

## East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times

# Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture

Edited by  
Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge

14

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# East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times

Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World

Edited by  
Albrecht Classen

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# Table of Contents

## Introduction

Albrecht Classen

Encounters Between East and West in the  
Middle Ages and Early Modern Age:  
Many Untold Stories About Connections  
and Contacts, Understanding and Misunderstanding.  
Also an Introduction

1. New Voices Reflecting Contacts Between Latin-Europa and the Muslim World .....	1
2. Xenology and Intercultural Research .....	5
3. Orientalism, Postcolonial Studies, and the Premodern World .....	12
4. Economic, Political, and Cultural Connections: Ignored but Significant Features Under the Radar Screen .....	16
5. Literary Reflections on the Foreign in Medieval Literature .....	19
6. Arab Writers, Geographers, and Travelers .....	24
7. St. Francis of Assisi's Attempt to Reach Out to the Saracens: The First Peaceful Missionizing in the Thirteenth Century .....	41
8. The Christian Perspective: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land A First Step Into a Vast Field .....	46
9. The Diplomat Pilgrim Bertrandon de la Broquière .....	49
10. The Helpful Saracen in Margery Kempe's <i>Book</i> : A Mystical Woman's Perception of the Foreign World .....	57
11. Locations of Contacts Between East and West .....	58
12. Travel as a Medium of Cultural Contacts .....	65
13. Curiosity Among Muslim Travelers? .....	66
14. Jewish Travelers in the Middle Ages .....	68
15. A Parallel Christian Travel Account and Literary Narrative: <i>Fortunatus</i> .....	77
16. Jewish Communities in the Diaspora .....	79
17. Historical Contacts Between East and West .....	80
18. Rabbi Petachia of Ratisbona .....	81
19. Additional Jewish Perspectives .....	85

20. Christian Pilgrim Narratives in the Late Middle Ages .....	92
21. The Most Astute Observer and Reporter: Felix Fabri .....	93
22. A Brief Comparison with Giovanni Boccaccio: <i>Decameron</i> .....	120
23. Trouble and Conflicts: Christian Pilgrims and Muslim Population .....	122
24. Bernhard von Breydenbach's <i>Peregrinatio</i> .....	130
25. Other Contacts and Contact Zones .....	135
26. Europeans and the Ottoman World .....	137
27. Anton von Pforr's German Adaptation of Indian Literature: Cross-Cultural Experiences in the Late Middle Ages .....	153
28. Origin and Framework of this Volume .....	165
29. Summaries of the Contributions and Critical Reflections .....	166
30. Conclusion and Outlook .....	211
Acknowledgments .....	217
 <b>Chapter 1</b>	
Linda T. Darling	
Mirrors for Princes in Europe and the Middle East: A Case of Historiographical Incommensurability .....	223
 <b>Chapter 2</b>	
Courtney Catherine Barajas	
Reframing the Monstrous: Visions of Desire and a Unified Christendom in the Anglo-Saxon <i>Wonders of the East</i> .....	243
 <b>Chapter 3</b>	
Glen M. Cooper	
Byzantium between East and West: Competing Hellenisms in the <i>Alexiad</i> of Anna Komnene and her Contemporaries .....	263
 <b>Chapter 4</b>	
Alan V. Murray	
Franks and Indigenous Communities in Palestine and Syria (1099–1187): A Hierarchical Model of Social Interaction in the Principalities of Outremer .....	291

**Chapter 5**

K. A. Tuley

A Century of Communication and Acclimatization:  
 Interpreters and Intermediaries in  
 the Kingdom of Jerusalem ..... 311

**Chapter 6**

Jens T. Wollesen

East Meets West and the Problem with Those Pictures ..... 341

**Chapter 7**

Christopher R. Clason

Walther von der Vogelweide and the Middle East:  
 "Holy Land" and the Heathen ..... 389

**Chapter 8**

Heiko Hartmann

Wolfram's Islam: The Beliefs of the Muslim Pagans  
 in *Parzival* and *Willehalm* ..... 427

**Chapter 9**

Andrew Holt

Crusading against Barbarians: Muslims as  
 Barbarians in Crusades Era Sources ..... 443

**Chapter 10**

Albrecht Classen

The Encounter with the Foreign in Medieval and Early  
 Modern German Literature: Fictionality as a  
 Springboard for Non-Xenophobic Approaches  
 in the Middle Ages. *Herzog Ernst*, Wolfram von Eschenbach,  
 Konrad von Würzburg, *Die Heidin*, and *Fortunatus* ..... 457

**Chapter 11**

Patricia E. Black

Rumi's *Mathnawi* and the *Roman de la Rose*:  
 The Space of Narrative ..... 489

**Chapter 12**

Connie L. Scarborough

The Moors in Thirteenth-Century Spain: "They are Us!" ..... 505

**Chapter 13**

Mark T. Abate

The Reorientation of Roger Bacon:

Muslims, Mongols, and the Man Who Knew Everything ..... 523

**Chapter 14**

Jean E. Jost

The Exotic and Fabulous East in *The Travels*of *Sir John Mandeville*: Understated Authenticity ..... 575**Chapter 15**

Scott L. Taylor

*Merveilles du Monde*: Marco Millioni, *Mirabilia*,

and the Medieval Imagination, or the

Impact of Genre on European *Curiositas* ..... 595**Chapter 16**

Romedio Schmitz-Esser

Embalming and Dissecting the Corpse between

East and West: From Ar-Razi to Henry de Mondeville ..... 611

**Chapter 17**

Stefanie Helmschrott

West-östliche Dialoge in der *Mörin*

Hermanns von Sachsenheim (1453) ..... 625

**Chapter 18**

Denis Bjaï

La représentation de l'Orient dans

les *Essais* de Montaigne ..... 649**Chapter 19**

Thomas Willard

The Strange Journey of Christian Rosencreutz ..... 667



**Chapter 20**

Ramón E. Duarte

Producing *Yeni Dünya* for an Ottoman Readership:

The Travels of Ilyas bin Hanna al-Mawsuli in

Colonial Latin America, 1675–1683 ..... 699

**Chapter 21**

Allison P. Coudert

Orientalism in Early Modern Europe? ..... 715

**Chapter 22**

Pascale Barthe

A Seventeenth-Century French Merchant in the Orient:

The Portrait of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier in *Les six voyages* ..... 757

List of Illustrations ..... 781

Contributors ..... 787

Index ..... 797



# Encounters Between East and West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age

## Many Untold Stories About Connections and Contacts, Understanding and Misunderstanding

Also an Introduction

Albrecht Classen

### 1. New Voices Reflecting Contacts Between Latin-Europa and the Muslim World

The tenth-century Hispano-Arabic traveler, diplomat, perhaps spy, and certainly most open-minded and curious author, Abraham ben Jacob, better known under his Arabic name of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya`qūb al-Isrā'īlī al-Turtūshī, can be identified as one of the earliest reporters about Eastern, Slavic, but also northern Europe, including Germany.<sup>1</sup> He originated from Moorish-ruled Turtūṣah, or Tortosa, close to the estuary of the Ebro in northeastern Spain; he himself may also have lived in Córdoba, considering his political function at the court there. In 961–962 he traveled throughout Western and Central Europe and in Italy.<sup>2</sup> Since he was

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- <sup>1</sup> Abdurrahmane al-Hajji, *Andalusian Diplomatic Relations with Western Europe During the Umayyad Period* (A.H. 138–366/A.D. 755–976): *An Historical Survey* (Beirut: Dar al-Irshad, 1970), 245; Ahmad Nazmi, *Commercial Relations Between Arabs and Slavs (9th–11th Centuries)*. *Dzieje orientu* (Warsaw: Akademickie DIALOG, 1998), 40; Semen Rapoport, “On the Early Slavs, The Narrative of Ibrahim ibn Yakub,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 8 (1929): 331–41; here 333. See also the contributions to *Ibrahim ibn Ya`qub al-Turtushi: Christianity, Islam and Judaism Meet in East-Central Europe, c.800–1300 A.D.: Proceedings of the International Colloquy 25–29 April 1994*, ed. Petr Charvát and Jiří Prosecký (Prague: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Oriental Institute, 1996).
- <sup>2</sup> Lutz Richter-Bernburg, “Ibrāhīm ibn Yāqūb al-Isrā’īlī al-Tūrtūshī,” *The Oxford Companion to World Exploration*, ed. David Buisseret. 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), I: 402b–403b. Many times I will refer to Arabic names and terms in the following pages. I have tried my best to render them in the proper fashion, with all the necessary macrons and other specific Arabic letters,

officially received in audience by the Holy Roman Emperor Otto I during the first week of February of 962, perhaps in Magdeburg (today northeastern Germany), he might have been in the service of the Umayyad Caliph of Córdoba, al-Hakam II (ca. 961–973).

His work is widely known as the first reliable description of the Polish state under Mieszko I, the first historical ruler of Poland.<sup>3</sup> He is also noted for his description of the Vikings living in Hedeby, the Nakonid fortification at “Dorf Mecklenburg” and of what was, in all likelihood, the nucleus of the later ducal castle and palace at Schwerin. His descriptions of the Slavic world in Poland and then in Bohemia would not be so exciting for us today if they did not originate from a Hispano-Arabic writer at such an early age, which signals clearly how little our modern concepts of the divide between East and West in the Middle Ages and the early modern ages, specifically in cultural-historical terms, correspond with the actual reality at that time. If northeastern Poland was well within the reach of a Muslim traveler from al-Andalus, many other visits and contacts can well be imagined.

In his account, Abraham discusses, among other aspects, also the cities of Prague and Magdeburg, the territory of Prussia, the kingdom of Bulgaria, always with a focus on commercial activities, and then turns his attention to the climatic conditions, the cultural idiosyncracies, building styles, and the sexual mores of unmarried and married people.<sup>4</sup> It would be a fruitful effort to compare his account with that provided by the Venetian traveler Marco Polo from the end of the thirteenth century because we would probably recognize a surprising number of parallels in interests, topics, and attitudes toward the foreign world. From there we should move into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when the number of global travelers increased dramatically, while the basic patterns of intercultural contacts and awareness of otherness and linguistic challenges, for instance, did not change fundamentally, as we will see below.

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but being not an Arabist, I cannot fully vouch for the complete correctness of the transcriptions. In the sources we also observe a considerable degree of variances in that regard, especially because many scholars simply ignore those diacritical marks. I have also worked closely with the various contributors to secure the highest possible accuracy in that regard, but I must beg the reader for some indulgence if we have not met all expectations.

<sup>3</sup> W. Sarnecki and D. Nicolle, *Medieval Polish Armies 966–1500*. Men-at-Arms Series, 445 (Oxford and New York: Osprey Publishing, 2008); Gerard Labuda, *Mieszko I* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawn, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> *Relatio Ibrāhim Ibn Ja'kūb de itinere slavico, quae traditur apud Al-Bekrī*, ed. Thaddaeus Kowalski. Monumenta Poloniae Historica. Nova Series, I (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1946), 138–51. In Arabic, the work is entitled as *Kitāb al-mamālik wal-masālik*. Alauddin Samarrai, “Ibrāhīm Ibn Ya'qūb al-Isrā'īlī (fl. 960s),” *Trade, Travel, and Exploration in the Middle Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. John Block Friedman and Kristen Mossler Figg (New York and London: Garland, 2000), 271.

Abraham's visit to northern Germany to the court of Emperor Otto I had a surprising consequence for the world of religious literature. The Canoness Hrotsvita of Gandersheim (end of the tenth century), who was related to the emperor and seems to have had fairly close contacts with the imperial court, became familiar with the account of the martyr Pelagius who had suffered his death as a martyr in Córdoba for his courage to uphold his Christian faith at the Muslim court. Hrotsvita had most likely heard about him through reports provided by the Muslim travel group and their companions (perhaps one of their translators might have been a Christian). Subsequently Hrotsvita composed her own version, a legendary tale in which she portrays the Sultan in Córdoba as a homosexual—a common stereotype of Muslims constantly perpetuated by European Christian writers—who tried to seduce the young, beautiful, but virtuous man. But Pelagius harshly rejected him, hitting the Sultan even in his face when the latter requested a kiss from him, which naturally prompted the incensed ruler to have Pelagius executed. Hrotsvita's verse narrative can be identified as the first and only literary reflection in northern Germany from the early Middle Ages about the truly distant Iberian Peninsula.<sup>5</sup>

The historical facts, though often mixed in with legendary tales, as far as we can reconstruct them, are as follows: After the Arabs' victory over the Christian forces in Galicia against King Ordoño II of León in 921, Pelagius had been sent to Córdoba as a hostage for his defeated father. After three years in the dungeon, his beauty attracted the court's attention, so they brought him to the Caliph Abdurrahmane Al-Haji III (born 889/891; ruled 912–961), also known as Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muhammad ibn Abd Allāh.<sup>6</sup> He was said to entertain two harems

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<sup>5</sup> Hrotsvit, *Opera omnia*, ed. Walter Berschin. *bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana* (Munich: Saur, 2001); for an English translation, see Hrotsvit of Gandersheim, *A Florilegium of Her Works*, trans. with intro., interpretive essay and notes by Katharina M. Wilson. *Library of Medieval Women* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998), 29–40; see also the contributions to *Hrotsvit of Gandersheim: Rara Avis in Saxonia?*, ed. Katharina M. Wilson. *Medieval and Renaissance Monograph Series*, VII (Ann Arbor, MI: Marc Publishing, 1987); and to *Hrotsvit of Gandersheim: Contexts, Identities, Affinities, and Performances*, ed. Phyllis R. Brown, Linda A. McMillin, and Katharina M. Wilson (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Stephen L. Wailes, *Beyond Virginity: Flesh and Spirit in the Plays of Hrotsvit of Gandersheim* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press; Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2006). I have researched the relationship between medieval Spain and medieval Germany in "Spain and Germany in the Middle Ages: An Unexplored Literary-Historical Area of Exchange, Reception, and Exploration," *The Lion and the Eagle. Interdisciplinary Essays on German-Spanish Relations over the Centuries*, ed. Conrad Kent, Thomas K. Wolber, and Cameron M. K. Hewitt (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), 47–76; and: "Espanya, València i Oswald von Wolkenstein: Geografia de la Baixa Edat Mitjana i història de la mentalitat geogràfica" (trans. Ferran Robles i Sabater), *Paisajes Espirituales. El Diálogo cultural entre Alemania y Valencia*, ed. Berta Raposo y José A. Calañas (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 2003), 13–37.

<sup>6</sup> E. Lévi-Provençal, "Abd al-Rahmān," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. New Edition, ed. H. A.R. Gibb, J. H.

for himself, one with women, the other with men; hence the charge of homosexuality against him. However, the young man, who soon gained the status of a martyr, steadfastly refused to convert to Islam, so he was condemned to death in 925.<sup>7</sup> In 967 Pelagius's relics were transferred to León, in 985 to Oviedo.

While the first written account of his martyrdom by the Spanish cleric Raguel dates from ca. 960, oral reports must have been well known even among the Arabic diplomats, led by the Mozarabic Bishop Recemundus of Elvira, at the court of Otto I, who must have been competent enough in Latin to communicate with the German courtiers and intellectuals or had Christians in their company, who could help them linguistically.<sup>8</sup> Although Recemundus never mentions Pelagius in his own writings, he included the saint's feast in his *calendarium* in 961. We can easily imagine that he included a reference to the young martyr in his discussions with the representatives of the Ottonian court to ingratiate himself there as a witness of the suffering of a major Christian martyr in Córdoba.<sup>9</sup>

Altogether, this rather obscure example, when carefully examined, sheds enormously illuminating light on the actual intercultural conditions even within early-medieval Europe across deep cultural, religious, and linguistic divides, where obviously some diplomatic relationships existed between al-Andalus on the southern Iberian Peninsula and the Holy Roman Empire under Otto I in northern Germany.<sup>10</sup> As much as we tend to regard the premodern world as rather limited or uninterested in foreign cultures, religions, and countries, here I will provide a vast sweep of how much travel was possible and eagerly pursued by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim intellectuals, scholars, artists, and politicians, who thus built a wide range of intercultural bridges.<sup>11</sup> If political exchanges between a major Muslim ruler in al-Andalus and the German emperor were in fact possible and

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Kramers, E. Lévi-Provençal, and J. Schacht. Vol. 1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill; London: Luzac & Co., 1960), 81–84, esp. 83–84. According to the information provided there, 'Abd al-Rahmān did not really fight in Galicia, but in Asturio-León, especially conquering and sacking Pamplona in 920. The best and most updated study on these historical events seems to be the article in *Wikipedia*: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abd-ar-Rahman\\_III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abd-ar-Rahman_III) (last accessed on Aug. 11, 2012). I will refer back to him below in the context of Jewish travelers in the Middle Ages.

<sup>7</sup> *Butler's Lives of the Saints*. New full ed.: *August*, rev. by John Cumming (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 288–89.

<sup>8</sup> *Hrotsvithae Opera*, mit Einleitung und Kommentar von H. Homeyer (Munich, Paderborn, and Vienna: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1970), 123–29.

<sup>9</sup> Linda A. McMillin, "'Weighed down with a thousand evils': Images of Muslims in Hrotsvit's *Pelagius*," *Hrotsvit of Gandersheim: Contexts, Identities* (see note 5), 40–55; here 41–42.

<sup>10</sup> See also the contributions to *Al-Andalus und Europa: zwischen Orient und Okzident*, ed. Martina Müller-Wiener (Petersberg: M. Imhof, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. also the excellent introduction by Juan Martos and Rosario Moreno Soldevila in Rosvita de Gandersheim, *Obras completas*. intro., trans., and notes [in Spanish]. Arias Montano, 78 (Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 2005), xxi–xxiv; see also M. C. Díaz y Díaz, "La pasión de S. Pelayo y su difusión," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 6 (1969): 97–116.

actively pursued already in the tenth century, we ourselves might have to question whether political, economic, and artistic interests throughout the following centuries might not have continued as well, despite the Crusades.<sup>12</sup>

Linguistic aspects also have to be considered since cultural and political exchanges are only possible if the parties involved are familiar enough with the language/s spoken by the other side. Diplomats such as Ibrāhīm ibn Ya`qūb al-Isrā'īlī al-Turtūshī (see above) could only accomplish their tasks of reaching out to political leaders in the target countries if they were linguistically competent enough to communicate across the various language divides. Both today and in the past, the problem in this regard gains in weight if Arabs and Latin-Europeans try to speak to each other, while those representing the various Indo-European languages enjoy many commonly shared linguistic elements.<sup>13</sup> We will encounter numerous examples below where European Christian pilgrims had to struggle very hard to cope linguistically in the Holy Land and beyond.

