

INSTITUTE OF SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION  
FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF THE RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
(INION RAN)



# **SYRIA IN PUBLICATIONS OF RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE**

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МОСКВА  
2024

УДК 030:94(569.1)

ББК 92:63.3(5Сир)

Рекомендовано к печати ученым советом ИНИОН РАН

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**Krylov D.S., Glukhov I.D. (Eds.) Syria in publications of Russian scientists:  
Past, Present, Future : справочник / ИНИОН РАН : отд. Ближнего и  
Постсоветского Востока, Центр междисциплинарных исследований. —  
Москва, 2024. — 219 с.**

**ISBN 978-5-248-01131-5**

The reference book includes more than 430 scientific publications by Russian researchers covering almost all aspects of the Syrian state (archaeology, history, economy, legislation, domestic and foreign policy, culture, etc.). The works are represented by contemporary research from 2019 to 2024. The present handbook also includes articles that examine recent events in Syria in December 2024 that led to the rise to power of opposition groups.

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ISBN 978-5-248-01131-5

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## INTRODUCTION

From ancient times to the present day, Syria has been a unique hub of trade routes and transportation arteries. The great empires of the past have competed for control over Syria and the leading powers of the present day continue this rivalry. The geostrategic importance of this ancient land can hardly be overestimated. Syria embodies the key features of the Middle East: here one can find amazing examples of the coexistence of different civilizations, a mix of cultures, religions and diverse peoples. The power that controls Syria gains the key to the Eastern Mediterranean and a strategic outpost to the Middle East region.

Not surprisingly, even in the 21st century, Syrian lands have become an arena of confrontation between key regional actors in the Middle East and major powers seeking to gain a firm foothold in the region. Having survived the onslaught of the first wave of the Arab Spring, which brought discord and instability to the Middle East, Syria could not fail to attract the attention of external forces that sought to take advantage of the turbulence to strengthen their own positions in the Middle East. The fragile ethno-confessional balance was chosen as the target of their efforts.

The government of Bashar al-Assad, which strived to preserve a united and indivisible unitary Syria, in line with the Pan-Arabic ideological line characteristic of the 1950s–60s, faced regional separatism, the struggle of the influential Kurdish minority to establish its own state (or obtain its own autonomy), as well as the most menacing manifestations of radical Islam, expressed in the emergence of numerous terrorist groups and a new generation terrorist movement – Islamic State\* of Iraq and Syria (an organization banned in the Russian Federation).

Russia and Iran supported the legitimate Syrian Government and prevented external forces from exacerbating the situation in the country and defragmenting Syria along the lines of the Libyan scenario. In the following years, Russia has made many efforts to eliminate the terrorist threat, restore peace in Syria and overcome the grave socio-economic and humanitarian crisis.

Many plans, however, were not destined to come true. At the end of 2024, the armed terrorist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham\* (banned in Russia) seized power in Syria. These events led to a significant change in the balance of power between the key regional players in the Middle East. Iran has lost a significant part of its influence and financial resources in the Syrian territories, while Israel and Turkey have significantly strengthened their position.

In a complex geopolitical environment, Russia needs to be extremely rational and careful in choosing areas for military, political and economic investment. In this regard, in recent years there has been a gradual decrease in the volume of support for the government of the Syrian Arab Republic. However, these changes do not mean that the geopolitical confrontation in

Syria has come to an end. Syria remains Russia's most important outpost in the fight against international terrorism, as well as an essential frontier in terms of containing the waves of radical Islamists that could overwhelm the states of the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

It should also be noted that the lands of Syria are one of the cradles of Christianity, and in some regions of the Syrian Arab Republic Orthodox Christians live compactly.

From a cultural and humanitarian point of view, Russia has made considerable efforts to preserve the unique archaeological and historical material heritage – a treasure of all mankind – which has suffered severe destruction at the hands of terrorists.

The present handbook summarizes the publication activity of Russian scholars for the period 2019–2024 on Syrian issues, dealing with a wide range of issues (politics, history, economics, law, culture, etc.). The handbook also includes articles that examine recent events in Syria in December 2024 that led to the rise to power of opposition groups.

