been very useful," and for a "very useful and interesting report."<sup>43</sup>

At the beginning of his service at Port Said, from 1915 to 1917, Jaussen's role was to gather and synthesize information. Jaussen's signature can be found on many telegrams and reports. His regional expertise was varied. One telegram Jaussen oversaw was from Marine Paris to Admiral Pothuau and detailed sightings of submarines on the Levantine coast.<sup>44</sup> Another described relations between Alexandria and the island of Kastellorizo.<sup>45</sup> He held a crucial power deciding what was or not relevant, in practice dictating the SIL priorities.

However British domination on the ground, especially after the taking of Jerusalem in December 1917, meant that French intelligence did not immediately translate into political power. French protests concerning British imposition of martial law (and by extension the temporary closing of consulates) in Palestine were vocal and reminiscent of similar criticism during Britain's 1882 occupation of Egypt.<sup>46</sup> These French fears were genuine. In January 1918, a month after the British had entered Jerusalem, François Georges-Picot, the French representative in Palestine, complained that General Allenby had broken

promises and denied the French any substantive role in administering Palestine. Allenby allegedly told Picot that “there is no French representative in Jerusalem.” The British had “not admitted the presence of consuls,” making Picot “only my Counsellor for Arab and Syrian affairs. Nothing more.”<sup>47</sup>

A British memorandum dated 8 February 1918 provides a detailed explanation for Allenby’s rebuke of Picot, which was based in British fears that France would insist on maintaining a key role in Palestine as representative of Catholic institutions and individuals:

Ceremonial Honours rendered to French officials by ecclesiastical authorities acknowledging Papal Supremacy are not to be regarded as according to the French Commission the right to exercise any executive authority, nor as entitling him to make representations to the Military Authority on behalf of any supranational religious body, or any element of the Palestinian population of French origins as the Military administration cannot admit any claims based on the Consular status under the Turkish regime . . . As the French Government has considerable interests in Palestine in the shape of purely French religious and lay institutions, economic concessions and interests, and, further, as many members of the supranational institutions are French Citizens, the French Commissioner is empowered to advise the Military Administration . . . in so far as such questions are French questions and not of a supranational character . . . an office of Petitions may be established by the Military Administration.<sup>48</sup>

In spite of a certain degree of mistrust between them, collaboration was a pragmatic and necessary option for French and British intelligence alike. In one letter dated 24 April 1918, the chief officer of French intelligence in Alexandria informed his superior of a British demand for the service to make a public enquiry of local opinions on British military action in Palestine and east of the Jordan, the arrival of the Zionist mission, and the Arab movement.<sup>49</sup>

Though Jausen’s Orientalist knowledge would have been an asset to the intelligence service, we can also see how governmental institutions questioned his loyalty. Jausen’s activities were continually monitored by his French officers for two reasons: first, his status as a religious intellectual as opposed to a traditional bureaucrat; and second, his close proximity to British intelligence, which led to questions over his patriotism. Neither had any real foundation. Jausen was both a demanding worker and strongly embedded in French culture. Still, these suspicions led to a demand from the Naval Ministry for Jausen’s removal. The SIL defended him, noting that the information he provided would certainly be received by the British if the French did not take advantage of it: “Information gathered on Father Jausen implicates the need to differ [from] the measure [of] renouncing his collaboration [with the SIL] which would be immediately used by the English service to the detriment of our own.”<sup>50</sup> A full report was put together which maintained a firm stance on the matter.

This report reveals the fears that the SIL leadership held regarding Jaussen's character. As an Orientalist and outsider, questions were raised over Jaussen's ability to remain professional at all times. In a sense the British raised the same concerns in relation to T. E. Lawrence, who many saw as a maverick rather than a professional agent. Jaussen clearly did not agree with the bureaucratic method and gives the impression of a strong willed character. Notably, a few weeks later, Jaussen himself pored over this document and annotated it. The official concerns and his justifications are worth quoting at length:

it seems that the severe accusations reported . . . concerning father Jaussen originated in the voluntary character [of his service] combined with the brutal manner of this religious type [Jaussen: *Thank you Mr. Auble (the chief of SIL). If the manner is brutal, it is honest. You too could assume this brutality.*] impartial observers . . . are unanimous in attributing to Father Jaussen serious knowledge of questions pertaining to Arabia and Syria . . . Although noting the antipathy that surrounds this Dominican in the Syrian world [Jaussen: *not in the Syrian world, but among intriguing Syrians . . . who have attempted to trick the good faith of France.*] and taking into account the other aspects of governance which we must hold toward the Syrian populations, it does not seem possible to me that we tolerate for Father Jaussen's future this special situation which the Naval Division of Syria had allowed him to occupy [Jaussen: *I have never had the arrogance to think myself, or to let myself pass off as the representative of French policy in Syria.*] Reduced to a simple role of collaborator, father Jaussen could render appreciable services.<sup>51</sup>

Eventually Jaussen's position shifted within the SIL. In October 1916, Jaussen was "interpreting officer" who was also bureau chief.<sup>52</sup> By late May 1917, Jaussen was a simple information gatherer.<sup>53</sup> While his skill as translator and his contacts with the locals were valued, perhaps even envied, Jaussen was not trusted to perform at a political level.

The bureaucratic aspects of intelligence gathering in time also alienated or submerged the considerable efforts and agency of local indigenous Palestinian agents recruited to support French interests in the region. Jaussen had carefully built such a system of informants using his contacts in religious and cultural spheres. These informants were rewarded with payment as well as benefits such as passes for travel.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, a report from July 1918 details Jaussen's use of mobile agents going through Transjordan in order to access enemy territories.<sup>55</sup> But relations with such agents were not always easy. A May 1918 report details accusations leveled by one agent against another, both of them in Jaussen's pay: Mustapha Driss Makroum, an Algerian working in Cairo and Palestine, complained about being cheated out of his pay by another agent, Omar Ben Sheikh.<sup>56</sup>

These informants were individual agents with their own interests and pressures. From the beginning of intelligence operations indigenous Syrian informants became irritated with their mistreatment at Port Said, as Jaussen needed to keep them under strict control, and blamed Jaussen.<sup>57</sup> We need only look back at Jaussen's paternalistic attitude



Jaussen with Lawrence (Copyright École Biblique Jerusalem).

toward Arabs in his ethnographic study to suggest that his assumptions limited the possibilities of interactions with his Syrian informants.<sup>58</sup> Indeed the use of Algerian agents in an Egyptian and Syrian context betrays the strong influence of Orientalist conceptions: “Arab” agents were viewed as interchangeable between Maghrib and Mashriq, despite significant linguistic and cultural differences between the two regions. On the whole, the opinions, roles, and interests of local agents have been largely lost to history and can only be

partially reconstructed. Unfortunately, we have even less of a notion of the interests and preoccupations of the wider population; most informants seem to have been interested individuals or members of cultural minorities sympathetic to France, such as Maronites.

As for Jaussen’s personal interests, there are two clear areas where they coalesced with wider French strategic interests: opposition to Zionism (and by extension British influence) and encouragement of Arab activities in a paternalistic manner. France had long argued for a *Syrie Integrale*, in which the entire Ottoman province of Greater Syria would fall under French direction on the basis of religious, cultural, and economic ties. The World War had changed the dynamics of the situation. As seen above in the interactions between Picot and Allenby, British policy did indeed seek to undermine French claims and viewed nearly all French activity through this lens. According to a British War Office report:

France . . . has continually connived . . . to promote French interests and make it appear at the Peace Conference that the wish of the majority of the people of Palestine is for French administration . . . There are numerous agents and agencies of French propaganda . . . priests and nuns working in school, hospitals . . . exert a very favourable influence for France . . . But, in addition to these, there is a body of well paid agents and propagandists who are directed by Mr. Durieux at the Haut Commissariat and Père Jaussen, the celebrated Orientalist who is at the head of the French Intelligence Office in Jerusalem.<sup>59</sup>