## 2. Xenology and Intercultural Research

Research in xenology (the study of the foreign or the encounter with the foreign(er)) has progressed considerably in the last few years, with scholars examining both the philosophical underpinnings of the encounter between self and other and concrete documents reflecting those experiences in specific terms.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Mahmoud Makki, "The Political History of Al-Andalus," *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 3–60; Enrico Cerulli, "Le calife 'Abd ar-Rahmān III de Cordoue et le martyr Pélage dans un poème de Hrotsvitha," *Studia Islamica* 32 (1970): 69–76.

<sup>13</sup> Reinhard Schneider, *Vom Dolmetschen im Mittelalter: Sprachliche Vermittlung in weltlichen und kirchlichen Zusammenhängen*. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, 72 (Vienna: Böhlau, 2012), offers a fairly global survey without going into specific details or analyzing his sources.

<sup>14</sup> In political terms, of course, throughout history the various countries/kingdoms have regularly tried to establish contacts with their neighbors or more distant lands if there were specific economic, political, or military interests; see, for instance, T. H. Lloyd, *Alien Merchants in England in the High Middle Ages* (Brighton: Harvester, 1982); Pierre Chaplais, *English Diplomatic Practice in the Middle Ages* (London: Hambledon and London, 2003); for a more specific angle, see the contributions to *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History: From the Late Middle Ages to World War One*, ed. Randall Lesaffer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); cf. also Torstein Jørgensen and Gastone Saletnich, *Letters to the Pope: Norwegian Relations to the Holy See in the Late Middle Ages* (Stavanger: Misjonshøgskolens, 1999). Still of relevance is C. F. Beckingham, *Between Islam and Christendom: Travellers, Facts and Legends in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1983); *A Inglaterra e a Península Ibérica na Idade Média: séculos XII–XV: intercâmbios culturais, literários e políticos*, ed. Maria Bullón-Fernández. Forum da história, 46 (Mem Martins: Publicações Europa-Ameérica, 2008); *Western Europe, Eastern Europe and World Development, 13th–18th Centuries*, ed. Jean Batou and Hnryk Szlajfer. Studies in Critical Social Sciences, 16 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010). We should also not forget the Eastern perspective, considering, for instance, the Byzantine Empire and its neighbors; see *Die Awaren am Rand der*

We probably would not overextend our critical reach if we argue that all cultural development has been predicated on the separation of self and other, of establishing borders and frontiers and, most importantly, of transgressing them again.<sup>15</sup>

As all historians can confirm, which unfortunately might be misconstrued as a political statement today, all borders throughout times and in all systems have lasted only temporarily and were eventually permeated so much that they became meaningless, such as the Chinese wall or the Roman *limes*, not to mention the border between East and West Germany from 1961 to 1989. As much as individual cultures might have tried to stay in splendid isolation (USA, China, Japan, North Korea), ultimately the outside/rs entered the interior space, exerted influence, and made the borders meaningless. This understanding is of fundamental relevance for all cultural history, both in past, and present, and also future.

Culture forms both internally and through an exchange with the exterior. While this might be more difficult to determine on the European continent, especially north of the Alps, the situation in the Mediterranean during the entire Middle Ages provides excellent insight into the exchanges among the various peoples, languages, religions, and economic and political entities. The Crusades and the subsequent wars between the Christians and the Arabic Muslims (later especially the Turks) represented just one dimension, but below the military surface we can always and rather easily recognize countless cultural, linguistic, mercantile, and perhaps even literary and artistic contacts of great profit for both sides. After all,

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*byzantinischen Welt: Studien zu Diplomatie, Handel und Technologietransfer im Frühmittelalter*, ed. Falko Daim, Júlia Andrási, and István Bóna. Monographien zur Frühgeschichte und Mittelalterarchäologie, 7 (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2000); see also the contributions to *Multicultural Europe and Cultural Exchange in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. James P. Helfers. Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, 12 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005). For the study of xenology in related fields, see Munasu Duala-M'bedy, *Xenologie: die Wissenschaft vom Fremden und die Verdrängung der Humanität in der Anthropologie*. Fermenta philosophica (Freiburg i. Br.: K. Alber, 1977); see also the contributions to *L'Europe des religions: éléments d'analyse des champs religieux européens*, ed. Richard Friedli and Mallory Schneuwly Purdie. Studia Religiosa Helvetica, 8/9 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004).

- <sup>15</sup> Undoubtedly, the examination of how people in the past engaged with others, if not 'the Other,' in practical and epistemological terms, represents a hugely productive hermeneutic enterprise, as a whole league of scholarship has already demonstrated. See, for instance, Götz Pochat, *Das Fremde im Mittelalter: Darstellung in Kunst und Literatur* (Würzburg: Echter, 1997); see also the contributions to *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*, ed. Albrecht Classen (New York and London: Routledge, 2002); and for theoretical reflections, see my introduction. See now also Frank Meier, *Gefürchtet und bestaunt: vom Umgang mit dem Fremden im Mittelalter* (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2007); *Den Fremden gibt es nicht: Xenologie und Erkenntnis*, ed. Christian Bremshey. Kulturwissenschaft, 2 (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2004). See also the contributions to *Fremdes wahrnehmen – fremdes Wahrnehmen: Studien zur Geschichte der Wahrnehmung und zur Begegnung von Kulturen in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Wolfgang Harms and C. Stephen Jaeger, together with Alexandra Stein (Stuttgart and Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1997).



the Crusades were brilliantly engineered by the various popes and represented a masterpiece of global politics by the Holy See throughout the centuries, but this did not mean that the official propaganda fully represented the broader mentality, or that all people in Christian Europe fully embraced the image of the Muslims as their arch-enemies.<sup>16</sup>

Yaacov Lev recently offered a detailed study of the Fātimid dynasty and its attitude toward medieval (Christian) Europe. They ruled a huge empire that extended from northern Africa well into Egypt, then Palestine, and into the Middle East during the time from ca. 909 to ca. 1171. Although they commonly pursued military strategies against their neighbors, especially the Byzantines, they primarily worked hard to protect their own interests in Sicily and Syria. In Lev's words:

The Fatimid raids on Italy were of peripheral significance, being an outcome of internal considerations to maintain their image as warriors of the holy war. They were not a reflection of bigotry toward the Christian world [, they were] rather marked by misunderstanding as exemplified by the Fatimid policy toward the First Crusade and their attempts to co-operate with the Franks against the Seljuks. This misguided policy reflects the basic inward Islamic orientation of the Fatimid state. The first priority of the political vision of the Fatimids was their desire to rule the Muslim world and their

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<sup>16</sup> Aziz Suryal Atiyah, *Crusades, Commerce and Culture* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, and London: Oxford University Press, 1962); see the contributions to *Relations Between East and West in the Middle Ages*, ed. Derek Baker (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973); Claude Cahen, *Orient et Occident au temps des Croisades*. Collection historique (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1983); Robert Lopez, "The Trade of Medieval Europe: the South," *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, rev. ed., vol. 2: *Trade and Industry in the Middle Ages*, ed. M. M. Postan and Edward Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 306–401; Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*. Studies in Comparative World History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches Toward the Muslims* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984); David Abulafia, "The Role of Trade in Muslim-Christian Contact During the Middle Ages," id., *Mediterranean Encounters, Economic, Religious, Political, 1100–1550*. Variorum Collected Studies Series (Aldershot, Burlington, VT, et al.: Ashgate Variorum, 2000, orig. 1994), 1–24; Stephen O'Shea, *Sea of Faith: Islam and Christianity in the Medieval Mediterranean World* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 2006), focuses on the battles between Muslim and Christian forces from 636 (Yarmouk) to 1565 (Malta). See also Amin Maalouf, *Les Croisades vues par les Arabes* (Paris: Lattès, 1983); trans. by Jon Rothschild as *The Crusades Through Arabic Eyes* (London: Al-Saqi Books, 1984). For the role of the papacy in the Crusade history, and this on a European level, see the contributions to *La Papauté et les croisades The Papacy and the Crusades: Actes du VII Congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East/ Proceedings of the VIIth Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. Michel Balard. Crusades. Subsidia, 3 (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011). See also the contributions to *Travellers, Intellectuals, and the World Beyond Medieval Europe*, ed. James Muldoon. The Expansion of Latin Europe, 1000–1500, 10 (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010).

struggle against Shi'i and Sunni internal foes. Any notion of world rule and the fighting of external enemies came second.<sup>17</sup>

The exploration of foreign cultures, peoples, religions, and countries is only possible if the traveler has some, if not good, command of the foreign languages, and also has some awareness of his own place in cultural space. While Mikhail Bakhtin still believed that this skill was characteristic of the Renaissance (Rabelais) only, we can now point to many previous and also much later examples. However, irrespective of this effort to specify a cultural period in which such a phenomenon emerged, individual Westerners tried throughout time, at least since the late Middle Ages, to gain an understanding of the East and to learn the necessary languages.<sup>18</sup>

The opposite might not quite have been the same case, but we can be certain, following Charles Taylor's significant reflections on this phenomenon, travel, hence, dialogue, constitutes one of the essential functions in the formation of the self everywhere: "Thus discovering my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I negotiate it through dialogue, partly overt, partly internal, with others . . . . My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others."<sup>19</sup>

Globally speaking, this claim might go too far, especially if we consider the basic immobility of the masses of people living in the countryside both in the past and the present, but deserves us to bear it in mind for our subsequent discussions of contacts between Europeans and Muslims/Arabs (but then also Jews and other people) during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age, often highly problematic, but yet not impossible, and sometimes even regarded with great curiosity and interest.<sup>20</sup> Already by the tenth century an intense translation

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<sup>17</sup> Yaacov Lev, "A Mediterranean Encounter: The Fatimids and Europe, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries," *Shipping, Trade and Crusade in the Medieval Mediterranean: Studies in Honour of John Pryor*, ed. Ruthy Gertwagen and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 131–56; here 150–51.

<sup>18</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse," id., *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 41–83; see now Peter Burke, "The Renaissance Translator as Go-Between," *Renaissance Go-Betweens: Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Andreas Höfele and Werner von Koppenfels. Spectrum Literaturwissenschaft, 2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 17–31; id., "Translation into Latin in Early Modern Europe," *The Cultural History of Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. id. and R. Po-Chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 65–80. Now see also Reinhard Schneider, *Vom Dolmetschen im Mittelalter* (see note 13).

<sup>19</sup> Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1995), 231. For a practical case, see *An Early Modern Dialogue with Islam: Antonio de Sosa's Topography of Algiers (1612)*, ed. with an intro. by María Antonia Garcés, trans. by Diana de Armas Wilson (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> For further theoretical reflections on this topic, see also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), who identifies transculturation as "a

process, rendering Arabic texts into Latin, had started at the monastery of Santa María at Ripoll in the Spanish Marches, a monumental new process which initiated the subsequent and long-term cultural-intellectual exchanges between the European and the Arab world throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern age.<sup>21</sup>

This had certainly nothing to do with tolerance or an open-minded interest in the other culture; on the contrary, Christians tried to learn Arabic so they could missionize among Muslims, if not colonize them, as we would say today. Nevertheless, the acquisition of a foreign language has always represented the first step in learning about a foreign culture, regardless of how hostile both sides might be toward each other. In the twelfth century, Robert of Ketton (or of Chester) (ca. 1110–ca. 1160) created, upon the encouragement of Peter the Venerable, together with Herman of Carinthia (ca. 1100–ca. 1160), Peter of Poitiers (ca. 1130–ca. 1215), and a man only identified as Mohammed, the first translation of the Qur'an into Latin (*Lex Mahumet pseudoprophete*, 1143), but then it took more than three hundred years for the first vernacular translation, the one written by Juan de Segovia, who produced a Spanish translation in 1456.

Intriguingly, Juan deeply distrusted Robert's previous work and made a very serious attempt to achieve the highest possible philological accuracy in his task, for which purpose he invited the spiritual leader of Segovia's Mudejar community, 'Isā ibn Jābir, to his residence in Savoy, who worked with him for four months until that project was completed. Subsequently Juan translated the Spanish text also into Latin. In the following centuries, at least until the early seventeenth century when the Mudejars, or Moriscos, were finally all expelled from Spain between 1609 and 1614, at least ca. twenty-six other Spanish translations of the Qur'an came into existence. In other words, Islamic culture continued to exist in Spain for a very long time after 1492, and survived, even if with many difficulties,

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phenomenon of the contact zone" (6); this is now also examined, though for the early modern age, by Simone Testa, "Travellers' Accounts, Historians and Ambassadors in the Sixteenth Century," *Cross-Cultural Travel: Papers from the Royal Irish Academy Symposium on Literature and Travel. National University of Ireland, Galway, November 2002*, ed. Jane Conroy. Travel Writing Across the Disciplines, 7 (New York, Washington, DC, et al.: Peter Lang, 2003); Daniel Carey, "Travel, Identity, and Cultural Difference, 1580–1700," *ibid.*, 39–47. See now also Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Late Medieval Ambassadors and the Practice of Cross-Cultural Encounters 1250–1450," *The 'Book' of Travels: Genre, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage, 1250–1700*, ed. Palmira Brummett. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, 140 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), 37–112.

<sup>21</sup> Gabriele Crespi, *The Arabs in Europe*. Intro. by Francesco Gabrieli (1979; New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1986), 305–12. See also the contributions to *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean*, ed. Benjamin Arbel. Mediterranean Historical Review. Special issue (London: Frank Cass, 1996).

until 1609, when the final, though probably not complete ethnic cleansing took place.<sup>22</sup>

We could even extend our perspective further geographically and include the study of contacts between medieval Europe and the Asian world, as best represented by Marco Polo, though we then would open another vast window of research, which would go beyond the limit of this study.<sup>23</sup> Still, let us keep in mind that Polo was a most intrepid traveler, reaching the Far East, spending close to two decades there, enjoying a high reputation and serving in a number of political functions at the Mongol court. Moreover, Franciscan missionaries such as William of Rubruck (ca. 1215–1270), John de Plano Carpini (1245–1247), Odoric of Pordenone (ca. 1286–1331), or John of Montecorvino (1247–1328) had also made their way to the Far East,<sup>24</sup> although it remains difficult for us to understand how

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<sup>22</sup> For a recent study on Robert of Ketton and his predecessor Mark of Toledo (also: Marcos de Toledo), see Ulisse Cecini excellent comparative study with its in-depth textual analysis, *Alcoranus latinus: eine sprachliche und kulturwissenschaftliche Analyse der Koranübersetzungen von Robert von Ketton und Marcus von Toledo*. Geschichte und Kultur der Iberischen Welt, 10 (Berlin and Münster: Lit, 2012); for the later history of translations, see Consuelo López-Morillas, "Secret Muslims, Hidden Manuscripts: Spanish Translations of the Qur'an from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries," *Frühe Koranübersetzungen: Europäische und außereuropäische Fallstudien*, ed. Reinhold F. Glei. Bochumer Altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium, 88 (Trier: WVT, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2012), 99–116. See also id., "Lost and Found? Yça of Segovia and the Qu'rân Among the Mudejars and Moriscos," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 103 (1999): 277–92. I will engage with Juan de Segovia and then also with Nicholas of Cusa further below.

<sup>23</sup> See the contributions to *Crossings: Early Mediterranean Contacts with India*, ed. Federico De Romanis and André Tchernia (New Delhi: Manohar, 1997).

<sup>24</sup> For a good selection of primary texts concerning those Franciscan missions to the Mongolian court, see *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, trans. by a nun of Stanbrook Abbey, ed. and with an intro. by Christopher Dawson. The Makers of Christendom (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955); cf. Michèle Guéret-Laferté, *Sur les routes de l'empire mongol: Ordre et rhétorique des relations de voyage aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles*. Nouvelle Bibliothèque du Moyen Âge (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 1994); Marina Münkler, *Erfahrung des Fremden: Die Beschreibung Ostasiens in den Augenzeugenberichten des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 30–40. She also refers to the Dominican André de Longjumeau (also known as Andrew of Longjumeau in English), who traveled to the Tartars in 1248 on behalf of King Louis IX of France and returned in 1251 (40–42), and to the Franciscan William of Rubruck, who went to the Mongols from 1253 to 1255 (43–49). Cf. Albrecht Classen, "Indien: Imagination und Erfahrungswelt in Antike und Mittelalter," *Mittelalter-Mythen*, V. Ed. Ulrich Müller and Werner Wunderlich (St. Gall: UVK, 2008), 359–72. See also Antti Ruotsala, *Europeans and Mongols in the Middle of the Thirteenth Century: Encountering the Other*. Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemian Toimituksia. Sarja-ser. Humaniora nide-tom, 314 (Helsinki: The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2001). See now also the contributions to *Historicizing the "Beyond": The Mongolian Invasion as a New Dimension of Violence?*, ed. Frank Krämer, Katharina Schmidt, and Julika Singer (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2011). See also Peter Jackson, "Medieval Christendom's Encounter with the Alien," *Travellers, Intellectuals, and the World Beyond Medieval Europe* (see note 16; orig. 2001), 31–53; O. R. Dathorne, *Asian Voyages: Two Thousand Years of Constructing the Other* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1996). Cf. also the

they perceived that foreign world and how, if at all, they could function there in that really different cultural and linguistic environment. Nevertheless, they were neither the first nor the only ones, but they certainly blazed paths that have been of greatest significance ever since for Western observers, writers, politicians, and artists.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, our topic is not limited to the two groups of Europeans and Arabs, as complex as their relationships were throughout the centuries (and actually until today). We also need to consider how Jews encountered the Christian and the Muslim world, how representatives of individual countries traveled and visited each other, although often linguistic hurdles were difficult or impossible to overcome. Within the framework of the present study I will not consider the Christian-Jewish context, as important as it certainly is, because this has already been covered by a rich body of modern scholarship, and so there is no point in carrying coal to Newcastle.

Here I also abstain mostly from the examination of how poets or artists viewed the foreign in a fictional context, both because there is already much work on that topic and because several contributors to this volume will offer specialized studies on literary material reflecting on the East-West relationship in the premodern world. We would have to include, for example, an extensive analysis of the Old English *Wonders of the East* and *The Letter of Alexander the Great*, both in their

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very insightful survey by Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India Through European Eyes, 1250-1625*. Past and Present Publications (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 35–84. He emphasizes also: “While it is necessary to distinguish the books of Marco Polo and Mandeville as the two most important instances in the development of the genre of travel literature in the Latin West, it is nevertheless unacceptable to compare Mandeville as an observer (which he never was) with the Venetian merchant. In order to understand medieval ethnographical practices we must therefore compare Marco Polo with those Franciscan and Dominican missionaries whose accounts did actually reflect an experience in South India and China” (49). See now also Romesh Gyaram Molle, *Dschingis Khan und das Bild der Mongolenherrscher in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters*. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, 769 (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 2012), which offers excellent text excerpts and translations, not at all limited to German medieval literature. *Wikipedia* offers a good article on Rubruck, including important links to online sources and editions: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_of\\_Rubruck](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_of_Rubruck) (last accessed on March 19, 2013).