The handbook presents periodic publications in scientific journals on the following topics:

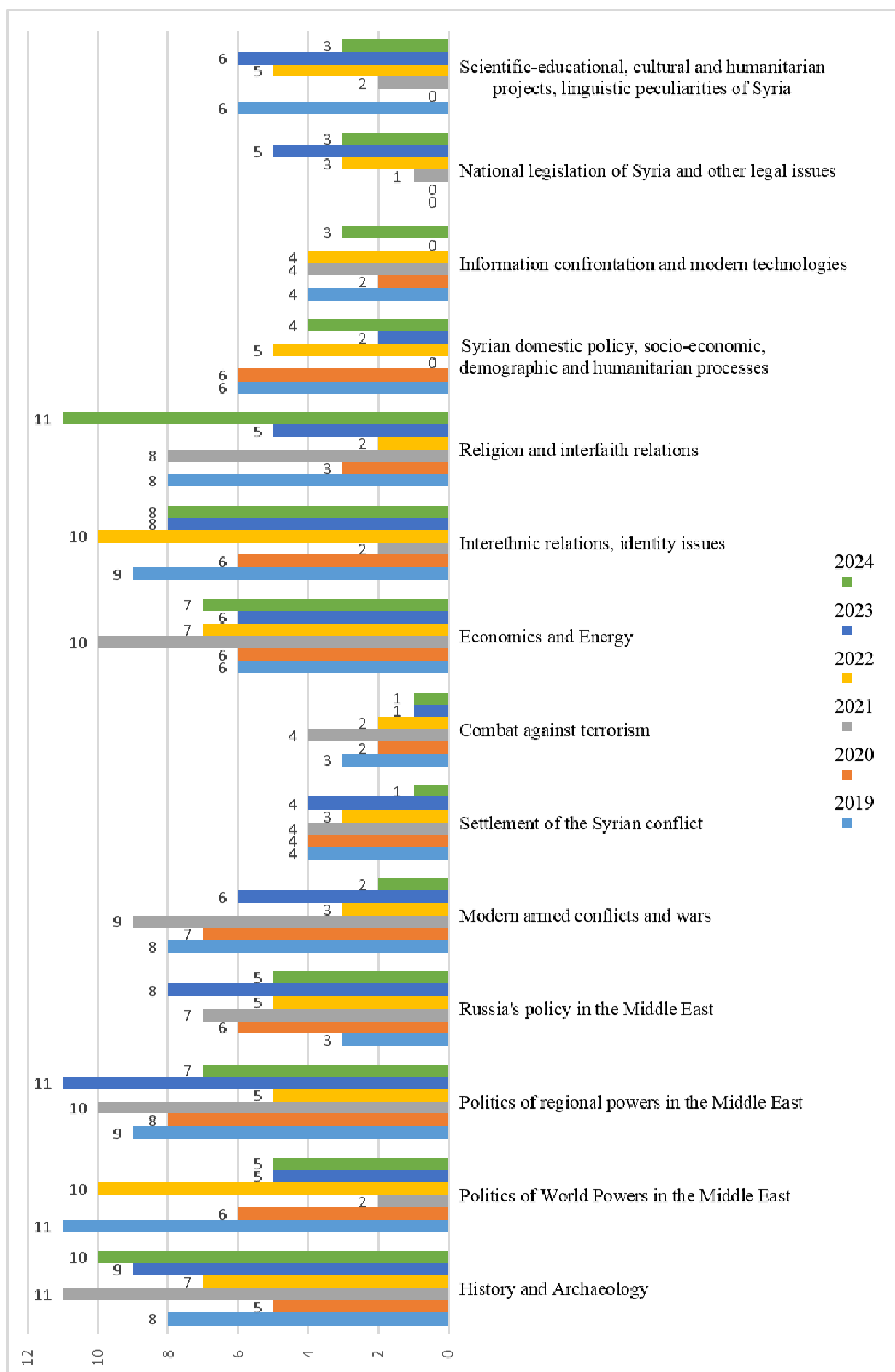
- History and Archaeology;
- Politics of World Powers in the Middle East;
- Politics of regional powers in the Middle East;
- Russia's policy in the Middle East;
- Modern armed conflicts and wars;
- Settlement of the Syrian conflict;
- Combat against terrorism;
- Economics and Energy;
- Interethnic relations, identity issues;
- Religion and interfaith relations;
- Syrian domestic policy, socio-economic, demographic and humanitarian processes;
- Information confrontation and modern technologies;
- National legislation of Syria and other legal issues;
- Scientific-educational, cultural and humanitarian projects, linguistic peculiarities of Syria.