The French presence in Palestine as a whole would have been increasingly concerned with the growing influence of Zionism in the British government.<sup>60</sup> Aside from the general concerns over the growing presence of Zionists, there would surely have been a considerable deal of private concern for Jaussen. The future of archaeological research specifically tied to the Christian past could be at risk. By 1918, he reported the laying of the Hebrew University’s foundations in a rather icy manner, concluding: “Zionism seeks to implant itself in Palestine as its country of origin to re-establish . . . the Jewish nation . . . the fact is to be noted.”<sup>61</sup>

This position, especially given the Zionists' open wishes for a British presence in Palestine, meant that France began to support nascent Arabism.<sup>62</sup> Men such as Hasan Sidqi al-Dajani, head of one of the first Arab literary societies in Jerusalem (al-Muntada al-'Arabi), were actively supported by Coulondre, Picot's right hand man. Coulondre saw this as an investment in the future: the members of al-Muntada al-'Arabi "consist in fact of a political club whose immediate objective is the fight against the menace of the encroaching Jewish element . . . they could be called upon . . . to play a role in the social and political evolution" of the country.<sup>63</sup>

The French, and Jaussen in particular, correctly predicted a rising tide of Arabism in the face of Zionist colonization. Jaussen was sympathetic to the Arab cause, much like T. E. Lawrence and other French Orientalists such as Louis Massignon. Yet each of these specialist observers failed to note the power of nationalist sentiments. Perhaps due to established Orientalist viewpoints, the Arabs were seen as a potential partner in, as opposed to a potential successor to, French administration. Such views would lead to troubles for France in Mandate Syria and point to an increasing gulf between metropolitan policy based on the bureaucratic reports of intellectual specialists and facts on the ground for the population at large.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, they demonstrate the manner in which the internal voices of local populations were ignored even by the most sympathetic of intellectuals.

## Conclusion

With the end of the war, Jaussen was eventually dismissed by the SIL and he returned to his regular life in Jerusalem. In the post-war era, Franco-British tensions – which had been subsumed by the necessities of war, allowing Jaussen to play a key role in the intelligence community in the Middle East – developed into an open rivalry. Jaussen soon realized that France was not going to play any relevant role in Palestine as the British chose to support the Zionists and the establishment of a Jewish national home. He was clearly disillusioned and in 1928 he moved from Jerusalem to Cairo where he worked toward the establishment of an ecumenical dialogue with other Christian denominations and religions. By then, the Middle East had been fully integrated into the British and French empires. Both Britain and France established bureaucratic systems that no longer needed the services of individuals like Jaussen. Still they relied on the same notions held by our Dominican spy: visible and latent Orientalism pervaded British and French institutions. In a sense, Jaussen and other individuals like him were responsible for the perpetuation of this model. Nevertheless, a full assessment of Jaussen and his historical agency would be unfair without looking at the broader picture. In his reports it is easy to find sympathy for the local indigenous population, and though he still advocated some sort of French protection, he was certainly convinced of the abilities of the Arabs to achieve some form of independence.

As historical research seems too often to focus on political leaders, spymasters, military commanders, and those who "made" history, Jaussen teaches us a lesson: war was commanded by few but fought by many. There are indeed many actors who may have

not played the high profile diplomatic role of Sykes, the military role of Lawrence, or the nationalist roles of Mustafa Kemal or Faysal. The unassuming and routine work of people like Jaussen still needs to be fully understood and reconstructed in its historical context.