<sup>25</sup> As far as Polo is concerned, the most influential study continues to be John Larner, *Marco Polo and the Discovery of the World* (1999; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001). See now also the valuable contributions to *Marco Polo and the Encounter of East and West*, ed. Suzanne Conklin Akbari and Amilcare A. Iannuci (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2008), where even Chinese historians comment on the authenticity of Polo’s account (Yunte Huang and Longxi Zhang). For the connection between the Christian West and the Mongolian empire, see Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West: 1221–1410*. Medieval World (Harlow, England, and New York: Pearson Longman, 2005). For a discussion of the wondrous and wonders in nature and in the East, see Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 32–34. I would disagree, however, with their assessment of Polo’s account as “an ecstatic description of the natural wonders” (33), discounting some exceptions.

ancient Greek and Latin, and then in their various medieval vernacular versions. The myth of Alexander the Great certainly played a huge role in shaping the European imagination of the mysterious East, and writers throughout time projected, hence, a variety of utopias far beyond the borders of the European continent.<sup>26</sup>

The burning question, by contrast, that I will mostly pursue in this 'introduction' concerns concrete, specific encounters between people from East and West, as we can trace them in travelogues, scientific work, pilgrimage accounts, and mystical reports, and my critical concern will focus on perceptions by individual writers, who often reveal more about their own attitudes toward the foreign world and its peoples than they might have intended.

### 3. Orientalism, Postcolonial Studies, and the Premodern World

One important danger in all of xenological studies really has to be avoided, as Sharon Kinoshita recently pointed out in her review of the volume *Contextualizing the Muslim Other in Medieval Christian Discourse*, edited by Jerold C. Frakes (2011). In the wake of current postcolonial approaches also to the premodern world, scholars tend to perceive everything in the straightjacket of the Christian-Muslim conflict, as if there had not been many other cultural, ethnic, religious, and national groups that faced each other and constituted parts of a very mixed kaleidoscope of perceptions, assumptions, ideals, values, fears, and concepts already in the European and Middle Eastern (probably also East Indian and African) worlds: "Absent such cross-conversations, readers are likely to dip into the volume for essays on their preestablished areas of interest, missing the opportunity productively to rethink the problematics of Muslims in/and medieval 'Christian' discourse."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> For a solid text edition and English translation of both, see *The Beowulf Manuscript: Complete Texts and The Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. and trans. R. D. Fulk. Dunbarton Oaks Medieval Library (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2010). For the Alexander myth, see the contributions to *Alexanderdichtungen im Mittelalter: Kulturelle Selbstbestimmung im Kontext literarischer Beziehungen*, ed. Jan Cölln, Susanne Friede, and Hartmut Wulfram. Veröffentlichungen aus dem Göttinger Sonderforschungsbereich 529: "Internationalität nationaler Literaturen, 1 (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2000). See now the contribution to this volume by Courtney Catherine Barajas.

<sup>27</sup> Sharon Kinoshita, review of *Contextualizing the Muslim Other in Medieval Christian Discourse*, ed. Jerold C. Frakes. *The New Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave, 2011), in *The Medieval Review* (online, 12–8–11; Aug. 31, 2012). Obviously, research that investigates non-Orientalizing perspectives in the premodern world does not enjoy favor among scholars, such as Frakes; see the contributions to *Juden, Christen und Muslime: Religionsdialoge im Mittelalter*, ed. Matthias Lutz-Bachmann and Alexander Fidora (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004); and to

While Frakes seems to pursue a somewhat ideological agenda in casting an almost stereotypical paradigm of the Christian-Muslim relationship in the Middle Ages,<sup>28</sup> David Tinsley, in his contribution to Frakes's own volume, argued rather

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*Christians and Muslims in Dialogue in the Islamic Orient of the Middle Ages = Christlich-muslimische Gespräche im Mittelalter*, ed. Martin Tamcke. Beirut: Orient-Institut; Würzburg: Ergon Verlag in Kommission, 2007). See now the contribution to this volume by Allison P. Coudert who focuses on the way Europeans viewed the Orient from the sixteenth through the early eighteenth centuries. Scholars in other disciplines have long recognized the intense cultural exchanges between Europe and India since antiquity, as reflected by borrowings and copying of images, ideas, and concepts. Aesop's fables, for instance, enjoyed vast success both in East and West; see, for instance Matteo Compareti, "Classical Elements in Sogdian Art: Aesop's Fables Represented in the Mural Paintings at Penjikent," *Iranica Antiqua* XLVII (2012): 303–16. I thank the author for sharing his publication with me. Ancient Greek and Roman culture, philosophy, and literature apparently exerted deep and continuous influence both on West and East. By the same token, both Far East and the West identified India as the land of the miraculous and exotic. See Gioia Zaganelli, *L'Oriente incognito medievale: enciclopedia, romanzi di Alessandro, teratologie. Medioevo romanzo e orientale*. Studi, 10 (Soveria Mannelli [Catanzaro]: Rubbettino, 1997); Duccio Balestracci, *Terre ignote strana gente: storie di viaggiatori medievali*. Storia e società (Bari: GLF Ed. Laterza, 2008).

- <sup>28</sup> Such a charge by Kinoshita, however, might not be quite appropriate or fair to the approach pursued here, at least on the surface, considering that Frakes attempts, as he states in the Foreword, to recognize "the interstitial cultural space," which "did indeed exist for Muslims in medieval Iberia and Sicily and for Jews especially in medieval Iberia, central Europe, and somewhat later in the Venetian republic" (xiii). To support his claim, he also refers to Janet L. Abu-Lughod's *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). Then, however, he radically rejects the work by Sharon Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature*. The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), without indicating what his objections really might be or engaging with her arguments in any detail (xx). A brief glance into Kinoshita's Introduction reveals where the true differences lie, since she admonishes us, right from the beginning, to abstain from traditional stereotypical Orientalizing perspectives, as if the Middle Ages had been a homogenous block in its absolutist rejection of all Saracens/Muslims. In Kinoshita's words: "Obscured in the process, however, are medieval Christians' lived reactions to and interactions with Muslims and the Islamic world—interactions much more complex and multifaceted than implied in the demonizing depictions by Norman Daniel or Edward Said himself" (6). I am afraid that in the case of Frakes's Foreword to his collection of essays we face a bad case of ideologized polemics in Medieval Studies that result from personal sensibilities and not from objective scholarly observations. Surprisingly, John Tolan, in his "Afterword" to Frakes's volume (171–77), correctly notes: "one must take into account the complexity and richness of contacts among medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Muslims lived cheek by jowl with Latin Christians as subjected minorities in Spain, Sicily, and the Latin states of the holy land. European traders, principally Italians and Catalans, frequented the ports of North Africa and the Middle East. Indeed, trade with the East nurtured a sense that the Saracen ruled over lands of fabulous riches" (174). Reflecting on the enormous degree to which both worlds and the many different cultures were in concrete contact with each other, he concludes: "It is in the context of this diverse and intense interaction, which often led Latin Christians to sense the inferiority or fragility of their own culture, that the polemics must be understood" (175). Frakes deserves recognition for having accepted both Tinsley's article and Tolan's Afterword as part of his volume, since they both

the very opposite. In Kinoshita's words, "In the end, Tynsley's [sic] panorama of examples attests 'the remarkable diversity' (92) of medieval German depictions of the Muslim Other." Both in research and in public media it is always much easier to project negative perspectives into the past as a contrast to the advancements of the present than to recognize, based on a large and diverse amount of evidence, the multifarious situations and conditions. To give Tinsley a chance, here as well, it deserves to be recognized that he does not simply side, in the case of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Willehalm*, with the interpretation that the former Saracen woman Arabel, now turned Christian and baptized Gyburg, expressed tolerant attitudes or preached tolerance, as Wolfram's mouthpiece. Nor does he naively follow Frakes's and others' opinion that Wolfram was a typical colonialist and racist already in the Middle Ages. Instead, as he emphasizes, "Wolfram's message, voiced through Gyburg and the deeds of Rennewart, is not the humanist mantra of 'we are all brothers' but rather a stern warning that compassion is essential in a fallen world where human frailty can bring damnation to all."<sup>29</sup>

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strongly disagree with his own views, but both in his footnotes and in his monograph, *Vernacular and Latin Literary Discourses* (see note 41 below) he completely rejects any attempts by Kinoshita and others to recognize a certain degree of complexity and difference in the relationships between East and West and thereby the necessity to overcome some of the deep flaws of traditional approaches to Medieval Studies. As Kinoshita concludes: "I hope to have shown that neither the nationalizing taxonomies of late nineteenth-century official culture nor the conventional orientalizing tropes deployed by an unreflective strain of late twentieth-century postcolonial medievalism can do justice to the complex and often astoundingly bold cultural work being done by texts we too often dismiss as charmingly simple or conventionally formulaic" (236). Hopefully, our own volume will do justice to this somewhat contortionist view of intercultural relations in the premodern world as espoused by Frakes and others. Edward Said's approach to Orientalism (so the title of his book, 1978) proves to be a valuable theoretical concept, certainly applicable to European approaches to the Eastern world at least since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In our volume Pascale Barthe will even suggest that specific features of Orientalism can be detected in seventeenth-century France. However, Said's theoretical model cannot simply be transferred to the Middle Ages with their very different socio-economic, religious, and cultural conditions. For a very thorough critique from the perspective of an early modernist, see the contribution to this volume by Allison P. Coudert. See also Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 2006)

<sup>29</sup> David F. Tinsley, "Mapping the Muslims: Images of Islam in Middle High German Literature of the Thirteenth Century," *Contextualizing the Muslim Other* (see note 27), 65–101; here 89. However, Tinsley might go too far as well when he positions all Latin-European perspectives toward the Muslim, or Saracen, world in the context of an apocalyptic mentality: "The rise of Islam, the flourishing of heresy, and the failure and disintegration of the Christian consensus were all viewed as signs of the imminent Apocalypse" (93). After all, Islam had risen already in the seventh century, and Wolfram, for instance, had nothing to do with Beguines or mystics. I also would question that he created his *Willehalm* or his *Parzival* in light of an apocalyptic perspective. See now Albrecht Classen, "Early Outreaches from Medieval Christendom to the Muslim East: Wolfram von Eschenbach, Ramon Llull and Nicholas of Cusa Explore Options to Communicate with Representatives of Arabic Islam: Tolerance Already in the Middle Ages?," *Studia Neophilologica* 84.2 (2012): 1–15. See also Pauline Moffit Watts, "Talking to Spiritual Others: Ramon



As Kinoshita then concludes, Frakes's overarching "focus on the Muslim <i>Other</i>" means that a consideration of cases where a Muslim is represented as a friend, an ally, a business associate, a companion, or even a run-of-the-mill adversary is discouraged, if not foreclosed, from the start. Perhaps this explains the absence of an entry on Iberia in this volume, except from the perspective of the post-medieval, post-expulsion seventeenth century. Finally, <i>Medieval Christian Discourse</i> subsumes texts as linguistically, culturally, and generically varied as Wolfram von Eschenbach's <i>Parzival</i>, <i>Brut y Tywysogion</i>, the <i>Letter of Prester John</i>, Rudolf of Ems' <i>Weltchronik</i>, and Matthew of Edessa's chronicle into a religiously-defined singular, implying a unity that the Foreword must belatedly work to undo."

But to be fair, we would also have to acknowledge that Frakes does not simply cast all European discourse of Muslims in the paradigm of 'the Other,' as he openly acknowledges the significance of Tinsley's contribution: "The chapter is in general a reformulation of the classic argument against a generalized anti-Islamic prejudice in medieval Europe and thus a chapter that in its conception and purpose forms a clear counterpoise to others in the volume" (xxvi). Ironically, however, in a footnote Frakes then slyly and radically distances himself from Tinsley's approach as misguided and wrong, after all, and refers the readers to his own monograph on this topic, *Vernacular and Latin Literary Discourse*.<sup>30</sup>

A great counter-example to Frakes's global perspective can be found in the world of medieval Spanish altarpieces, many of which were actually produced by Jewish artists who apparently enjoyed, at least until the late fifteenth century, a considerable degree of toleration.<sup>31</sup> In general, as we will see below, it was hard for

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Llull, Nicholas of Cusa, Diego Valadés," *Nicholas of Cusa in Search of God and Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Morimichi Watanabe by the American Cusanus Society*, ed. Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izicki. *Studies in the History of Christian Thought*, 45 (New York and Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991), 203–18.

<sup>30</sup> In fact, I find Frakes' s method here to be rather disingenuous, if not deceptive: "While I respectfully disagree with most aspects of Professor Tinsley's interpretation, the editor's foreword is not the proper place to attempt a refutation" (xx). Why did he then include that article in his collection? Does it perhaps serve as a kind of fig-leaf to hide his ideologically driven interpretation that stands on rather shaky grounds? Where is then the critical engagement with Tinsley's opposing views? See the contribution to this volume by Heiko Hartmann, who offers a trenchant critique of Frakes's work, which proves to be predicated on outdated research and long abandoned theoretical models.

<sup>31</sup> See the contributions to *Uneasy Communion: Jews, Christians, and the Altarpieces of Medieval Spain*, ed. Vivian B. Mann (New York: Museum of Biblical Art, 2010). Cf. also the excellent articles in *The Jew in Medieval Iberia, 1100-1500*, ed. Jonathan Ray (Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2012), and the review of this book by Paola Tartakoff in *The Medieval Review* 12.10.15 (online). For post-medieval perspectives, focusing on the Turkish-European relationship, see Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanism and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). Cf. also the contribution to this volume by Jens T. Wollesen.

people north of the Alps to have any good understanding of the cultures in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, whereas a specifically Mediterranean perspective, keeping the close proximity of various cultures there in mind, will alert us to much more complex conditions and the possibility of existing communicative channels. After all, the direct contacts between Muslim traders and merchants with their Christian partners, for example in Venice, Genoa, Barcelona, and Alexandria, then the intellectual exchanges between Muslim and Jewish, ultimately also Christian scholars and scientists, not to forget the large number of artists, composers, and architects both in north and south, in east and west, established surprisingly intense and constructive networks involving both cultures and religions.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4. Economic, Political, and Cultural Connections: Ignored but Significant Features Under the Radar Screen

The simple economic factor, that is, the global interest in trade, business, and hence profit, confirms, without requiring any further evidence, the universal interest in contacts, in exchanges, and hence in markets where people get together coming from all over the world. They come together not because they intentionally seek out foreigners because of their exotic nature, but because the others offer products or material that meets their needs and allows them to sell them well in their own markets. Whether there is then a common language between the two merchants or not, the product itself and the process of mercantile exchange speak their own languages, based on gestures and objects, such as gold coins and the like.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Anthony Cutler, "Everywhere and Nowhere: The Invisible Muslim and Christian Self-Fashioning in the Culture of Outremer," *France and the Holy Land: Frankish Culture at the End of the Crusades*, ed. Daniel H. Weiss and Lisa Mahoney (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2004), 253–81; Maher Y Abu-Munshar, *Islamic Jerusalem and Its Christians: A History of Tolerance and Tensions*. Library of Middle East History, 13 (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007); Richard Hitchcock, *Mozarabs in Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Identities and Influences* (Aldershot, England, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008); cf. also Stephen O'Shea, *Sea of Faith: Islam and Christianity in the Medieval Mediterranean World* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 2006). See also the contribution to this volume by Jens T. Wollesen.

<sup>33</sup> See, for instance, the contributions to *Fremdheit und Reisen im Mittelalter*, ed. Irene Erfen and Karl-Heinz Spieß (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997). The authors discuss, for example, the European marriage politics involving the transfer of numerous young women as future brides to courts in distant countries (Karl-Heinz Spieß and also Doris Ruhe); the experience of the foreign world in medieval epic literature (Rolf Bräuer); the value of royal and other itineraries for our understanding of medieval travel experience (Marc Löwener); the extensive travels by merchants of the Hanseatic League (Horst Wernicke); the meeting with and integration of foreign merchants

Without going into details, we can be certain that international trade was quite common already in the early Middle Ages and steadily continued and expanded throughout the following centuries. But theological and historiographical authors, such as the Venerable Bede in his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* from 731 only knew of the horrible dangers resulting from the Saracen threat endangering English travelers or pilgrims to southern France, while Saint Boniface warned one of his female friends, a nun in England, to abstain from a pilgrimage to Rome for the same reasons.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Liudprand of Cremona (ca. 920–972) commonly made references to the Saracens/Muslims and described them simply as the enemies of European Christendom who were to be feared and to be fought with at any possible opportunity.<sup>35</sup> At the same time we find enough examples of gift exchanges over vast distances, such as that of an elephant, called Abdul Abbas, for Charlemagne, sent to him in 801 by the Caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd all the way from Persia to northern Germany, Aachen, where it lived until 810.<sup>36</sup>

The material consequences of those exchanges can be fairly easily identified and determined, while the deep cultural impact on the Christian and the Muslim world, for instance, is much harder to fathom, especially because of the deep divide between these two world religions, or, for that matter, among all major world religions. Faith is a glorious matter, but it also bitterly divides people into polar camps, both in the past and in the present.<sup>37</sup> David Abulafia noted, for

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in fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries England (Nils Jörg); the traveling apothecary (Christoph Friedrich); and stereotypes of and prejudice against foreigners at large (Jürgen Regge).

<sup>34</sup> Richard Fletcher, *Ein Elefant für Karl den Großen: Christen und Muslime im Mittelalter*, trans. from the English by Dirk Oetzmann (2002; Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2005), 29.

<sup>35</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. with an intro. and notes by Paolo Squatriti. Medieval Texts in Translation (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 45–47; 94–95; 96–97; 123; 142, et passim. As to the phenomenon of ‘fear’ associated with the conflict with ‘foreigners’ in the Middle Ages, see now Charles W. Connell, “Foreigners and Fear in the Middle Ages,” *Handbook of Medieval Culture*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, forthcoming).

<sup>36</sup> Fletcher, *Ein Elefant* (see note 34), 41–42.