These topics affect exclusively social and humanitarian sciences. In total, there were analysed more than 430 scientific publications in the periodical editions. The distribution of publications by years and topics is as follows.

Due to the fact that many of the articles discussed in this publication are devoted to the events of the Civil War in Syria, the text repeatedly mentions a number of organizations and associations included in the Unified Federal List of organizations, including foreign and international, designated as terrorist by the courts of the Russian Federation. Although the nature of present publication is scientific rather than journalistic, the authors, acting in the spirit of the Law of the Russian Federation "On Mass Media" No. 2124-1 of December 27, 1991 as of November 23, 2024, deemed it necessary to mark prohibited terrorist organizations with an asterisk (\*) each time they are mentioned in the text.

The authors consider it necessary to emphasize that this publication is informational and reference in nature, and its purpose is to disseminate information about current scientific research. The authors strongly condemn illegal terrorist and extremist activities.

References to terrorist and extremist organizations, their ideology, and activities were made by the authors of the referenced articles in pursuit of the goals and objectives of their scientific research.



## HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

**Для цитирования:** Бершов В.Н. Завершающий этап борьбы за независимость Сирии: международное обсуждение эвакуации иностранных войск (1945–1946) // *Genesis: исторические исследования*. – 2019. – № 11. – С. 101–112. – DOI: 10.25136/2409-868X.2019.11.31200. – EDN: AGECCGO.

**For citation:** Bershov V.N. (2019). Final Stage of the Struggle for Independence of Syria: International Discussion on Evacuation of Foreign Troops (1945–1946). *Genesis: Historical Studies*, no. 11, pp. 101–112. DOI: 10.25136/2409-868X.2019.11.31200.

**Abstract.** This article focuses on the final stage of Syria's struggle for independence (1945–1946), examining the “Anglo-French Agreement on Near East” of December 13, 1945, and the response of Syrian society. It explores the United Nations Security Council discussions held from February 14–16, 1946, concerning the evacuation of foreign troops from the Levant, and the resulting decisions that impacted Syria's path to independence. The article also analyzes the negotiations between the Syrian, British, and French governments, leading to the withdrawal of foreign troops on April 17, 1946, which marked the end of the French mandate in Syria. The study concludes that the “Anglo-French Agreement” was a pivotal moment in Syria's fight for independence, sparking widespread protests and leading to international pressure on Britain and France to evacuate their forces, thus advancing the decolonization process in the region.

**Keywords:** UN SECURITY COUNCIL, AGREEMENT, EVACUATION, STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, ENGLAND, LEBANON, FRANCE, SYRIA, GOVERNMENT, FOREIGN TROOPS

**Для цитирования:** Бершов В.Н. Обретение Францией мандата на Сирию: путь от Мудроса к Севру // *Общество: философия, история, культура*. – 2019. – № 12(68). – С. 132–135. – DOI: 10.24158/fik.2019.12.24. – EDN: FVXBHA.

**For citation:** Bershov V.N. (2019). France Getting Mandate to Syria: The Way from Mudros to Sèvres. *Society: Philosophy, History, Culture*, no. 12(68), pp. 132–135. DOI: 10.24158/fik.2019.12.24.