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#### Endnotes

- 1 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Pantheon Books, 1978), 225.
- 2 In *Spies in Arabia*, Priya Satia has tried to unpack an unexplored side of the First World War in the Middle East, discussing the romantic British fascination with “Arabia” and examining the cultural background of the British intelligence community deployed in the region. Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: the Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain’s Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). For more on this British fascination, see Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture, 1799–1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005).
- 3 See: Tilman Lüdke, *Jihad Made in Germany: Ottoman and German Propaganda and Intelligence Operations in the First World War* (Münster: Lit, 2005); Kevin Morrow, ed., *Germany’s Covert War in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2016); Polat Safi, “History in the Trench: The Ottoman Special Organization – *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* Literature,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 48, no. 1 (Jan. 2012): 89–106.
- 4 Joseph-Marie (Antonin) Jaussen was born in Sanilhac on 27 May 1871. After studying in Poitiers he joined the Dominican order. Jaussen arrived in Jerusalem in 1890 whilst still a student: a popular system to avoid military service which was compulsory for every single French citizen residing in France. Jaussen worked and studied under the direction of Père Lagrange. Jaussen was eventually ordained priest in 1894 though he was not a *père de ministère*, as he did not serve any particular parish, and his duty to the *École* was as professor and researcher. In 1928 Jaussen decided to leave Jerusalem for Cairo. He changed attitude and became more of a priest, dedicated to the apostolate and he began to work for the establishment of an ecumenical dialogue with Christian denominations and other religions. He eventually died in 1962.
- 5 Paul Chack described Jaussen as “monumental both in size and height . . . one would swear that one of the twenty four patriarchs had come back from the dead.” Paul Chack, *On se bat sur la mer* (Paris: Les éditions de France, 1926), 208–9.
- 6 Capitulations were treaties or grants which established a system of privileges and reductions in custom duties, as well as extraterritorial jurisdiction, favourable to Europeans. See Alexander de Groot, ‘The Historical Development of the Capitulatory Regime in the Ottoman Middle East From the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries’, *Oriente Moderno*, 22, (2003): 254-259; A.J. Arberry (ed.), *Religion in the Middle East: Three religions in Concord and Conflict*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 352.
- 7 Jacques Frémeaux, *La France et L’Islam depuis 1789* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991), 74–75.
- 8 Arberry, *Religion in the Middle East*, 352.
- 9 James Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Indeed, it is notable that the French President during the War, Georges Clémenceau, had previously summed up French policy towards the Catholic Church (in 1904 on the eve of the 1905 Church-State separation bill) with one word: “Divorçons [let’s divorce].” See Mathilde Guilbaud, “La loi de séparation de 1905 ou l’impossible rupture,” *Revue d’histoire*