<sup>37</sup> See the contributions to *The Meeting of Civilizations: Muslim, Christian, and Jew*, ed. Moshe Ma’oz (Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2009). See also the bibliography, *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, ed. David Thomas and Barbara Roggema, et al. 3 vols. History of Christian-Muslim Relations, 11, 14, 15 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009–2011). In vol. 2 we learn about the Muslims’ attitudes toward Christians and Christianity (David Thomas) and about the diplomatic relations between Christian and Muslim rulers (Nicolas Drocourt). Emphasizing the ordinary nature of the political contacts between both worlds at least in the early Middle Ages, Drocourt posits: “Diplomatic relations were frequent, and religious difference seems not to have been considered an obstacle to such relations and understandings. Each ruler acted to further his own ambitions and interests. It was not uncommon for Christians to call on Muslims to help them maintain their independence from other Christian powers” (vol. 2, 47). The contributors to vol. 3 examine, for instance, Western narratives of the First Crusade (Marcus Bull), the treatment of Christians in Shī‘ī law (David M. Freidenreich), the discussion of

instance, "It is true that until the late twelfth century there was little demand in the Muslim world for Western industrial goods; but this changed dramatically as Flemish, north French and even English woollen cloths, made to very high specifications, became the preferred export of the Genoese, Pisans and Venetians to eastern markets."<sup>38</sup>

Silver, armaments, and probably also tools of all kinds, and other products out of metal were welcome items on the Muslim markets, but trade with the Muslim world always proved to be rather difficult and was somewhat closed to or inaccessible to the European merchants. For that reason the opening up of the Silk Route during the Mongol rule in the thirteenth century<sup>39</sup> constituted a most welcome opportunity for Westerners to reach the Chinese markets and so to import their products to Europe. But economic exchange hardly ever knew real concrete barriers and disregarded cultural, religious, or linguistic conflicts. When problems occurred, such as when merchandise was captured by pirates or stolen by robbers, when local authorities confiscated goods for a variety of reasons, negotiations quickly developed that indicate how little political and military problems and tensions really mattered on that level and that monetary interests were actually equally shared in East and West.<sup>40</sup>

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Muslims in Western canon law (also by Freidenreich).

<sup>38</sup> Abulafia, "The Role of Trade" (see note 16), 8.

<sup>39</sup> Luce Boulnois, *The Silk Road*, trans. from the French by Dennis Chamberlin (1963; London: Allen & Unwin, 1966); Irene M. Franck and David M. Brownstone, *The Silk Road: A History* (New York: Facts on File, 1986); Frances Wood, *The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia* (2002; London: British Library, 2003); Jonathan Tucker, *The Silk Road: Art and History* (Chicago: Art Media Resources, 2003); Colin Thubron, *Shadow of the Silk Road* (2006; London: Vintage, 2007); see now the contributions to *The Silk Road and Beyond: Travel, Trade, and Transformation*, ed. Karen Manchester. Museum Studies (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2007). Cf. also Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present* (2009; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011). However, this study is more concerned with the transition of a rhetorical method in the academic discourse which the Europeans inherited, as Beckwith argues, from Central Asia. See the review by Will Sayers in *Mediaevistik* 26 (forthcoming).

<sup>40</sup> Abulafia, "The Role of Trade" (see note 16), 18–19. See also Michel Balard, "A Christian Mediterranean: 1000–1500," *The Mediterranean in History*, ed. David Abulafia (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 183–217. Both confirm two central points in the entire history of trade between East and West; one, the strong role which the ports and merchants on the Iberian Peninsula played, and two, the continued significance of the Arabic influence there as well. Balard also underscores the importance of the reopening up of the Atlantic trade already in the thirteenth century, when, in 1277, for the first time, a Genoese ship managed to travel through the Straits of Gibraltar in order to reach the northwestern coast of Europe and to begin trade with Flanders and England (203). Economically speaking, then, the Muslim ports and zones of influence in the Eastern Mediterranean were difficult to enter for the Christian merchants, though they tried very hard. Nevertheless, international trade flowed well between East and West since the early Middle Ages and never suffered from real set-backs, even when the Ottomans had conquered Constantinople in 1453, which motivated Columbus and others to seek other trade routes to India

All this, however, still leaves us rather baffled as to the real contacts and the true level of exchange between both cultures, as far as poets, writers, composers, architects, and artists might be concerned. I will return to this issue once again at the end of this study, but here I need to stake out the basic criteria determining the East-West relationships. We still face many difficult questions that refuse simple answers because the records tend to be quiet about them: How were linguistic barriers overcome? To what extent were poets and artists, for instance, allowed to travel in and through foreign countries? Did patrons in East and West demonstrate any interest in hiring or sponsoring composers and musicians from foreign cultures? To what extent were painters, architects, sculptors, and musicians welcome at foreign courts, either in the West or in the East? How did diplomats and other politicians develop the necessary skills (linguistic or cultural) to engage with their respective partners in the distant lands.

## 5. Literary Reflections on the Foreign in Medieval Literature

Here I intend to make an exception to my own previous statement to refrain from the analysis of literary and artistic expressions in order to gain at least a modicum of insight into the discursive dimension of the contacts between East and West. Medieval and early modern writers in Europe hardly ever, if at all, engaged in a fully-fleshed attempt to examine the foreign culture to the East in any more critical or thorough fashion, and instead mostly pursued individual and pragmatic perspectives to enhance the interest of their accounts so that they could appeal better to their audiences. As Stephanie Cain Van D'Elden correctly observes with regard to medieval German literature, "within a single work the poets were often inconsistent and thus unable, even in the most anti-Muslim setting, to maintain a totally black and white dichotomy. . . . Some were imbued with a blind adherence to the teachings of the Church in their condemnation of all non-Christians; others appear to be indifferent to religion. Some were persuaded that people are human beings, capable of both good and evil, whether they are black or white. Contact

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and China. For an excellent collection of relevant sources, see *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents*, trans. with introductions and notes by Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond. Records of Western Civilization (1955; New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Money and trade, however, often also led to conflicts and tensions, though these were then regularly dealt with in official manners and through a variety of channels, while religious or ethnic arguments then did not matter at all (303–37). See also Lianna Farber, *An Anatomy of Trade in Medieval Writing: Value, Consent, and Community* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); see also Sharon Kinoshita, "'Noi siamo mercatanti cipriani': How to Do Things in the Medieval Mediterranean," *The Age of Philipp de Mézière: Fourteenth-Century Piety and Politics Between France, Venice, and Cyprus*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Kiril Petkov. The Medieval Mediterranean (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 41–60.

with the Mediterranean world did indeed contribute a new dimension to medieval German narrative, albeit a confused one."<sup>41</sup>

Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* (ca. 1205) and the goliardic *Herzog Ernst* (ms. B, ca. 1215–1230) prove to be excellent examples, and both have been discussed from that angle already a number of times.<sup>42</sup> But an appropriate word of caution might also be in place here because the number of literary texts from the high and late Middle Ages and beyond in which people from the West make their way to the East, and, to a lesser degree, the opposite way as well, is just too large to assume that these poets and writers were only imagining the other world for the entertainment of their audiences and relying only on stereotypes and topical concepts. After all, both for military and religious reasons, not to mention economic ones, both worlds were in contact with each other, whether in hostile, friendly, or neutral terms.

The fascination with the other culture, whether an outgrowth of Orientalism or Occidentalism, was certainly present and well developed already in the premodern world, both terms implying a certain degree of understanding of the other side, yet predicated on fancifulness as well.<sup>43</sup> As Stephanie L. Hathaway's

<sup>41</sup> Stephanie Cain Van D'Elden, "Black and White: Contact with the Mediterranean World in Medieval German Narrative," *The Medieval Mediterranean: Cross-Cultural Contacts*, ed. Marilyn J. Chiat and Kathryn L. Reyerson. Medieval Studies at Minnesota, 3 (St. Cloud: North Star Press of St. Cloud, [1988]), 112–18; here 116. Jerold C. Frakes, *Vernacular and Latin Literary Discourses of the Muslim Other in Medieval Germany*. New Middle Ages (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), picks up on this theme, applying a strongly critical perspective, denying any kind of real awareness or true understanding of otherness in these medieval German literary accounts, which mostly reflect, as he sees it, nothing but a 'colonialist' attitude, completely anchored in the Christian ideology. I will engage more in detail with his arguments in my contribution to this volume.

<sup>42</sup> See, for instance, the contributions to this volume by Heiko Hartmann and Albrecht Classen. For *Herzog Ernst*, see Albrecht Classen, "Multiculturalism in the German Middle Ages? The Rediscovery of a Modern Concept in the Past: The Case of *Herzog Ernst*," *Multiculturalism and Representation. Selected Essays*. Ed. John Rieder, Larry E. Smith (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 198–219; Alexandra Stein, "Die Wundervölker des *Herzog Ernst* (B): Zum Problem körpergebundener Authentizität im Medium der Schrift," *Fremdes wahrnehmen – fremdes Wahrnehmen: Studien zur Geschichte der Wahrnehmung und zur Begegnung von Kulturen in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Wolfgang Harms and C. Stephen Jaeger, together with eadem (Stuttgart and Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1997), 21–48; Barbara Haupt, "Ein Herzog in Fernost: Zu *Herzog Ernst A/B*," *Bild, Rede, Schrift; Kleriker, Adel, Stadt und ausserchristliche Kulturen in der Vormoderne; Wissenschaften und Literatur seit der Renaissance. 'Germanistik im Konflikt der Kulturen'*, 7. Akten des XI. Internationalen Germanistenkongresses Paris 2005, ed. Jean-Marie Valentin, Ronald Perlwitz, et al. Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik: Reihe A: Kongressberichte (JIGA), 83 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), 157–68; Albrecht Classen, "The Crusader as Lover and Tourist: Utopian Elements in Late Medieval German Literature: From *Herzog Ernst* to *Reinfried von Braunschweig* and *Fortunatus*," *Current Topics in Medieval German Literature: Texts and Analyses (Kalamazoo Papers 2000–2006)*, ed. Sibylle Jefferis. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, 748 (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 2008), 83–102.

<sup>43</sup> See the contributions to *Medieval Cultures in Contact*, ed. Richard F. Gyug. Fordham Series in

new study illustrates, the conversion of Saracens and the possibility of love between a Christian knight and a formerly Saracen princess, as colonialist as it probably was at that time, represented a remarkable dream in and for the Middle Ages, as perhaps best represented by Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Willehalm* (ca. 1218–1220).<sup>44</sup> As Hathaway argues, to which Jerold C. Frakes would be probably vehemently opposed, Wolfram's "Saracens exemplify this chivalry in part or convey messages to the Christian protagonists and to the audience about how it should be retained and employed."<sup>45</sup> Moreover, as she correctly emphasizes, "conversion to Christianity in *Willehalm* is presented only in terms of spirituality and union with God, not as a motivation for war or killing heathens."<sup>46</sup>

To be sure, as to the recognition of the other religion, the Muslim side obviously did not fare much better than its European counterpart, which would not really surprise us because throughout times people have always had great difficulties in dealing with otherness and foreign cultures if their representatives suddenly come very close to them.<sup>47</sup> There were certainly a number of contacts and exchanges, as we have seen above and as we will learn more below as far as Muslim scholarship was concerned, but the fact still remains that the Muslim world did not really make any serious effort to learn much about the Western world, and those isolated efforts did not really lead to any kind of extensive exchanges or an in-depth learning process, although the *Idrisi-Map*, which I will discuss further below, indicates the true extent of geographical knowledge about Northern and Western

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Medieval Studies (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

<sup>44</sup> Stephanie L. Hathaway, *Saracens and Conversion: Chivalric Ideals in Aliscans and Wolfram's Willehalm*. Studies in Old Germanic Languages and Literature, 6 (Oxford, Bern, et al.: Peter Lang, 2012).

<sup>45</sup> Hathaway, *Saracens and Conversion* (see note 44), 290. For the radically opposed view, see Frakes, *Vernacular and Latin Literary Discourses* (see note 40).

<sup>46</sup> Hathaway, *Saracens and Conversion* (see note 44), 291.

<sup>47</sup> Nizar F. Hermes, *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture: Ninth-Twelfth Century AD*. New Middle Ages (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). For an early attempt to come to terms with this issue, see Gustav Diercks, *Die Araber im Mittelalter und ihr Einfluss auf die Cultur Europa's* (Annaberg: C. O. Schreiber, 1875). He emphasizes, first of all, the development of the sciences and the arts among the Arabs, then argues that they must have deeply influenced the poetry and the arts on the Iberian Peninsula and in the Provence (86–88), concluding that the Arabs really awoke the new spirits of the medieval courtly world (92), but he keeps owing us the evidence. For scientific and scholarly exchanges throughout the Middle Ages, see the contributions to *Wissen über Grenzen: arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, ed. Andreas Speer and Lydia Wegener. *Miscellanea mediaevalia*, 33 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006). See also *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert. *The Ancient World—Comparative Histories* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). As Romedio Schmitz-Esser alerts us in his contribution to this volume, it would be dangerous to attribute all major scientific or medical innovations in the Middle Ages to influences from the Arabic or Persian world. There were also indigenous developments, especially in the world of embalming corpses.

Europe which was available in the Muslim world, at least among the scholars. After all, the Crusades had a traumatic effect on the Muslim world, despite its rigorous and ultimately successful defense, ultimately leading to the fall of the last Christian fortress, Acre, in 1291. But what happened thereafter? That would be the topic for a whole monograph on its own, while the question all by itself clearly alerts us to the enormous *desiderata* of this entire research field.

Muslim poets and writers extensively reflected on their encounters with the enemy, and they pursued a similarly pejorative ideology of the other side in this universal religious-military conflict, whether they simply denigrated the opponents or appealed to their own rulers to rekindle their Muslim spirit and turn to a resolute *jihad* in order to oust the Christian crusaders altogether.<sup>48</sup> More important might also be that the Muslim world neighbored the Middle East and entertained intensive economic relationships with India and other countries there, in many respects more important than those relationship with the trading centers in the West.

Since Europe proved to be the hostile foreign world, Arab scholars and writers were certainly less inclined to turn their attention to the West than the other way around especially because the Europeans were certainly considerably behind them in philosophical, medical, scientific, and other terms. This must, however, not be confused with ignorance or complete unfamiliarity.

While Edward Said's famous dictum of European "Orientalism," circumscribing ideological strategies to justify colonizing efforts,<sup>3</sup> has resonated strongly throughout modern Western research, including Medieval Studies,<sup>49</sup> as problematic as it might be in light of the complex conditions of medieval society, we suddenly seem to face also a kind of "Occidentalism" as developed by Muslim, Oriental, writers, as Nizar F. Hermes now alerts us, strongly arguing against such intellectual giants in the field of historiography as Bernard Lewis, David Morgan, and, above all, Franco Cardini.<sup>50</sup> Countless Arab scholars, merchants, diplomats,

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<sup>48</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 160–62. Allan V. Murray, in his contribution to this volume, offers an insightful analysis of how the Franks actually accommodated themselves with the highly varied indigenous population in the Holy Land (though less so with the Muslims).

<sup>49</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). For recent criticism, see the contributions to *Orientalism Revisited: Art, Land and Voyage*, ed. Ian Richard Netton. Culture and Civilization in the Middle East, 34 (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, and New York: Routledge, 2012). Cf. also Ibn Warraq, *Defending the West: A Critique of Edward Said's "Orientalism"* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2007). For a powerful critique, see now the contribution to this volume by Allison P. Coudert.

<sup>50</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: Norton, 1982); id., *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); id., *A Middle East Mosaic: Fragments of Life, Letters, and History* (New York: Random House, 2000); id., *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); David Morgan, "Persian Perceptions of Mongols and Europeans," *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between*



geographers, and diplomats traveled far and wide, never closing their eyes toward the Far East, as Jacques Le Goff once famously but rather erroneously stated. According to Hermes, “medieval Muslims showed an enormous interest in their own ‘Orient’ especially after the conquest of the region of *al-Sind* (modern Pakistan) in 711 by Muhammad ibn Qasim.”<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, European writers increasingly projected their protagonists operating somewhere in the Orient, and this quite well without facing serious challenges, as if the differences in languages, religions, and culture mattered less and less. One intriguing example for this intriguing normalization of the relations from a Western perspective, at least in fictional terms, would be the heretofore virtually unknown verse narrative *Der Herzog von Braunschweig* from the middle or late fourteenth century which has survived in a Heidelberg manuscript (Universitätsbibliothek Heid 1012) from the second half of the fifteenth century. The author seems to have been the Dutch Augustijn van Dordt, who probably based his text on the Middle Dutch verse romance *Heinric en Margriete van Limborch* from ca. 1300.<sup>52</sup>

The two lovers, the Duke of Brunswick and the wife of the King of Sevilla, run away, she pretending to have drowned, and hide in anonymity in Venice. After one year of happiness, however, he is overwhelmed by remorse for having robbed the king of his wife, while she feels deep regret over having deprived her lover of the chance of gaining new fame as a knight. Consequently she secretly leaves him and departs with a merchant for Baghdad, where she lives for a long time working in the service of this merchant whose daughters she educates. She later learns that

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*Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz. Studies in Comparative Early Modern History (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 201–17; Franco Cardini, *Europe and Islam*, trans. by Caroline Beamish. Making of Europe (1999; Oxford and Malden: Blackwell, 2001).

<sup>51</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 23. Even distant countries such as Cambodia were obviously not beyond Arab reach, as the case of ‘Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Ishaq confirms (ibid., 24).

<sup>52</sup> The text is currently prepared by Thomas Klein for a critical edition. For a description of the manuscript Heid 1012 and a bibliography of recent critical studies on this ms. and other texts contained in it, such as Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken’s *Loher und Maller* (1437), see <http://www.handschriftencensus.de/3678>. A digital version of this manuscript can be found online at: [http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/heidhs1012?action=fulltextsearch&ft\\_query=Heid%201012&navmode=fulltextsearch](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/heidhs1012?action=fulltextsearch&ft_query=Heid%201012&navmode=fulltextsearch) (last accessed on Dec. 27, 2012). Although some scholars have mentioned this verse narrative before, it represents a truly uncharted narrative territory. See now Johanna Thali, “Sinnwidrigkeiten: Interferenzen zwischen Text, Bild und Layout in der Erzählung vom ‘Herzog von Braunschweig in der Heidelberger Handschrift 1012,” *Wolfram-Studien* XXII: Finden – Gestalten – Vermitteln: Schreibprozesse und ihre Brechungen in der mittelalterlichen Überlieferung. *Freiburger Colloquium* 2010, ed. Eckart Conrad Lutz, together with Susanne Köbele and Klaus Ridder (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2012), 467–512.

her lover has been appointed king of Spain after her own husband back in Sevilla had died. In order to communicate with the new ruler, she sends six valuable tapestries to Spain, where the king immediately recognizes the ekphrastic message woven into the textiles. So he travels to Baghdad, reunites with his beloved, takes her back home to Spain, and marries her.