**Abstract.** The article distinguishes between the spheres of influence of the Entente countries in the Ottoman Empire after World War I and the actions of French diplomacy that led to the French mandate over the Syrian Vilayets. Particular attention is paid to the Armistice of Mudros, which served as the starting point for the disintegration of the Ottoman Porte. It is noted that the actual disintegration of the empire was accomplished by the Entente countries as a result of the San Remo agreement and the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres. These events led to the conclusion of agreements between France and Britain, which resulted in France receiving a



mandate for the Syrian Vilayets of the Ottoman Empire. The articles of the French Mandate have been translated into Russian as part of this research.

**Keywords:** FRANCE, SYRIA, GREAT BRITAIN, LEBANON, MANDATE, TREATY OF SÈVRES, MURROS AGREEMENT, OTTOMAN EMPIRE

**Для цитирования:** Бершов В.Н. Сирийское восстание 1925–1927 годов на подмандатных территориях (Сирия и Ливан): причины, ход и последствия // Ученые записки Крымского федерального университета имени В.И. Вернадского. Исторические науки. – 2019. – Т. 5 (71), № 1. – С. 43–51. – EDN: YUIZQT.

**For citation:** Bershov V.N. (2019). The Syrian Revolt of 1925–1927 on Mandatory Territories (Syria and Lebanon): Causes, Progress and Consequences. *Scientific Notes of the V.I. Vernadsky Crimean Federal University. Historical Science*, vol. 5 (71), no. 1, pp. 43–51.

**Abstract.** This article examines the Syrian national liberation movement against the French Mandate Administration from 1925 to 1927, led by Sultan al-Atrash. The uprising, which spread across the Syrian provinces, marked a turning point that compelled the French authorities and the international community to reconsider their colonial policies toward mandated territories. The movement played a crucial role in the history of Syria and Lebanon, highlighting the crisis of the mandate system. The French were forced to adopt more flexible forms of governance, leading to the admission of Syrian and Lebanese nobility into French joint-stock companies, the convening of the 1928 Constituent Assembly, the adoption of the 1930 constitution, and other steps toward independence. The uprising highlighted issues like unresolved agricultural problems, the closure of local industries in favor of French and foreign companies, and high unemployment, which fueled widespread instability. The study focuses on the causes and consequences of the 1925–1927 uprising, marking it as a significant stage in Syria's path to independence.

**Keywords:** UPRISING, LIBERATION MOVEMENT, FRANCE, SYRIA

**Для цитирования:** Эпштейн А.Д. Проигранный гамбит: третья война между Израилем и Египтом, её причины и уроки // Вестник МГИМО Университета. – 2019. – Т. 12, № 4. – С. 161–179. – DOI: 10.24833/2071-8160-2019-4-67-161-179.

**For citation:** Epstein A.D. (2019). The Lost Gambit: The Third War between Israel and Egypt, Its Causes and Lessons. *MGIMO Review of International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 161–179. DOI: 10.24833/2071-8160-2019-4-67-161-179.

**Abstract.** Yevgeny Maximovich Primakov had exceptional expertise in the Middle East, having worked in Cairo (1965–1969) and maintaining close ties with Egypt's political and military elite. He also visited Israel frequently from 1971 onward, engaging with five Israeli prime ministers. Known for his profound understanding of regional geopolitics, Primakov's insight remains unmatched in Russia. This essay honors his memory by analyzing the June 1967 Six-Day War, which reshaped the Middle East. While the war has been widely studied, this research emphasizes the pivotal role of Egyptian leaders in initiating the conflict, driven by Pan-Arab solidarity at odds with Egypt's national interests. The study suggests the war's causes went beyond Egypt-Israel relations. This examination is timely, as many believe a new war between the two nations is impossible after the Sinai's return, yet the 1967 war proves that tensions can escalate without territorial disputes. The conflict also highlights that a state's security cannot rely solely on peacekeeping forces or foreign guarantees, as evidenced by the failure of UN and U.S. intervention during the crisis.