- du XIXe siècle* 28 (2004): 163. As we will see some British intelligence agents were wary of this notion; calling it a ploy to allow France greater influence. Even if we soberly agree that it provided strategic, and in the final analysis economic, benefits the very notion of French ties to Greater Syria *did* exist in the official imagination.
- 10 *L'Asie Française*, Jan.–Mar. 1915, quoted in: C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, “The French Colonial Party and French Colonial War Aims, 1914–1918,” *Historical Journal* 17, no. 1 (Mar. 1974): 80.
  - 11 Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, “French Colonial Party,” 88.
  - 12 Jukka Nevakivi, *Britain, France, and the Arab Middle East, 1914–1920* (London: Athlone Press, 1969).
  - 13 Reardon, “Roman Catholic Modernism,” 141.
  - 14 B. M. G. Reardon, “Roman Catholic Modernism,” in *Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West*, vol. 2, ed. Ninian Smart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 141; for a more recent work, see Etienne Fouilloux *Une Eglise en quête de liberté: La pensée catholique française entre modernisme et Vatican II – 1914–1962* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998).
  - 15 Reardon, “Roman Catholic Modernism,” 147–48.
  - 16 Alfred Loisy, *A Propos d'Histoire des Religions* (Paris: Émile Nourry, 1911), 146.
  - 17 Loisy, *A Propos d'Histoire*, 101–2.
  - 18 Lagrange actually published a book on Loisy. It is full of confusing statements designed to distance himself from Loisy (given the time of publication was a period of decline for Catholic modernism). Nevertheless, there remains a sense of admiration for Loisy. Marie Joseph Lagrange, *M. Loisy et le Modernisme* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1932). Certainly, some of Lagrange’s earlier books imply a strong solidarity with Loisy’s aims at clothing biblical studies in a scientific discourse: Marie-Joseph Lagrange, *La Méthode Historique* (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1904). See also Bernard Montagnes, *The Story of Father Marie-Joseph Lagrange* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006).
  - 19 Henry Laurens, “La redéfinition des missions du consulat général de France à Jérusalem sous le Mandat,” in *France and the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Michel Abitbol (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2004), 167. Laurens mentions the Franco-Russian alliance which stipulated a French responsibility for Catholics; Russian for the Orthodox community. On this see Charles Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453–1923* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
  - 20 Jacques Frémeaux, *La France et L'Islam depuis 1789* (Paris: PUF, 1991), 127–28: “The Quai D’Orsay [French Foreign Office] considered these establishments, public or confessional, as an important element of penetration.”
  - 21 Frémeaux, *La France et L'Islam*, 127.
  - 22 Dominique Trimbur, “Une présence française en Palestine – Notre Dame de France,” *Bulletin du CRJF* 3 (1998): 117–140; Dominique Trimbur, “Sainte Anne: lieu de mémoire et lieu de vie française à Jérusalem,” *Chrétiens et société – XVIIe–XXe siècles* (2000).
  - 23 P. Jean-Michel de Tarragon, “Antonin Jaussen (1871–1962): parcours biographique d’un religieux,” in *Antonin Jaussen: sciences sociales occidentales et patrimoine arabe*, ed. Géraldine Chatelard and Mohammed Tarawneh (Amman and Beirut: Éditions CERMOC, 1999), 15.
  - 24 De Tarragon, “Antonin Jaussen,” 16.
  - 25 De Tarragon, “Antonin Jaussen,” 18; Montagnes, *The Story of Father Marie-Joseph Lagrange*, 26.
  - 26 P. Marcel Sigrist, “Situation de l’exégèse en France au temps du Père Lagrange,” in *Antonin Jaussen*, ed. Chatelard and Tarawneh, 63.
  - 27 Sigrist, “Situation de l’exégèse,” 55–59.
  - 28 Cyrille Jalabert, “De l’exégèse biblique au monde arabe,” in *Antonin Jaussen*, ed. Chatelard and Tarawneh, 69.
  - 29 Dominique Avon, *Les frères precheurs en Orient: Les dominicain du Caire (années 1910–années 1960)* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2005).
  - 30 He became famous for his opposition to Spanish treatment of Native Americans.
  - 31 This is not to mention the personal effects of the war and its bureaucratic pressures on the Father. After the war the charismatic father went to Cairo a changed man with the mundane experiences of the war at the back of his mind.
  - 32 Henry Laurens, “Jaussen et les services de renseignement français (1915–1919),” in *Antonin Jaussen*, ed. Chatelard and Tarawneh; Henry Laurens, “1917: Deux dominicains en Palestine,” *Revue d'études palestiniennes* 46 (Winter 1993): 87–100.
  - 33 For those interested in this literature, a good starting point would be the following links: “Les ordres religieux dans la Grande Guerre” (online at [www.cath.ch/news/ordres-religieux-grande-guerre/](http://www.cath.ch/news/ordres-religieux-grande-guerre/)); “Un prêtre sous la mitraille” (online at [www.lejourduseigneur.com/Web-TV/Evenements/14-18-les-aumoniers-dans-la-Grande-Guerre](http://www.lejourduseigneur.com/Web-TV/Evenements/14-18-les-aumoniers-dans-la-Grande-Guerre)); and “Les catholiques français pendant la Première guerre mondiale” (online at [fr.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/09/29/les\\_catholiques\\_fran%C3%A7ais\\_pendant\\_la\\_premi%C3%A8re\\_guerre\\_mondiale/1107533](http://fr.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/09/29/les_catholiques_fran%C3%A7ais_pendant_la_premi%C3%A8re_guerre_mondiale/1107533)).
  - 34 Laurens, “Jaussen et les services,” 23. See also David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace* (New York: Owl Book, 1989), 94–95; John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 215–16.
  - 35 Laurens, “La redéfinitions des missions,” 169.
  - 36 Service Historique de la Marine (SHM), SS Q 77, Navy Paris to SIL, Port Said, 12 October 1917.