While the critical issue certainly rests on issues pertaining to love, chivalry, communication, and the use of various media for that purpose, first there is the war against the Muslims in Spain, in which the Duke of Brunswick triumphantly defeats the opponents—for a significant parallel in this motif, see the anonymous sentimental romance *Mai und Beaflo* (end of the thirteenth century)—and later his mistress's move to Baghdad, from where he retrieves her at the end. As this narrative indicates, following a number of other examples in late-medieval European literature, especially if we think of the rich and highly diverse tradition of *Floire and Blancheflor* or the Old French *chanteable* *Aucassin et Nicolette*, not to forget the anonymous Middle High German romance *Reinfried von Braunschweig* (late thirteenth century), locations such as Baghdad and other cities in the Near East were certainly within reach of European authors, whether in actual travelogues or in fictional accounts.

## 6. Arab Writers, Geographers, and Travelers

We also would have to consider the history of Arabic seafaring in the Mediterranean, although that part of the world never seems to have gained as much importance for the Arab rulers as the Indian Ocean, which enjoyed mostly peace throughout times; here disregarding smaller skirmishes and the attacks by pirates.<sup>53</sup> But this did not mean that Arabs were not working to improve their cartography of the Mediterranean, did not attempt on a regular basis to expand their hold on islands and neighboring countries, were not constantly engaged with the Byzantines despite the latter's vastly superior fleet, and did not attempt to develop their own ship-building skills and navigation abilities.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> George F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times*, rev. and expanded by John Carswell (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995). Despite its narrow title, there is also a whole chapter on the early history of Arabic seafaring in the Mediterranean, 53–61. The early Middle Ages witnessed some development in Arab navigation, but the competition with Byzantium and a variety of Christian countries to the north and west kept all those efforts on a low level.

<sup>54</sup> This entire topic still seems to be somewhat in its infancy, but see the contributions to *Aspects of Arab Seafaring: An Attempt to Fill in the Gaps of Maritime History*, ed. Yacoub Yousef al-Hijji and Vassilios Christides, together with Peggy Moschona and Christos G. Makrypoulias (Athens: Institute for Graeco-Oriental and African Studies, 2002).

Arabic geographers at least since the ninth century, whether on the basis of personal experiences, which might be unlikely, or rather on the basis of ancient Greek and Roman sources, drew numerous maps of the entire known world, including Europe. "It must be said that in both divisions, Europe is often conceived as including not only al-Andalus (Muslim Spain), the adjacent lands of the Galicians and the Basques, the Franks and *al-Rum* (Romans and Byzantines) but also the lands of the Slavs, the Bulgars, the Rus, and many other eastern European regions."<sup>55</sup>

The most sophisticated and most curious author seems to have been al-Mas'udi (d. 896), often characterized as the Herodotus of the Arabs, who first visited Persia in around 915, then went to India and China, returned to East Africa, visiting Zanzibar, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Sudan. In 926 he reached Palestine, then turned to Arabia for his *hajj*, then got to Syria, the Byzantine Empire, and finally went as far north as to the Slavic world in northern Europe. Once he had settled in Egypt, he died there in 956.<sup>56</sup>

Mostly copying Greco-Roman views of the races in the north, identifying and pitying them as Barbarians with little reason, using coarse language, and characterized by huge white-skinned bodies, this writer imitated much of traditional perceptions, creating—or replicating and expanding on—a kind of medieval "Occidentalism" already.<sup>57</sup> But he still made a serious and noteworthy attempt to bring the world of the Europeans closer to his Arabic readers, although he hesitated little to identify those populations in the north as barbarians, if not as monsters.<sup>58</sup> Undoubtedly, however, beyond those stereotypical opinions, he was the first extensive chronicler of Slavic culture and people in an Arabic context, whether he had been an eye-witness or not.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 41. The term 'Rum' was used by the Arabs to identify the Christians of the Orient, who could sometimes include the Genoese and other Italians, while the Christians of the Occident were generally called 'Franks.'

<sup>56</sup> Ahmad M. H. Shboul, *Al-Mas'udi & His World: A Muslim Humanist and His Interest in Non-Muslims* (London: Ithaca Press, 1979); André Miquel, *La géographie humaine du monde musulman jusqu'au milieu du 11e siècle*. Civilisations et sociétés, 7, 37, 68, 78 (Paris: Hays, 1975), 259.

<sup>57</sup> David Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden: Vorstellungen und Fremdkategorien bei Rimbart, Thietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold von Bosau*. *Orbis mediaevalis*, 5 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005).

<sup>58</sup> Mas'udi, *The Meadows of Gold, The Abbasids*, trans. Paul Lunde and Caroline Stone (London and New York: Kegan Paul, 1989); see also *Al-Mas'udi Millenary Commemorative Volume*, ed. S. Maqbul Ahmad and A. Rahman (Aligarh: Indian Society for the History of Science, 1960); Ahmad A. M. Shboul, *Al-Mas'udi and His World: A Muslim Humanist and His Interest in Non-Muslims* (London: Ithaca Press, 1979). The article in *Wikipedia* proves to be impressively detailed and nuanced: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Masudi> (last accessed on July 27, 2012). See also André Miquel, *La géographie humaine dans le monde musulman jusqu'au XIe siècle*, 4 vols. (Paris: Mouton, 1967–1988; 2nd ed. 2001).

<sup>59</sup> Ahmad Nazmi, *Commercial Relations Between Arabs and Slavs* (see note 1), 83; see also Hermes, *The*

As to Rome, and further on as to London, hence England, the first one to write about the marvels (at least in Rome), was Harun ibn Yahya, of whose biography very little is known. He was captured by pirates in the seaport town of Ascalon shortly before 886, taken to Constantinople, held as a prisoner of war there, ransomed in 886, and then traveled, instead of returning home, to Europe via Greece.<sup>60</sup> His account of Rome with all its churches, but then also of the people of Rome, proves to be most fascinating for its personal approach, his expression of astonishment about the fact that the men all shaved their beards and often also their heads, which signaled to him, being a Muslim, that they must have been homosexuals.<sup>61</sup>

Ibn Yahya's account of northwestern Europe again does not prove to be based on his personal experiences, but it reflects an impressive accuracy: The tenth-century Ibn Rustah, drawing from him, quotes the following in his *Book of Precious Records*:

From the city (sc. Rome) you sail the sea and journey for three months, till you reach the land of the king of the Burjān (here Burgundians). You journey hence through mountains and ravines for a month, till you reach the land of the Franks. From here you go forth and journey for four months, till you reach the city (capital) of *Bartīniyah* (Britain). It is a great city on the shore of the Western Ocean, ruled by seven kings. At the gate of its city (capital) is an idol (*ṣanam*). When the stranger wishes to enter it, he sleeps and cannot enter it, until the people of the city take him, to examine his intention and purpose in entering the city. They are Christians. They are the last of the lands of the Greeks, and there is no civilization beyond them.<sup>62</sup>

Another major author reflecting on the British Isles was the astronomer Al-Battānī, who published an important tract in 902, who was followed by Ibn Rustah who based his writing (913) on that source as well. This in turn influenced Al-Mas'ūdī (see above) who began writing in 943, and has to say the following in his *Murūj al-Dhahab*: "No ship sails therein (Atlantik), nor is any habitable land there, nor any reasonable creature dwelling therein. Neither its extent nor end is known. It is the

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[*European*] *Other* (see note 47), 50–51.

<sup>60</sup> *Studies on the Travel Accounts of Sallām at-Tarḡumān (before 864), Hārūn b. Yahyā (fl. about 912) and as-Sindibād al-Bahriā (fl. about 912)*, collected and reprinted by Fuat Sezgin in collaboration with Mazen Amawi. Publications of the Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science: Islamic Geography, 166 (Frankfurt a. M.: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1994).

<sup>61</sup> Christian Bromberger, "Hair: From the West to the Middle East Through the Mediterranean," *Journal of American Folklore* 121 (2008): 379–99; here 385, 390–91.

<sup>62</sup> D. M. Dunlop, "The British Isles According to Medieval Arabic Authors," *Islamic Quarterly* 4 (1957): 11–28; here 16; see also Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 78–79. For a complete text edition, see Ibn Rustah, *Kitāb al-A'lāk an-Nafīsa*, ed. M. J. De Goeje. Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum [BGA] (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1892). His book, published in 903 C.E., is sometimes also translated as *Book of Precious Things*.

Sea of Darkness, the Green Sea, the Encircling Ocean. . . . Marvellous things are told concerning it . . . ."<sup>63</sup>

The geographer Ash-Sharīf al-Idrīsī (ca. 1154) remarks about the waters surrounding the British Isles: "The waters of this sea are covered with cloud and dark in colour. The waves are enormous, and the sea is deep. Darkness reigns continually, and navigation is difficult. The winds are violent and towards the west its limits are unknown. In this sea are a number of inhabited islands, but few sailors dare to risk their lives therein" (21). In another context I will later return to this amazing and deeply learned scholar who seems to have known so much not only about the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, but also about northern and Western Europe.

Subsequently, another geographer, Abū 'l-Fidā, commented in his work from 1321 both on England and France, drawing from an 'Ibn Sa'īd: "And to the east of Bordeaux is the city of Toulouse. . . . The river (sc. Garonne) is south of it, and ships from the Encircling Ocean ascend it, with tin and copper, which they bring from the island of England and the island of Ireland. It is carried on pack-animals to Narbonne, and taken from there on the ships of the Franks to Alexandria" (25).

To what extent all these and other documents confirm a concrete contact between Arabic writers and the British Isles, and other parts of Europe, cannot be confirmed at all. They demonstrate, however, a certain degree of knowledge and clear awareness of the Northwestern parts of that continent. We also would have to keep in mind that throughout times countless authors of travelogues, such as Marco Polo, presented often rather astonishing accounts seemingly unbelievable in their content for their audiences back home. But the point is not so much whether they actually traveled or not, but rather whether they succeeded in conveying a sense of new worlds and thus contributed to the growth of an intercultural awareness.

Dunlop tends to dismiss his evidence as proof for specific travels, since these are all learned reports, hence based on previous writings, probably ultimately going back to the Greeks. Nevertheless, it would go too far to disregard these multiple references altogether (28), especially as he himself is willing to admit: "Possible contacts with the south or west coast of Ireland are as much as can be affirmed. A similar contact with the coast of England is not excluded" (28). Moreover, the various Muslim rulers tried to establish a relationship with the Western rulers, and vice versa.

The Arabic chronicler Awhadi related that Bertha, the daughter of Lothar, queen of France, "sent a gift and a letter to the Abbasid Caliph al-Muktafi in the year 293 of the Hijra (906 C.E.). Accompanying those was a further message, not included in the letter, but addressed directly to the Caliph. The letter, says the Arab

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<sup>63</sup> Dunlop, "The British Isles" (see note 62), 18.

historian, was written on white silk 'in a writing resembling the Greek writing but straighter'. . . . The message, he says, was a request to the Caliph for marriage and friendship."<sup>64</sup> The letter, however, at first represented a linguistic puzzle that did not find an easy solution. The members of the court sought someone who could at least transcribe the text, which a Frankish slave finally could do, rendering it from Latin to Greek writing. Once that had been completed, they could bring in the famous scientific translator Ishaq ibn Hunain, who finally rendered the text from Greek into Arabic.

Unfortunately, it escapes us what happened next, though we can certainly surmise that the outcome was rather modest or even totally meaningless since none of the hoped for diplomatic and political connects were created. As later cases, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean confirm, the linguistic difficulties did not diminish, on the contrary. "An Englishman who had something to say to a Turkish official said it to someone who translated it into Italian and then someone else translated it from Italian into Turkish. The answer came back by the same route."<sup>65</sup> While the many different European vernaculars developed over the centuries, gaining in weight next to the learned language, Latin, in the Arabic world the situation appears to have been quite different, with Arabic, despite many local dialects, rising to the level of a *lingua franca*. Not surprisingly, there was subsequently little interest among Arabic speakers to bother with European languages, which made the contacts difficult. As Bernard Lewis emphasizes: "Why would an Arabic speaker bother to learn the barbarous idioms of infidels and savages beyond the imperial frontier? Arabic provided all his needs, and if anyone wanted to talk to him, they would learn Arabic."<sup>66</sup>

Nevertheless, as we can observe on the basis of a growing body of evidence, linguistic channels to Europe existed after all, and the Muslim world certainly did not remain in splendid isolation throughout the centuries. A very simple example, which I will examine at much greater length below, pertains to the scores of European pilgrims who came for a visit to the Holy Land. Although hardly anyone among them was capable of speaking Arabic, the many exchanges with the local population, with guides, authorities, merchants, inn-keepers, and countless other people confirmed (often via Italian or Latin, rarely through a garbled German) that some sort of communication was possible, and this already in the Middle Ages.

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<sup>64</sup> Bernard Lewis, *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004), 20–21.

<sup>65</sup> Lewis, *From Babel to Dragomans* (see note 64), 21.

<sup>66</sup> Lewis, *From Babel to Dragomans* (see note 64), 22. It needs to be emphasized that Lewis operates without any solid scholarly apparatus, irrespective of a few notes at the end of each chapter. It seems highly problematic to agree with many of his strong arguments since the base for them appears rather thin.

Turning to the learned tradition, we only need to realize, in our context, how much, in fact, Arabic writers reflected on Europe, which shatters traditional opinions as to the complete ignorance or lack of knowledge about the West. Muslim slaves or captives can probably assumed to be additional sources of information, such as the Syrian Muslim scholar al-Jarmi who was taken prisoner by the Byzantines around 845, transferred to Constantinople, and freed in 847 after his ransom had been paid by the Abbasid Caliph al-Wathiq. His extensive travel accounts about that part of the world, so important for his Arabic audience, were mostly preserved by Ibn Khordadbeh and al-Mas'udi, and later extensively copied by future travel writers. As Hermes notes: "After his return to Baghdad, he wrote an account of his travels that became the most valuable firsthand narrative on the Byzantines, Khazars, and Slavs."<sup>67</sup>

If we followed Hermes's study at length, we would encounter a plethora of additional sources that confirm his arguments of a Muslim "Occidentalism," but he also underscores the true extent of knowledge, even if very fragmentary, about medieval Europe by the contemporary Arabic Muslims, such as, to name one more important name, Ibn Fadlan, a famous emissary of the Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtadir (d. 932) to the city of Bulghar, today in central-European Russia (921) (80–98). This author can also be identified as the first writer to mention the Vikings, here named 'Rus,' whom he characterizes as tall, strongly built in the way of a palm tree, yet also severely criticizes for their habit of exposing their bodies in public, not wearing much clothing.

As to the Viking women, he has the following to say: "Each of the women has fastened upon the two breasts a brooch of iron, silver, copper, or gold in weight and value according to the wealth of her husband."<sup>68</sup> To his shock, women would shamelessly expose their vulva even in the presence of strangers, and would go swimming in rivers together with men, neither wearing any clothing, not to mention the fact that it was not uncommon for them to have sex with slave girls in front of everyone.<sup>69</sup> In many respects, here we encounter an almost stunningly

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<sup>67</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 79.

<sup>68</sup> Richard N. Frye, *Ibn Fadlan's Journey to Russia: A Tenth-Century Traveler from Baghdad to the Volga River* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2005), 63. The text was already translated into German in 1939, *Ibn Fadlan's Reisebericht*, trans. A. Zeki Validi Togan. *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 24.3 (Leipzig: Kommissionsverlag F. A. Brockhaus, 1939). There are a good handful of relevant studies on Ibn Fadlan both in Russian and Arabic, which I could not consult. But see C. M. Fraehn, *Ibn Foslan's und anderer Araber Berichte über die Russen älterer zeit*. *Hamburger philologische Studien*, 39 (1823; Hamburg: Buske, 1976); Ibn Fadlân, *Voyage chez les Bulgares de la Volga*, trans. and annotated by Marius Canard. *La Bibliothèque arabe. Collection Les Classiques* (Paris: Sindbad, 1988). See also Stig Wikander, *Araber, vikingar, varingar*. *Svenska humanistiska förbundet*, 90 (Nyhamnsläge and Lund: Svenska humanistiska förbundet, 1978).

<sup>69</sup> McKeithen, "The *Risala* of Ibn Fadlan: An Annotated Translation and Introduction," Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, Bloomington, 1979, 131; Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 92.

early report about the Russian Vikings observed through the lens of this Arabic travel author.<sup>70</sup>

A variety of Arabic writers commented with ridicule, but also with horror and disgust, on the lack of public morals among European women, as they perceived it, most dramatically formulated by Usamah ibn Munqidh (d. 1188) who visited the city of Nablus, then occupied and controlled by Crusaders. Whether the anecdotes included in his text can really be trusted as representative of the Frankish culture there cannot be fully verified, particularly because they seem to be so titillating, perhaps even pornographic, and transgressive at least, to be sure. What matters, by contrast, is the fact that Arabic writers such as Usamah formulated opinions about the Western culture, which they despised altogether. It might well have been that he had made up some of his anecdotes in order to undermine the Christians' character, but he certainly reflected on them and considered it worth his time to discuss how he perceived the Europeans and, as he emphasized, their lack of jealousy or even decency in terms of sexuality.<sup>71</sup>

The most famous example, truly shocking even for us today, hence perhaps a clever propaganda ploy by the author, proves to be this account of a Frank who had entered his bath in al Ma'arra. The Frank disapproved of any clothing while in the bath, and so forcefully took off the author's clothing to make him conform to his own customs. The following events are nothing but extraordinary, and have, for that reason, also been quoted a number of times:

He looked and saw that I had recently shaved off my pubes. So he shouted, "Sālim!" As I drew near him he stretched his hand over my pubes and said, "Sālim, good! By the truth of my religion, do the same for me." Saying this, he lay on his back and I found that in that place the hair was like his beard. So I shaved it off. Then he passed his hand over the place and, finding it smooth, he said, "Sālim, by the truth of my religion, do the same to madame, referring to his wife. He then said to a servant of his, "Tell madame to come here." Accordingly the servant went and brought her and made her enter the bath. She also lay on her back. The knight repeated, "Do what thou hast done to me." So I shaved all that hair while her husband was sitting looking at me. At last he thanked me and handed me the pay for my service. (165–66)

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<sup>70</sup> J. E. Montgomery, "Ibn Fadlan and the Russiyyah," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 3 (2000): 1–25; id., "Traveling Autopsies: Ibn Fadlan and the Bulgars," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 7 (2004): 4–32; Caroline Stone, "Ibn Fadlan and the Midnight Sun," *Saudi Aramco* 30 (1979): 1–3.