**Keywords:** MIDDLE EAST, ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, SIX-DAY WAR, ISRAEL, EGYPT, SYRIA, PAN-ARABISM, THE UN EMERGENCY FORCE

**Для цитирования:** Илюшина М.Ю. Караман в политике Султаната Мамлюков (XIV–XV вв.) // Вестник Пермского университета. История. – 2019. – № 2(45). – С. 53–61. – DOI: 10.17072/2219-3111-2019-2-53-61.

**For citation:** Iliushina M.Yu. (2019). Karaman in the Mamluk Sultanate's Policy (13th–15th Centuries). *Perm University Herald. History*, no. 2(45), pp. 53–61. DOI: 10.17072/2219-3111-2019-2-53-61.

**Abstract.** The Karaman Emirate, located in Asia Minor, existed from the 13th to the 15th century, playing a significant role in the political and economic landscape of the late Middle Ages. Its history was deeply intertwined with the interests of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), one of the largest Muslim states of the period. Karaman controlled crucial trade routes, particularly the one through Konya, and became a buffer zone between the Mamluk and Ottoman territories. The Mamluks sought to prevent the Ottomans from absorbing Karaman, while ensuring that the Karamanids did not oppose Cairo's political strategy. The Ottoman conquest of Karaman in the late 15th century allowed them to control important trade routes and positioned them near the Mamluk borders. This shift led to increasing tensions, culminating in the first Ottoman-Mamluk war (1485–1491). In the early 16th century, Ottoman Sultan Selim I decisively defeated the Mamluk forces at Marj Dabiq (1516) and annexed Mamluk territories into the Ottoman Empire. The article draws on primary Arabic sources, including unpublished letters from Mamluk Sultan Barquq to Karaman's ruler, Ala al-Din, offering insights into the complex diplomatic relations between the Mamluks and Karaman.

**Keywords:** KARAMAN, MAMLUK SULTANATE, OTTOMAN EMPIRE, ASIA MINOR, EGYPT, SYRIA

**Для цитирования:** Копоть Е.М. Российская военная разведка в Азиатской Турции и Сирии во второй половине XIX в. // Исторический вестник. – 2019. – Т. 30. – С. 266–293. – DOI: 10.35549/HR.2020.70.64.010. – EDN: ABMRZA.

**For citation:** Kopot' E.M. (2019). Russian Military Intelligence Focus in the Arab-Ottoman World in the Second Half of the 19th Century. *Istoricheskii vestnik*, vol. 30, pp. 266–293. DOI: 10.35549/HR.2020.70.64.010.

**Abstract.** The analysis of the materials of the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire and the Russian State Military History Archive allowed to reconstruct the formation of the methodology of data collection by the Russian intelligence in Syria as a possible place of military operations in 1870–1890. Intelligence officers of the Russian Caucasus Army operated under the cover of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire. Despite bureaucratic tensions between the Ministry of War and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which often turned into open confrontation, the new philosophy of scientism that quickly spread throughout the establishment contributed to more rational political decision-making in both wartime and peacetime. The article emphasizes the changing focus of military intelligence. The focus shifted from purely military issues to social ethnology and the search for potential Russian allies in the region. In Syria, adherents of the Greek Orthodox Antiochian Patriarchate were considered as such.

**Keywords:** MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, POPULATION POLITICS, SYRIA, ORTHODOX ARABS, PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH

**Для цитирования:** Махар Д. «Пальмирский лев». К вопросу об архаических мотивах в творчестве М. Аль-Олаби // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского государственного университета технологии и дизайна. Серия 2: Искусствоведение. Филологические науки. – 2019. – № 1. – С. 10–16. – EDN: EIVPCQ.

**For citation:** Mahar D. (2019). "Palmyra Lion". On the Issue of Archaic Motifs in the Works of M. Al-Olabi. *Bulletin of St. Petersburg State University of Technology and Design. Series 2: Art History. Philological Sciences*, no. 1, pp. 10–16.

**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the analysis of artist's paintings and the problem of using archaic motives of the ancient Syrian civilization. The study is based on the material collected in