- 37 Laurens, "Jaussen et les services," 23.
- 38 Pérennès, *Le Père Antonin Jaussen*.
- 39 Yigal Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 7.
- 40 See the unpublished article by P. de Tarragon, "Les Pères Lors de la Grande Guerre."
- 41 Pérennès, *Le Père Antonin Jaussen*, 20–21. Though perhaps serendipitous in origin, his recruitment by intelligence was certainly a conscious act considering that the Central Powers too during the war made use of their own specialists: Austria had such figures as Alois Musil; Germany had Max von Oppenheim and Curt Prüfer.
- 42 SHM, SS Q 85, Note of Jaussen, Suez Canal, 15 October 1916. Jaussen highlights his sources as GHQ and reports on the initial Arab guerrilla tactics; unfortunately most of the rest of the note is illegible.
- 43 SHM, SS Q 85, GHQ Cairo, 28 October 1916.
- 44 SHM, SS Q 77, Navy to Admiral Pothuau, Paris, 23 August 1916.
- 45 SHM, SS Q 77, [illegible] to Admiral, Kastellorizo, 2 January 1917. Kastellorizo was an important base off the coast of Turkey which the French occupied during the war. The famous sinking of the British seaplane carrier HMS Ben-My-Chree occurred off the island in 1917.
- 46 Laurens, "La redéfinition des missions," 170.
- 47 Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Nantes (hereafter MAE), Guerre 1914–1918, 882.233, 26 January 1918, 882.233.
- 48 The National Archives (United Kingdom) (hereafter TNA), Foreign Office (FO) 371/3397.
- 49 SHM, SS Q 78, SIL Alexandria to the Chef d'État-Major de la Division Navale de Syrie, No 5, 24 April 1918.
- 50 SHM, SS Q 77, SIL to Navy Paris, No 3.
- 51 SHM, SS Q 78, SIL to Navy Ministry, Port Said, 12 October 1917.
- 52 SHM, SS Q 77, Order No 37.
- 53 SHM, SS Q 77, 31 May 1917. In another report, Savignac is referred to as an Officer present during an exchange between Jaussen and two agents. SHM, SS Q 78, Cairo, 15 May 1918. Antoine-Raphaël Savignac (1874–1951), colleague and friend of Jaussen was at first mobilized by the French army. He later joined Jaussen in Port Said and worked as agent. Information on Savignac can be found in René Dussaud, "Nécrologie – Le R. P. Raphaël Savignac," *Persée* 30, no. 3 (1953): 373–74; M. de Tarragon, "Les dominicains en Arabie, 1907–1917," in *Photographies d'Arabie: Hedjaz 1907–1917* (Paris: Institut du Monde Arab, 1999), 19–21. See also de Tarragon, "Les pères lors de la Grande Guerre," and the unpublished *Carnet* of Savignac conserved in the Archives of the École Biblique in Jerusalem and transcribed by P. Michel de Tarragon.
- 54 On 9 January 1918, Captain Marcel Simon, chief of the SIL, sent a letter to Colonel Elgood, base commander at Port Said, demanding passes for travel to be given to his agents, including Joseph Khalil, who had been recruited by Father Jaussen. SHM, SS Q 78, Captain Marcel Simon to Elgood, Port Said, 9 January 1918. A report from July 1918 details Jaussen's relationship with Joseph Khalil. See: SHM, SS Q 77, Report on the organization of SIL, Port Said, 20 July 1918.
- 55 SHM, SS Q 77, Report on the organization of SIL, Port Said, 20 July 1918.
- 56 SHM, SS Q 78, Cairo, 15 May 1918.
- 57 See de Tarragon, "Les pères lors de la Grande Guerre."
- 58 See Jaussen's publications as listed here.
- 59 TNA War Office (WO) 106/189, G.S.I. Advanced G.H.Q., *French Propaganda in Jerusalem*. The British reference to "Palestine" rather than "Syria" is notable.
- 60 James Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Renton has demonstrated the strong ties the Zionists built with a number of members of the British government and establishment.
- 61 SHM, SS Q 86, 26 July 1918.
- 62 The best example is that of the *Comités Islamo-Chrétiens* (Christian Muslim Associations), committees that organized early Palestinian political action, which were actively supported by French agents to counter Zionist claims; see Roberto Mazza, *Jerusalem from the Ottomans to the British* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009); Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*; Laura Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011); Noah Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).
- 63 MAE, Levant Palestine 1918–1929 I, Coulondre to Picot, 1 August 1918.
- 64 This is an emerging field for Middle Eastern post World War studies but quite a few works have already dealt with this theme. Alongside the aforementioned work by Priya Satia on Iraq readers can consult: Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder after 1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Daniel Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate: Insurgency, Space, and State Formation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); and Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).