<sup>71</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 109. For a translation, see *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades: Memoirs of Usamah ibn-Munqidh*, trans. Philip K. Hitti (London: I. B. Tauris, 1987). I will quote from this work. But cf. also the new translation, Usama ibn Munqidh, *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades*, trans. with an Intro. and Notes by Paul M. Cobb (London: Penguin, 2008). For detailed study focusing on the ethnic, social, and religious groups identified by Usama, see Alexander Schauer, *Muslimen und Franken: ethnische, soziale und religiöse Gruppen im Kitāb al-l'tibār des Usāma ibn Munqidh*. Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 230 (Berlin: K. Schwarz, 2000).



Whatever we might think about this situation, and we do not really need to assess the historical veracity of this scene in the bath, it clearly emerges how closely the representatives of both religions interacted with each other. The author regularly expresses his dislike of and even disgust for the Frankish culture, the legal procedures practiced by them, and their way of fighting in war. Nevertheless, this also indicates how much he was in contact with them and had obviously no problems in communicating with them.

In one case he even seems to have struck a close friendship with a Frank: "In the army of King Fulk, son of Fulk, was a Frankish reverend knight who had just arrived from their land in order to make the holy pilgrimage and then return home. He was of my intimate fellowship and kept such constant company with me that he began to call me 'my brother.' Between us were mutual bonds of amity and friendship" (161). Usamah also witnessed some truly brutal forms of medicine practiced by a Christian, which immediately led to the death of the patients (leg amputation and an attempt to heal a woman's insanity[162]). But he also knows to report of very successful medical treatments by Frankish doctors, even though he strongly dislikes one of the patients and regrets his complete recovery (162–63).

Freshly arrived Franks appear to him as particularly rude and uncouth because they have not yet acclimatized and are not yet used to Muslim culture. But Usamah explicitly emphasizes that he is protected and helped by the Templars whom he calls his "friends" (164), who went so far as to vacate a little adjoining mosque next to the Aqsa Mosque which they had transformed into a Christian church. The reason for their behavior was simply that they felt motivated to give him room and quiet space to carry out his own prayer (163–64). Moreover, we also hear of religious exchanges between the Christians and Muslims, as when a Frank introduced Usamah and his friends to an image of the Jesus child. The author did not object to that presentation, but quickly added: "But Allah is exalted far above what the infidels say about him!" (164).

We would and could not expect much more from either a Christian or a Muslim author from that time and under those military, political, and religious conditions. The religious barriers did not get lower, and the cultural conflicts continued to be considerably great. Nevertheless, this account by itself confirms how much exchanges, contacts, even friendship were all within the reach of possibility. As Usamah remarks: "Among the Franks are those who have become acclimatized and have associated long with the Moslems. These are much better than the recent comers from the Frankish lands. But they constitute the exceptions and cannot be treated as a rule" (169). One positive example proves to be a Frankish knight who invited Usamah to a delicious meal and assured him that it did not contain any pork and was strictly prepared according to Muslim conditions by an Egyptian cook (169–70).

Muslim writers were certainly deeply shocked and horrified at first about the attack by the Crusaders, and later also horrified about most brutal attacks against cities such as Damietta, Egypt, in 1219, but in the course of time many channels of communication and mutual interest opened up.<sup>72</sup> After all, the Crusaders operated as knights, and were soon simply recognized as such, as a warrior class, against which the Arabs launched their own armies. Hence, on that level a variety of new perspectives could develop, including mutual respect for heroism, courage, and bravery, piety and devotion. One unique example was the rather friendly relationship between Emperor Frederick II and the ruler of Egypt, al-Malik al-Kāmil, as described by Ibn Wasil.<sup>73</sup> Insofar as this case proves to be so instructive, let us follow it to some length.

In 1226 the Sultan sent as his ambassador to Frederick, the Emir Fakhr ad-Din because he was concerned about the meteoric successes of his brother, the governor of Damascus, who had established close ties with the Khwarizmian Turks, but seemed really to target Egypt. So al-Kāmil hoped to utilize Frederick's crusading intentions as a lever against his brother in Syria, while the Emperor seems to have understood well the power of diplomatic negotiations with the Muslim side at a time when there was a growing disunity in the Arabic world. The Sultan asked Frederick to attack Damascus in return for receiving Jerusalem, which would have worked fine for both sides, except that al-Kamil's brother, al-Mu'azzam, died, which made al-Kamil lose interest in his earlier offer to the Emperor. Nevertheless, Frederick was able to convince him finally to turn over Jerusalem because it was then a city of relatively low importance for the Muslim world, lacked a defense wall, and was rather desolate.

Significantly, the Temple Mount was kept by the Muslims. "Christians could, however, visit the Temple Mount. Around Jerusalem were to remain Muslim settlements, under Muslim control. Hebron . . . , centre of Muslim and Jewish veneration, remained in non-Christian hands. Al-Bira, or la Grande Mahomerie, north of Jerusalem, was to be the local Muslim governmental headquarters. But between Jerusalem and the sea, there would be a narrow corridor, linking the city to the coastal towns still in Frankish hands, by way of the see of St. George at Lydda. Bethlehem too was handed to the Franks, as was Nazareth."<sup>74</sup> The Franks

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<sup>72</sup> Aleya Khattab, *Das Ägyptenbild in den deutschsprachigen Reisebeschreibungen der Zeit von 1285–1500*. Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe I: Deutsche Sprache und Literatur, 517 (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1982); eadem, *Das Bild der Franken in der arabischen Literatur des Mittelalters: Ein Beitrag zum Dialog über die Kreuzzüge*. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, 505 (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1989).

<sup>73</sup> Francesco Gabrieli, *Storici arabi delle Crociate*. Nuova universale Einaudi, 34 (1963; Turin: G. Einaudi, 1966).

<sup>74</sup> David Abulafia, *Frederick II: A Medieval Emperor* (London: Penguin, 1988), 183. For a contrastive view, see Ernst Kantorowicz, *Frederick the Second: 1194–1240*. Makers of the Middle Ages (London: Constable & Co., 1931). There is, of course, much research on this emperor; see, for instance,

rebuilt some of the city's fortifications, but they explicitly banned all Jews from living there, although we know of important exceptions granted by the local viscount, Gerald of Sais, and the local lord of the city, probably the Castellan Baldwin of Picquigny, who allowed Jews to enter Jerusalem as part of their pilgrimage, and they also granted permission to a Jewish dyer to settle in the city.<sup>75</sup>

Unfortunately, if not tragically for Frederick, no one liked the treaty, neither the Muslim nor the Christian side, nor the outcome of his Crusade, whether in the West or in the East, which was mostly determined by negotiations and not by any fighting.<sup>76</sup> Ironically, perhaps for that very reason it was also rather successful for at least ten years when the Franks lost the control of the city entirely in 1244 in the wake of the Khwarazmian Sack, probably because it was not heroic and achieved the emperor's concrete goals in realistic and pragmatic terms without any great fanfare and drama. But the papal propaganda was totally opposed to this remarkable achievement and condemned the emperor even more than before.<sup>77</sup> As to the Muslims, the Sultan knew well how to appease his people and announced subsequently: "We have only conceded to them some churches and some ruined houses. The sacred precincts, the venerated Rock and all the other sanctuaries to which we make our pilgrimages remain ours as they were. Muslim rites continue to flourish as they did before, and the Muslims have their own governor of the rural provinces and districts."<sup>78</sup>

However, for al-Kamil the situation was equally difficult because he was almost regarded as a traitor especially in Damascus, where public mourning for his brother continued, which made al-Kamil's dealing with the infidel Emperor look

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*Stupor Mundi: Zur Geschichte Friedrichs II von Hohenstaufen*, ed. Gunther G. Wolf. Wege der Forschung, CI (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982); Wolfgang Stürner, *Friedrich II. Gestalten des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*. 2 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992–2000); Ulrich Müller, "Friedrich II: 'Jener große Freigeist, das Genie unter den deutschen Kaisern?'," *Herrscher, Helden, Heilige*, ed. id. and Werner Wunderlich. Mittelalter-Mythen, 1 (St. Gallen: UVK Fachverlag für Wissenschaft und Studium, 1996), 213–29; *Kaiser Friedrich II.: Leben und Persönlichkeit in Quellen des Mittelalters*, ed. Klaus van Eickels and Tania Brüsch (Düsseldorf: Artemis & Winkler, 2000); *Kaiser Friedrich II, 1194–1250: Begleitband zur Sonderausstellung "Kaiser Friedrich II. (1194–1250). Welt und Kultur des Mittelmeerraums" im Landesmuseum für Natur und Mensch Oldenburg*, ed. Mamoun Fansa and Karen Ermete. Schriftenreihe des Landesmuseums für Natur und Mensch Oldenburg, 55 (Mainz: P. von Zabern, [2008]); Olaf B. Rader, *Friedrich II.: der Sizilianer auf dem Kaiserthron, eine Biographie* (Munich: Beck, 2010).

<sup>75</sup> Joshua Prawer, *The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 90–91.

<sup>76</sup> Yvonne Friedman, "Between Warfare and Conflict Resolution: Pilgrimage and Politics in the Holy Land," *Pilgrims and Politics: Rediscovering the Power of the Pilgrimage*, ed. Antón M. Pazos. Compostela International Studies in Pilgrimage History and Culture (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 55–68; here 62–64.

<sup>77</sup> See, for instance, J. M. Powell, "Patriarch Gerold and Frederick II: The Mathew Paris Letter," *Journal of Medieval History* 25 (1999): 19–26; Friedman, "Between Warfare" (see note 76), 63.

<sup>78</sup> Abulafia, *Frederick II* (see note 74), 184.

highly suspicious. Similarly, most Muslims disliked Frederick for his lukewarm approach to his own religion and felt relatively little, if any, respect for him, and they hated him because he had negotiated the possession of Jerusalem for Christianity. Altogether, despite the Emperor's concrete success, in public opinion and in practical terms he had not achieved much at all and was a disappointment for both sides. He quickly experienced profound antagonism and seems to have hurt or insulted virtually every party, despite his great diplomatic skills.<sup>79</sup>

Nevertheless, apart from the political conflict which the Emperor went through, partly imposed on him by external forces, partly brought upon him by his own actions, we clearly observe one critical aspect truly essential for our purpose here. Whatever Frederick achieved, he did so because he had a whole entourage of diplomats, translators, and advisors with him who certainly could communicate with the Muslims on the other side. After all, in Southern Italy and Sicily he ruled over a relatively large group of an Arabic population. Such high-stake negotiations could only be carried out if there were enough people in both parties who could talk to each other clearly enough to avoid major misunderstandings and hence conflicts.<sup>80</sup> Multilingualism was not an uncommon feature at medieval and early-modern courts, and in the South of Europe it was not unrealistic to encounter a ruler who even knew some Arabic, apart from French, German, Italian, Czech, Latin, or English, depending on the specific framework of his or her kingdom. Moreover, most intellectuals were bilingual (Latin and a vernacular), and merchants in general had greatest need and desire to speak their customers' language, as is the case today.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Abulafia, *Frederick II* (see note 74), 189–94. He emphasizes clearly: "Frederick's crusade left a legacy of conflict and disorder both in Cyprus and in the Holy Land. The imperial factions on the island and on the mainland continued for years to struggle for ascendancy; in the 1230s, the Latin kingdom was, to all intents, split between Gibelins and imperialists. What is clear from the events between September 1228 and May 1229 is that Frederick had consistently underestimated the strength of the Gibein opposition; this strength was not merely military, but also ideological" (193).

<sup>80</sup> Schneider, *Vom Dolmetschen im Mittelalter* (see note 13), 53.

<sup>81</sup> Gerrit Deutschländer, *Dienen lernen, um zu herrschen: Höfische Erziehung im ausgehenden Mittelalter (1450–1550)*. Hallische Beiträge zur Geschichte des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit, 6 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2012), 30–32; *Intercultural Transmission of Scientific Knowledge in the Middle Ages: Graeco-Arabic-Latin*, ed. Mohammed Abattouy. Science in Context, 14.1/2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); for concrete linguistic exchanges in the field of sciences, see the contributions to *Greek Arabic Latin: The Transmission of Mathematical Texts in the Middle Ages: International Workshop Experience and Knowledge Structures in Arabic and Latin Sciences*, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science Berlin, December 16 – 17, 1996, ed. Richard Lorch. organized by Muhammad Abattouy and Paul Weinig (Berlin: Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, 1997). Although it is rather fashionable among early modern historians to categorize medieval scholarship and learning as limited to creating glossaries, commentaries, and copying of ancient and other texts, the opposite was often the case. Thomas Fuchs, "Einleitung: Bibliotheken zwischen Kultureller Memoria, Wissenschaft und Musealität," *Das Buch in Antike, Mittelalter und*

However, in later years Frederick radically turned against the Muslim population in Sicily who “were subjected to persecution everywhere and their defeat came with the great massacre at Palermo in 1200. The last act of violence against them was at the hands of the young Sicilian ruler himself, after he came of age: the last rebels were finally rooted out and their leader, Muhammad ibn ‘Abbâd, was executed together with his two sons.”<sup>82</sup> The small surviving Arab population was resettled in Lucera and turned into a subjugated colony.<sup>83</sup>

Cultural differences and hence conflicts continued to dominate the relationships between the Arabic and the European world, but there were at least relationships, though in a complex way. In Hermes’s words, “there was no shortage of Muslims who cast curious eyes and minds toward Europe and the Europeans.”<sup>84</sup> However, we still need to differentiate in the regard to what parts of Christian Europe we want to consider. While there were, indeed, many contacts between Arabs and Europeans in the wider Mediterranean since the early Middle Ages, we would look for those in vain if we turn our attention to the world north of the Alps.

After all, both worlds enjoyed the economic and political exchanges, and we might also assume that there were scientific and philosophical exchanges as well, though it still seems hard to trace them in the available records. The tenth-century Baghdad scholar Abu Hayyan al-Tawhidi responded to a question about what part of the world one should favor, the Arabic or the Non-Arabic, in the following way:

In essence, all nations have merits and demerits in the same way that they have always shared many common things and concepts of life. Yet each nation has cultivated some specific traits that its sister has not. Of course, in what they share, there is the good and there is the bad . . . as for the Arabs, they excelled in rhetoric, eloquence, encyclopedism, and the magic of the tongue. The Persians are the best when it comes

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*Neuzeit. Sonderbestände der Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig*, ed. id., Christoph Mackert, and Reinhold Scholl. *Schriften und Zeugnisse zur Buchgeschichte*, 20 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012), 1–35, concludes most recently: “Diese Wissensweise erklärt die Kanonizität und die geringe Innovationskraft der mittelalterlichen Informationsgesellschaft. Entsprechend gering war die Zahl der Bücher und der Titel” (13; This mode of acquiring knowledge explains the emphasis on the canon and the limited ability to innovate of the medieval information society. Correspondingly, the number of books and titles was limited). But he relies mostly on the fictional account by Umberto Eco in his famous novel *Il nome di rosa* (1980) (13–14) and relies heavily on stereotypical assumptions about the Middle Ages. See now the contribution to this volume by K. A. Tuley.

<sup>82</sup> Crespi, *The Arabs* (see note 21), 297.

<sup>83</sup> Eberhard Horst, *Der Sultan von Lucera: Friedrich II. und der Islam*. Herder Spektrum (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 197). See also the contributions to *Federico II puer Apuliae: storia, arte, cultura: atti del Convegno internazionale di studio in occasione dell’VII centenario della nascita di Federico II, Lucera, 29 marzo–2 aprile 1995*, ed. Hubert Houben and Oronzo Limone (Galatina [Lecce]: M. Congedo, 2001). See also James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade 1213–1221. The Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 74–78, 112–18, 198–203, et passim.

<sup>84</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 174.

to moderation, manners, politics, order, drawing, and servitude [to God]. As for the Turks, they are famous for courage and bravery.<sup>85</sup>

Of course, all this does not yet mean that we could identify an Arabic source that would reflect a more detailed, more intimate, more familiar awareness about medieval Europe. Even the famous traveler Ibn Jubayr (b. 1145 in Valencia), who went on his pilgrimage to Mecca on February 3, 1183, and returned on April 25, 1185, did not reach any European area apart from Sicily and Southern Italy.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, Ibn Jubayr's travelogue provides also highly valuable insights into the quirks of the cultural conditions in the Holy Land and elsewhere, with Muslim and Christian pilgrims peacefully boarding the same ship and crossing, for instance, the Mediterranean without running into conflicts. Coming from Damascus, the author enters Acre at a time when Saladin's army just had won its major victory over the Christians, and yet Ibn Jubayr faced no difficulty "to journey to this Christian stronghold in a caravan of Muslim merchants."<sup>87</sup> He commented on this phenomenon himself: "One of the strangest things in the world is that Muslim caravans go forth to Frankish lands, while Frankish captives enter Muslim lands" (313).

At the same time he marveled, though with some horror as well, about the peaceful coexistence of Muslim farmers and Christian lords:

Our way lay through continuous farms and ordered settlements, whose inhabitants were all Muslims, living comfortably with the Franks. God protect us from such temptation. They surrender half their crops to the Franks at harvest time, and pay as well a poll-tax of one dinar and five qirat for each person. Other than that, they are not interfered with, save for a light tax on the fruits of trees. Their houses and all their effects are left to their full possession. (316)

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<sup>85</sup> Hermes, *The [European] Other* (see note 47), 176, his translation. For al-Tawhidi, see Ibrahim Keilani, *Abū Hayyān at-Tawhīdī: essayiste arabe du 4e siècle d'l'Hégire (10e s.), introduction à son œuvre* (Beirut: Institut français du Damas, 1950); Marc Bergé, *Pour un humanisme vécu: Abū Hayyān al-Tawhīdī: essai sur la personnalité morale, intellectuelle et littéraire d'un grand prosateur et humaniste arabe engagé dans la société de l'époque bouyide, à Bagdad, Rayy et Chiraz, au I'vel/Xe siècle (entre 310/922 et 320/932–414/1023)*. Publications de l'I.F.E.A.D., 104 (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1979).

<sup>86</sup> *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, trans. from the original Arabic by R. J. C. Broadhurst (London: Jonathan Cape, [1952]). I will quote from this edition. See also *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, ed. from a MS. in the University Library of Leyden by William Wright. 2nd ed. rev. by M. J. de Goeje. "E. J. W. Gibb Memorial" Series, 5 (1852; Leiden: A. J. Brill, 1907). The text has also been translated into French (1846, 1923) Italian (1906), and, more recently, into German: Ibn Čubair, *Tagebuch eines Mekkapilgers*, aus dem Arabischen übertragen und bearbeitet von Regina Günther. Bibliothek Arabischer Klassiker, 10 (Stuttgart: Thienemann, Edition Erdmann, 1985). Ibn Jubayr's account of Messina and Palermo (1184–1185) is now also included in *Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation*, ed. Katherine L. Jansen, Joanna Drell, and Frances Andrews. The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), as section 58.

<sup>87</sup> Broadhurst, trans. (see note 86), 17.

Surprisingly, as we learn, the (Arab-?)Christian custom clerks of Acre speak and write Arabic (317), and everyone seems to be treated with respect and civility, irrespective of the merchants' or pilgrims' religious orientation (317–18). Acre itself proved to be "the meeting-place of Muslim and Christian merchants from all regions" (318), but Ibn Jubayr laments the fact that the Franks (Christians) had conquered that rich and wealthy city from the Muslims, defiling their religious sites, transforming mosques into churches and minarets into bell-towers (318).

In Sur (Tyre), by contrast, the author notices less religious suppression by the Franks, more cleanliness, and more peacefulness among the population. Nevertheless, Ibn Jubayr maintains an ambivalent attitude, on the one hand gazing at the public splendor of the Western culture, including a spectacular wedding procession, on the other criticizing the lack of modesty on the part of the bride.

While everyone, Christians and Muslims, "gazed on them without reproof" (321), our travel author still voices sharp criticism, perhaps intended for his Muslim audience as a kind of self-protection to hide his own fascination with the beautiful woman, not covered by a veil, and with the entire splendid ceremony: "We thus were given the chance of seeing this alluring sight, from the seducement of which God preserve us" (321).

To add to his sharp criticism, he subsequently underscores that no Muslim is allowed to live among Christians (321), while traversing their lands would constitute no problems: "Beware, beware of entering their lands" (322). To his worst chagrin, he even encountered a converted Muslim, which he found, naturally, to be a most egregious transgression of all Muslim laws: "He had been baptised and become unclean, and had put on the girdle of a monk, thereby hastening for himself the flames of hell, verifying the threats of torture, and exposing himself to a grievous account and a long-distant return (from hell)" (323).

Rhetorically, Ibn Jubayr resorted to the same imagery and language as we are wont to hear from Christian authors, especially in later centuries. When they finally board a ship to return to al-Andalus, he disparagingly remarks that a large group of Christian pilgrims came along: "May God in His grace and favour soon relieve us of their company" (325). But when he describes a major Christian festival on November 1, with everyone among that group holding a lit candle and participating in a makeshift mass, Jubayr suddenly refrains from commenting and might even have enjoyed the spectacle: "The whole ship, from top to bottom, was luminous with kindled lamps. In this manner we passed most of that night" (328).

Reaching the coast of Messina, they were shipwrecked, but still survived, and in this situation, the author notes with astonishment that they, as Muslim pilgrims, were helped by William, King of Sicily: "when he perceived some needy Muslims staring from the ship, having not the means to pay for their landing because the owners of the boats were asking so high a price for their rescue, enquired, this

King, concerning them and, learning their story, ordered that they be given one hundred ruba'i of his coinage in order that they might alight" (337–38).

Ibn Jubayr remains torn within himself, despising the Christians, and yet finding among them many times people of extraordinary greatness and humanity who had no to little problems completely disregarding the religious differences and helping the neighbors or fellow travelers in need. As he concludes, recognizing the Christian ruler as a tool in God's hands: "Another sign of the loving-kindness and benevolence of Great and Glorious God towards us in this disaster was the presence of this Rumi [eastern, Christian] king" (338). But when he turns to Messina, where no Muslims are living, he feels no hesitation to malign the city for it belonging to the Christians: "Teeming with worshippers of the Cross, it chokes its inhabitants, and constricts them almost to strangling. It is full of smells and filth; and churlish too, for the stranger will find there no courtesy" (338–39).

In Sicily itself, however, Ibn Jubayr came across fairly large Muslim communities, who enjoyed, as he noted with great surprise, a certain level of toleration: "The Muslims live beside them [the Christians] with their property and farms. The Christians treat these Muslims well and 'have taken them to themselves as friends' [Koran XX, 41], but impose on them a tax to be paid twice yearly" (339). Even more astonishing, the cohabitation of Muslims with Christians worked even better in Palermo: "It has Muslim citizens who possess mosques, and their own markets, in the main suburbs" (340). In addition, King Guillaume (William) II, "is admirable for his just conduct, and the use he makes of the industry of the Muslims . . . . He has much confidence in Muslims, relying on them for his affairs, and the most important matters, even the supervisor of his kitchen being a Muslim" (340).<sup>88</sup> We also learn that William consulted his Muslim physicians and astrologers, whom he treated well (341).

Furthermore, William apparently knew how to speak Arabic and resorted to the Muslim praying formula in his private devotion. It might have been nothing but an anecdote which Ibn Jubayr was told, but even the assumption implied proves to be fascinating: "the Frankish Christian women who came to his palace became Muslims, converted by these handmaidens. All this they kept secret from their King" (341).<sup>89</sup> This account might well have been the result of wishful thinking,

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<sup>88</sup> G. A. Loud, "Norman Sicily in the Twelfth Century," *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. IV: c. 1024–c. 1198. Part II, ed. David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 442–74, points out, however, how strongly William fought to support the Western Crusaders and launched a serious attack against Constantinople. He also dispatched naval aid to the Crusader states after the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin (471–72). See also Azīz Ahmad, *A History of Islamic Sicily*. Islamic Surveys, 10 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1975); Alex Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Sicily: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*. Culture and Civilisation in the Middle East (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003).

<sup>89</sup> For a Christian chronicle, see *De vita, et rebus gestis Guilelmi II, Siciliae regis*, ed. Francesco Testa (Monregali: M. Bentivenga, 1769); *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by 'Hugo Falcandus'*, 1154–69,



especially because later we will hear of parallel accounts by Christian pilgrims (Fabri) about women secretly making signs from within their houses to indicate that despite their Muslim appearance they were really Christians. Then, however, Ibn Jubayr also encounters a high-ranking official at the king's court, 'Abd al-Massih, who, once alone with him and other Muslim travelers, revealed his true faith, that of Islam. As he admitted to them: "'You can boldly display your faith in Islam,' he said, 'and are successful in your enterprises and thrive, by God's will, in your commerce. But we must conceal our faith, and, fearful of our lives, must adhere to the worship of God and the discharge of our religious duties in secret . . .'" (342).

To what extent we can fully trust his account might remain debatable, especially when he refers to the Muslim officials who secretly make every effort to carry out their prescribed prayers: "They thus continue to labour in their purpose, covertly advising the Muslims in their unending struggle for the faith" (343). But his remarks underscore the amorphous situation for the Muslims in Sicily, being partly tolerated, partly subjugated. After all, many mosques were still standing, prayer service was still performed there, and the Muslim travelers did find a hospitable welcome there (346). Considering how much the Christians had copied even public institutions such as hospitals from the Arab models (346), we can

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trans. and annotated by Graham Loud and Thomas Wiedemann. Manchester Medieval Sources Series (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 109–10, 121–22, 124, 130, 133, et passim (none of those passages, however, go into any detail as to the Muslim population). See also Annkristin Schlichte, *Der "gute" König: Wilhelm II. von Sizilien, 1166–1189*. Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom, 110 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2005), 203–11. She concludes her analysis of the situation for the Muslim population under William II as follows: "Die angeführten Belege . . . belegen [sic] dass von einer forcierten Christianisierungspolitik nicht gesprochen werden kann, genauso wenig allerdings von einer bewussten Integrationspolitik. Können und Loyalität waren, wie später unter Friedrich II., Voraussetzung für den Aufstieg muslimischer Beamter im Hofdienst, und wie seine Vorgänger bediente sich auch Willhelm II. der Muslime und ihrer praktischen Kenntnisse, ohne dass dadurch der grundsätzliche christliche Charakter seines Königtums in Frage gestellt worden wäre. Die Autorität des Königs garantierte das weitgehend friedliche Nebeneinander von Muslimen und Christen in einer Situation, die von latenten Spannungen nicht frei war und in der die christlich-lateinische Bevölkerungsgruppe zunehmend an Einfluss gewann" (210; The evidence provided confirms that we cannot speak of a policy of enforcing Christianization; but, by the same token, also not of a deliberate policy of integration. Ability and loyalty were, just as later under Frederick II, the preconditions for the rise of Muslim officials in the court administration. Just as his predecessors William II used the Muslims and their practical knowledge, without thereby undermining the principle Christian character of his kingdom. The king's authority guaranteed the peaceful cohabitation of Muslims and Christians in a situation that was not free from latent tensions and in which the Christian-Latin population increasingly gained in influence). For the early-medieval history of the Muslims in Sicily, see Bernd Rill, *Sizilien im Mittelalter: Das Reich der Araber, Normannen und Staufer* (Stuttgart and Zürich: Belser Verlag, 1995), 79–132. See also John Phillip Lomax, "Frederick II, His Saracens, and the Papacy," *Medieval Christian Perception of Islam: A Book of Essays*, ed. John Victor Tolan. Garland Medieval Casebooks (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996), 175–97.

easily fathom the dialectics in that contact zone of Sicily, where the King and his people obviously had found a way of *convivencia* there as well, parallel to al-Andalus.

With respect to Palermo we are informed: "The Muslims of this city preserve the remaining evidence of the faith. They keep in repair the greater number of their mosques, and come to prayers at the call of the muezzin. In their own suburbs they live apart from the Christians. The markets are full of them, and they are the merchants of the place" (348). The Muslims even enjoyed the privilege of running their own court system with a qadi, running their own schools, and operating their own inns and hostels. At the same time, "The Christian women of this city follow the fashion of Muslim women, are fluent of speech, wrap their cloaks about them, and are veiled" (349–50).

The rural population seems to have been all Muslim (350), who operated hot baths open to the wearisome travelers (350–51). Mosques and Christian churches almost stood side by side, as in the town of Trapani (351), while the Christian fortress was completely off-limits for Muslims (352). Soon thereafter Ibn Jubayr also comments on reports from Constantinople where the young prince, though a Byzantine, was said to study busily Arabic and other languages (356), while the King of Sicily intended to send a fleet to attack that capital city because of its inner weakness and leaning toward the Muslim world: "in shame for this youth and what befell him" (356). Ibn Jubayr again voices great worries about the well-being of the Muslim world and expresses his hope that William's designs would fail. According to other reports, some of the learned Muslims in Sicily were forced by the king to renounce their faith and accept Christianity, as in the case of Ibn Zur'ah, but the author then gets reassured that despite all external appearance, the jurist only "concealed what was really his true faith" (358).

The similar condition is said to be the case with the Lord of the Muslim community, Abu 'l-Qasim ibn Hammud, known as Ibn al-Hajar, who revealed to the travelers in private the tense relationship between Muslims and Christians. But Ibn Jubayr appears to react more emotionally than would seem logical, considering the extensive power and wealth which that official still commanded under the Christian king (358–59). On the one hand we are told: "When in Palermo we had seen houses belonging to him, his brothers, and members of his house, which were like lofty and superb castles. The condition of these men, in a word, was exalted, and his was so in particular" (359). On the other, which might reveal the rhetorical device at play here, he laments: "The (Muslim) people of this island suffer, amongst other tribulations, one that is very sore" (359).

The narrative account offers two polar perspectives, both confirming a solid state of toleration of the Muslims in that Christian state, and a strong sentiment on the part of the Muslims to leave that Christian kingdom behind or to defend their own faith in any other possible way (360). By the same token, Ibn Jubayr expresses

the greatest desire, as all the other Muslim pilgrims, to return home to al-Andalus, but the entire travelogue is still predicated on his considerable curiosity about the foreign world beyond the border of the Arabic culture. In all likelihood, we face here a rather typical situation most travelers have always been in, both feeling attracted to the foreign world for a while, but then longing to return home and to leave the exotic, alien culture behind.

Altogether, however, this author offers, probably quite unintentionally, many examples of how much Christians and Muslims could cohabitate in certain areas of the Mediterranean, especially since Muslims were often willing and knew how to adjust to the dominant Christian culture, and since the Christian rulers did not do much against their Muslim subjects. The situation was never ideal, but at least it was functional for both sides, and this as early as the late twelfth century, still in the midst of the Crusades. But that was brutal war, while Ibn Jubayr operated as a traveler and pilgrim, and so could calmly observe that in Cairo, for instance, a small army of captive Christians worked on major building sites: "The forced labourers on this construction, and those executing all the skilled services and vast preparations . . . were the foreign Rumi prisoners whose numbers were beyond computation" (43), and this to the great relief of the Muslims who "are relieved of it all, no work of that nature falling on any of them" (43).

## 7. St. Francis of Assisi's Attempt to Reach Out to the Saracens The First Peaceful Missionizing in the Thirteenth Century

One of the most impressive religious figures in the high Middle Ages, Francis of Assisi (1181/1182–1226), was already studied intensively during his own life time and immediately thereafter. He founded the Order of the Franciscans in 1210, and it has survived until today, flourishing globally, along with the Order of the Poor Clares. In 1224 Francis received the stigmata, the first human being to be graced with those signs copying the wounds of Christ in His Passion. Pope Gregory IX pronounced him a saint on July 16, 1228, and he is particularly venerated as a patron saint of animals, the environment, and, together with Catherine of Siena, of Italy. He is also deeply admired for his love of the Eucharist, for his sorrow during the Stations of the Cross, and for his introduction of the nativity crèche in 1223.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> There is a virtually infinite amount of research and literature on Saint Francis; see, for instance, Helmut Feld, *Franziskus von Assisi*. 2nd rev. ed. Beck'sche Reihe: C. H. Beck Wissen, 2170 (2001; Munich: Beck, 2007); *Franziskus von Assisi und seine Bewegung*, ed. Helmut Feld (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007); André Vauchez, *François d'Assise: Entre histoire et mémoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2009; an English translation is forthcoming with Yale University Press).

In 1219, Saint Francis of Assisi, accompanied by another friar, went to Egypt where a Christian army on the fifth Crusade had been encamped for over a year besieging the walled city of Damietta located ca. two miles south of the estuary of one of the main channels of the Nile.<sup>91</sup> The Sultan, al-Malik al-Kāmal, a nephew of Saladin, had succeeded his father as Sultan of Egypt in 1218 and was encamped south of Damietta, equally unable to relieve it.<sup>92</sup> A bloody and futile attack on the city was launched by the Christians on August, 29, 1219, but since the outcome was inconclusive for either side, the Muslims and the Crusaders agreed to a cease-fire which lasted four weeks.

It was most probably during this interlude that Francis and his companion made their amazing attempt to reach out to the Muslim enemy and to convince them of the truth of the Christian faith—the only ideological-religious position possible for these deeply devout men. They crossed the Arab lines and were brought before the Sultan, remaining in his camp for a few days. The visit is reported in contemporary Crusader sources and in the earliest biographies of Francis, but they do not give information about what occurred during that encounter and only comment that the Sultan received Francis graciously and that Francis preached to the Saracens without durable effect, returning unharmed to the Crusader camp. Unfortunately, no Arab chronicler discusses, as far as I can tell, that highly unusual visit by the founder of the Franciscan Order, and instead we have to rely exclusively, as far as I can tell, on the Christian sources.<sup>93</sup>

The Italian friar minor and later Cardinal Bishop of Albano (1274), Saint Bonaventure (1221–1274), in his official life of Francis (written ca. 1260–1263, i.e., a little more than forty years after the event), mentions that Francis had gone so far as to offer a trial-by-fire in order to prove the veracity of the Christian gospel. But the Sultan rejected this offer because he knew that none of his people would subject themselves to such a terrifying trial; and so he did not even allow Francis to step into the fire as a test to prove the greatness of the Christian God “because

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Augustine Thompson, *Francis of Assisi* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012). The latter, although claimed to be authoritative, has met with a bit of criticism; see the review by Jean-François Godet-Calogeras in *The Medieval Review* 12.10.29 (Oct. 2012).

<sup>91</sup> James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221*. The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986); *Tolerance and Intolerance: Social Conflict in the Age of the Crusades*, ed. Michael Gervers and James M. Powell. Medieval Studies (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001).

<sup>92</sup> Hans Ludwig Gottschalk, *Al-Malik al-Kāmil von Egypten und seine Zeit; eine Studie zur Geschichte Vorderasiens und Egyptens in der ersten Hälfte des 7./13. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1958).

<sup>93</sup> See, for instance, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*. Selected and trans. from the Arabic Sources by Francesco Gabrieli. Trans. from the Italian by E. J. Costello (1957; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 256–59, where the chronicler only covers the military events; he does not even mention the cease-fire.

he feared a revolt among his people. Nevertheless he offered him many precious gifts, which the man of God, greedy not for worldly possessions but the salvation of souls, spurned as if they were dirt."<sup>94</sup>

Later biographers added even the fanciful detail that a fire was actually kindled which Francis unhesitatingly entered without suffering burns, thus officially confirming his sanctity, which the famous painter Giotto Bondone (1266/1267–1337) depicted in his thirteenth-century fresco cycle in the upper basilica at Assisi. According to some subsequent sources, the Sultan allegedly gave Francis permission to visit the sacred places in the Holy Land and even to preach there as much he liked and could afford to,<sup>95</sup> but we would have to question the validity of those statements, even though this would not change anything in our evaluation of the saint's missionizing outreach which stands out so markedly in comparison with the Fifth Crusade and all other previous military operations.

As to be expected, the intensive effort to establish a believable myth about Francis's triumphal victory over the Saracens, although he could not convert them, led to a comprehensive literary, artistic (Giotto), and religious campaign involving many writers and church leaders.<sup>96</sup> It seems doubtful, however, whether Francis would have approved of their approach and their manipulation of the account about his travails at Damietta since his ideas hinged only on a peaceful strategy predicated on love, in the direct imitation of Christ.

The French canon regular Jacques de Vitry (ca. 1160/1170–May 1, 1240), appointed as bishop of Acre in 1214 and as cardinal in 1229, describes the encounter between Francis and the Sultan in 1220 in his sixth letter to a friend from February/March of the same year, while he accompanied the Crusaders at Damietta, as follows:

The head of these brothers, who also founded the order, came into our camp. He was so inflamed with zeal for the faith that he did not fear to cross the lines to the army of our enemy. For several days he preached the Word of God to the Saracens and made a little progress. The sultan, the ruler of Egypt, privately asked him to pray to the Lord

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<sup>94</sup> *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, ed. Regis J. Armstrong, J. A. Wayne Hellmann, and William J. Short. 4 vols. (New York, London, and Manila: New City Press, 1999–2002), vol. 1, 603. See now also *The Writings of Francis of Assisi: Rules, Testament, and Admonition*, ed. Michael W. Blicstic, Jay M. Hammond, and J.A. Wayne Hellmann. *Studies in Early Franciscan Sources*, 2 (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2011).

<sup>95</sup> See, for example, *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*, which is in essence a translation and reediting of Ugolino Boniscambi of Montegiorgio's *The Deeds of Saint Francis and His Companions*, here quoted from *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* (see note 94), 605–06, ch. 24; see *Fonti Francescane* (Assisi: Movimento Franciscano, 1977), 1441–624. For Giotto's paintings, see Gerhard Ruf, *Die Fresken der Oberkirche San Francesco in Assisi: Ikonographie und Theologie* (Regensburg: Schnell + Steiner, 2004).

<sup>96</sup> *St. Francis and the Sultan: The Curious History of a Christian-Muslim Encounter* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 135–46.

for him, so that he might be inspired by God to adhere to that religion which most pleased God.<sup>97</sup>

In his *Historia Occidentalis* (ca. 1221/1225), Jacques presents further impressions of great significance:

Not only Christ's faithful but even the Saracens and people in the darkness [of unbelief] admire their humility and virtue, and when the brothers fearlessly approach them to preach, they willingly receive them and, with a grateful spirit, provide them with what they need.

Once Francis had been brought into the presence of the Sultan, the latter appears to have felt great sympathy for that humble and yet forceful man who displayed no fear and was obviously deeply determined by spirituality:

He recognized him as a man of God and changed his attitude into one of gentleness, and for some days he listened very attentively to Francis as he preached the faith of Christ to him and his followers. But ultimately, fearing that some of his soldiers would be converted to the Lord by the efficacy of his words and pass over to the Christian army, he ordered that Francis be returned to our camp with all reverence and security.<sup>98</sup>

According to Jacques, the only conflict emerged when any of the Franciscans dared to "speak against Mohammed as a liar and an evil man. When they did speak in such a manner, the Saracens irreverently put them to the lash and savagely expelled them from their city . . ."<sup>99</sup>

As we can recognize clearly, and as we will observe many times later in fifteenth-century pilgrimage accounts, the East-West relationship could develop fairly easily and smoothly, at times even turning into friendship and comradeship among the travelers and their guides or drivers, if the religious controversy did not emerge as a topic of debate—certainly a universal and timeless phenomenon.

Whether Francis approved of the Crusade as a military strategy to spread the Christian faith even to the Muslim world, or whether he rejected it, which is a highly divisive issue in Francis of Assisi Studies, does not need to be determined here. What matters for us, however, is that this founder of the Franciscan Order took it upon himself to reach out to the Sultan and fearlessly endeavored to preach to him, which appears to have impressed al-Kâmal deeply. It is worth listening to Francis's own words that he uttered either just before his departure for Damietta or shortly thereafter, since his statement reveals him to be closer to Christ's original teaching, even in face of the enemy of the faith, than all those who subscribed to the Crusade ideology:

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<sup>97</sup> *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* (see note 94), vol. 1, 581.

<sup>98</sup> *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* (see note 94), vol. I: 584.

<sup>99</sup> *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* (see note 94), vol. I: 584-85.

All my brothers: let us pay attention to what the Lord says: *Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you*, for our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose footprints we must follow, called His betrayer a friend and willingly offered Himself to His executioners. Our friends, therefore, are all those who unjustly inflict upon us distress and anguish, shame and injury, sorrow and punishment, martyrdom and death. We must love them greatly, for we shall possess eternal life because of what they bring us. (Chapter 22 of the *Rules*)

Moreover, as Steven J. McMichael alerts us, Francis even had given specific instructions on how to carry out missionary work among the infidels:

As for the brothers who go, they can live spiritually among the Saracens and non-believers in two ways. One way is not to engage in arguments or disputes but to be subject to *every human creature in God's sake* [1 Peter 2:13] and to acknowledge that they are Christians. The other way is to announce the Word of God, when they see that it pleases the Lord, in order that [non-believers] may believe in the all-powerful God, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, the Creator of all, the Son the Redeemer and Saviour, and be baptised and become Christians because *no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being reborn of water and the Holy Spirit* [John 3:5].<sup>100</sup>

All that can safely be asserted is that Francis and his companion left the Crusader camp for Acre, from where they embarked for Italy in the latter half of 1220.<sup>101</sup> He obviously succeeded in meeting the Sultan and gaining his attention, if not great respect, but there was no conversion possible. While the Crusaders approached their task exclusively with military means, St. Francis developed an alternative model of peaceful missionizing. Unfortunately, neither the one nor the other truly

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<sup>100</sup> Quoted from Steven J. McMichael, "Francis and the Encounter with the Sultan (1219)," *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi*, ed. Michael J. P. Robson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 127–42; here 134–35. See also St. Francis of Assisi, *Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis*, ed. Marion A. Habig. Third rev. ed. (1973; London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1979), 43 (here identified as chapter 16).

<sup>101</sup> A good part of this entire paragraph has been influenced by the article in *Wikipedia* on St. Francis ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis\\_of\\_Assisi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_of_Assisi); last accessed on Aug. 5, 2012), although I have shortened, paraphrased, reworded, and expanded it to some extent. See also Paul Moses, *The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace* (New York: Doubleday, 2009); for a more comprehensive treatment of Saint Francis, see the contributions to *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi*, ed. Michael J. P. Robson (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). See also Robson, Michael, O.F.M.Conv., *St. Francis of Assisi: The Legend and the Life* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1997); Anita Ganeri, *The Life of St Francis*. Life of Saints (2004; Oxford: Heinemann Library, 2005). There are numerous other biographies on St. Francis, published since the nineteenth century. As to the relevant sources, see *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis*, ed. Marion A. Habig, 3rd rev. ed. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, [1973]); *Francis and Clare*, trans. and intro. by Regis J. Armstrong and Ignatius C. Brady. The Classics of Western Spirituality (London: SPCK, 1982).

achieved their goals,<sup>102</sup> but the dream conceptualized by St. Francis continues to exert a deep influence on us even, if not especially, today, the dream of overcoming religious differences and of establishing a world where all individuals can accept each other irrespective of their differing faiths and cultural values.<sup>103</sup>

## 8. The Christian Perspective: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land A First Step Into a Vast Field

Stefan Schröder has recently examined the pilgrimage accounts by Felix Fabri as expressions of the fundamental and timeless conflicts between both these world religions in his doctoral dissertation “Zwischen Christentum und Islam,” submitted to the University of Kassel in the winter semester of 2007/2008.<sup>104</sup> As he rightly emphasizes, all pilgrimage accounts imply, in one way or the other, the meeting with another world. However, pilgrims mostly traveled in groups and rarely got into contact with the native people except in an official situation, which would be quite typical and characteristic of all travel groups even today because familiarity continues to be highly desired even in the exotic and foreign world which potentially creates fear among the common travelers.

Of course, much depends on the individual experience, the circumstances, and the traveler’s character and interests. Felix Fabri made more efforts than many other pilgrimage authors to reach various audiences with different levels of education, composing three separate accounts, one in Latin (*Evagatorium in Terrae Sancta, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem*, 1484–1488), one in German (*Eigentliche beschreibung der hin vnd wider Fahrt zu dem Heyligen Land*, also ca. 1484–1488; first

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<sup>102</sup> See now Richard F. Cassady, *The Emperor and the Saint: Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, Francis of Assisi, and Journeys to Medieval Places* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 144–53. But this is mostly a historical narrative for the broader audience, though still well researched. He characterizes the Sultan as “brilliantly civilized, considerate, and an admirer of Westerners, their literature, and their languages. Basically, he was a man of peace whose major problems, like those of the other Ayyubite rulers, were with his own people” (147).

<sup>103</sup> Although not scholarly in its conception, the book by George Dardess and Marvin L. Krier Mich, *In the Spirit of St. Francis & the Sultan: Catholics and Muslims Working Together for the Common Good* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), draws from the bold and courageous efforts by St. Francis to reach out to the Sultan Malik al-Kamil and to preach to him peace and thus perhaps even to convert him to Christianity as a case study of how today religious tolerance could be achieved and practiced: “while Francis always said that he and his friars must be prepared for death, he said also that they must not deliberately seek it. Their purpose was to act according to the law of love they preached, not to provoke the enemy into murder” (115).

<sup>104</sup> Now in printed form, *Zwischen Christentum und Islam: Kulturelle Grenzen in den spätmittelalterlichen Pilgerberichten des Felix Fabri*. *Orbis mediaevalis: Vorstellungswelten des Mittelalters*, 11 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009). I will engage with Felix Fabri at greater length below. What matters here pertains only to the larger context of late-medieval pilgrimage accounts.



printed in 1556), and one, also in German (*Sionpilger*, 1492, original does not seem to have survived, copies were written in 1493, 1494, 1495), but destined for female readers in a convent who could not travel on their own and so had to rely on such pilgrimage reports which allowed them to follow the author from station to station, doing the prayers and meditating on the religious setting, reliquaries, saints, churches, and chapels (*Sionpilger*), but not carrying out those rituals in reality, but virtually back home in their convent. That way they could obey their monastic vow of the *stabilitas loci* and yet concomitantly realize their dream of getting to the Holy Land and hence close to all those holy sites, even if only in proxy.

As Schröder points out, summarizing our basic knowledge about Fabri's works, alerting us to what is not atypical for this type of writing, he resorted to the pilgrimage accounts by previous travelers, such as Burchard of Monte Sion (ca. 1283), Wilhelm von Boldensele (1334–1336), and Ludolf von Sudheim (1336–1341). Many other contemporary pilgrimage accounts exist in large numbers, reflecting a universal fascination with the idea of visiting the Holy Land although it was solidly in the hands of Arabic rulers at the latest since the fall of the last Crusader fortress of Acre in 1291. Some of those were: Jean and Anselme Adorno (1470), Alessandro di Filippo Rinuccini (1474), Wilhelm Tzewers (1478), Hans Tucher and Sebald Rieter (1479), Joos van Ghistele (1481), Francesco Suriano (1481–1484), Antonio da Crema and Konrad Grünemberg (1486), Dietrich von Schachten (1491), Pietro Casola (1494), and Arnold von Harff (1496–1498), coming from virtually all Christian countries in medieval Europe. We can safely trust all their religious devotion, but we can also observe an increasing mix of the profane with the sacred in these late-medieval pilgrimage accounts.<sup>105</sup>

But pilgrimage began already in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages (Egeria; Bishop Arculf) and has basically continued until today, and all pilgrims

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<sup>105</sup> Reinhold Röhrich, *Bibliotheca geographica Palaestina: Chronologisches Verzeichnis der auf die Geographie des Heiligen Landes bezüglichen Literatur von 333 bis 1878, und Versuch einer Cartographie* (Berlin: H/ Reuther, 1890); *Europäische Reiseberichte des späten Mittelalters: Eine analytische Biographie*, ed. Werner Paravicini. Part 1: *Deutsche Reiseberichte*, by Christian Halm. Kieler Werkstücke. R. D.: Beiträge zur europäischen Geschichte des späten Mittelalters, 5 (Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, et al.: Peter Lang, 1994); Part 2: *Französische Reiseberichte*, by Jörg Wettlaufer together with Jaques Paviot. Kieler Werkstücke 12 (1999); Part 3: *Niederländische Reiseberichte*, nach Vorarbeiten von Detlev Kraack bearbeitet von Jan Hirschbiegel. Kieler Werkstücke, 14 (2000); see also Ursula Ganz-Blättler, *Andacht und Abenteuer: Berichte europäischer Jerusalem- und Santiago-Pilger (1320–1520)*. Jakobus-Studien, 4 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990). See now Helmut Brall-Tuchel, "Unterwegs im Heiligen Land: Rheinische Pilgerberichte des 14. Jahrhunderts zwischen Tradition und Aneignung," *Wallfahrt und Kulturgegnung: Das Rheinland als Ausgangspunkt und Ziel spätmittelalterlicher Pilgerreisen. Beiträge des internationalen Symposiums in Erkelenz am 14. Oktober 2011*, ed. id. Schriften des Heimatvereins der Erkelenzer Lande e.V., 26 (Erkelenz: Heimatverein der Erkelenzer Lande, 2012), 143–71; see my review in *Mediaevistik* 26 (forthcoming).

have consistently disregarded any 'national,' religious, linguistic, or political barriers or borders, since their spiritual desire proved to be overwhelming.<sup>106</sup> The common route to the Holy Land normally began in Venice, then turned toward Alexandria and Cairo, from there to Mount Sinai, to reach Jerusalem and the many other Christian pilgrimage sites. There were individuals like William of Adam from southwestern France (ca. 1275–1338/1339), a member of the Dominican missions in Iran and at the end of his life Bishop of Antivari (Bar on the Adriatic coast) who vehemently argued against pilgrimage at large because it proved to be economically advantageous for the Mamluk rulers in Egypt and elsewhere, and who also opposed all economic trade with the Muslim East.

Yet, despite all his efforts through his *Tractatus quomodo Sarraceni expugnandi* (ca. 1316–1317) he did not achieve his desired goals, both because the religious needs of European Christians and the economic greed especially by many Genoese trading firms, who provided the Egyptians with necessary products out of iron and wood, and then with oil and grain, could not be repressed. After all, the Greeks, or Byzantines, were not to be trusted according to his opinion, since they looked out more for their economic profit than for the pilgrims from the Latin West.<sup>107</sup> Numerous other writers followed his lead, arguing very much along the same lines, but nothing could change the course of history or the weak position of the Latin West vis-à-vis the Muslim world, as the late-medieval pilgrimage accounts testify very vividly.

Fabri, like many others, used his time on the journey to engage first with the Venetians, then with the various Muslims, and Jews while he was in Egypt and Palestine, and so he developed a larger world view characteristic of the late fifteenth century. But the foreign world presented itself to him and the other travelers also in the form of spaces, cities, mountains, and bodies of water. In the process of describing the kaleidoscope in front of his eyes, Fabri resorted to one of the 'classical' strategies, which we can observe in many contemporary and later

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<sup>106</sup> Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1988); see now the text anthology, *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, 1187–1291*, ed. Denys Pringle. *Crusade Texts in Translation*, 23 (Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012). The particular value of this anthology consists of making available in English translation pilgrimage accounts that are normally not considered, such as by Thietmar (1217–1218), Ernoul (ca. 1231), Geoffrey of Beaulieu (1251), Matthew Paris (1250–1259), Friar Maurice (1227–1273), Burchard of Mount Sion (1274–1285), Philip of Savona (1285–1289), and Riccoldo of Monte Croce (1288–1289) (here disregarding some of the anonymous accounts, especially by a Greek anonymous).

<sup>107</sup> William of Adam, *How to Defeat the Saracens = Tractatus quomodo Sarraceni sunt expugnandi*, text and trans. with notes by Giles Constable, in collaboration with Ranabir Chakravarti et al. *Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Humanities* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2012) 27–39, et passim; as to Byzantium, see 41–45; see now the excellent review by John France in *The Medieval Review* (online, 13.03.02).

travelogues as well, comparing and contrasting the foreign with his own home country or city.

His readers were thus given an opportunity to comprehend in more concrete terms what the differences between their own existence and the foreign really might have meant. I will return to his account below to explore concrete details relevant for the purpose of this book. But first we need to get a more diversified understanding of what a variety of pilgrim authors from across Europe had to say about their encounters with the Muslim Others.

## 9. The Diplomat Pilgrim Bertrandon de la Broquière

One of those daring and truly curious late medieval travelers was the French nobleman Bertrandon de la Broquière (d. on May 9, 1459)<sup>108</sup> who was secretly charged by the Duke of Burgundy, Philip le Bon in 1432 to travel to Palestine, or the Holy Land, from where he returned in 1433, bringing back with him invaluable information in preparation for a possible crusade against the Turks, for which he composed his written account about his travels in 1438, *Le Voyage d'Outre-Mer*.<sup>109</sup> We do not quite know what Philip might have had in mind when he charged Bertrandon with that travel, since a new crusade at that time and age appeared, from our perspective, almost foolish, but there were two serious attempts in 1443 and 1444, both of which failed. Still, he might have toyed with that idea because he was dreaming of the French royal crown and might have believed in the possibility of carrying out a successful crusade which would have given him the European respect he needed for the realization of that dream.<sup>110</sup>

Bertrandon provided him with the desired encouragement, when he concluded his account with the following comment about the Turks: "I don't think, however, for a well-disciplined people, it would be very hard to break and defeat them,

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<sup>108</sup> G. Tyl-Labory, "Bertrandon de la Broquière," *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: Le Moyen Âge*, ed. Michel Zink and Geneviève Hasenhor (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 170–71.

<sup>109</sup> *Le voyage d'Outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquière*, publiée et annotée par Ch. Schefer (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1892). For an early English translation, see *Early Travels in Palestine Comprising the Narratives of Arculf, Willibald, Bernard, Sæwulf, Sigurd, Benjamin of Tudela, Sir John Mandeville, de la Broquière*, ed., with notes by Thomas Wright (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1848). Amazingly, there is even an older English trans., this one by Thomas Johnes, *The Travels of Bertrandon de la Broquière ... to Palestine and His Return from Jerusalem Overland to France* (London: Hafod, 1807). See now *The Voyage d'outremer by Bertrandon de la Broquière*, trans., ed. and ann. with an intro. and maps by Galen R. Kline. American University Studies. Series II: Romance Languages and Literature, 83 (New York: Peter Lang, 1988). I will quote from this version. There is even a Turkish translation of this text by Semavi M. Eyice, *Bertrandon de la Broquière'n denizas, iri seyahati* (Istanbul: Eren, 2000).

<sup>110</sup> *Französische Reiseberichte*, bearbeitet von Jörg Wettlaufer (see note 105), 80–88.

given their lack of arms" (145). We can only regard this remark as disingenuous, misleading his audience either out of naïveté or arrogance, and certainly not taking into full account the actual political, military situation in the entire Middle East and in the Ottoman Empire specifically.<sup>111</sup>

Probably fortunately for Philip, despite Bertrandon's optimism, he did not embark on such a suicide mission, considering the overwhelming military successes of the Ottomans, who even captured Constantinople in 1453. Bertrandon's report serves us exceedingly well in the further exploration of the encounters between East and West because he was not really driven by a religious impetus, but served his duke as a spy in military matters, although he himself introduces his work with the devious formulation: "For the amusement and distraction of the hearts of noble men who wish to see the world, by command and order of the most high, most powerful, and my most respected lord, Philip . . ." (1). But only a few lines further down he reveals his true colors: "Should any Christian prince or king wish to undertake the conquest of Jerusalem by taking a large army overland, or should any nobleman want to go or come back by land, he can learn of the cities, towns, regions, countries, rivers, mountains, and topography and of the lords who control them along the route from Jerusalem" (1).

In his narrative Bertrandon basically left out the entire route from Burgundy to Jerusalem because it was by then already so well known, as he remarks; instead he focuses on Syria and related parts where normal travelers, i.e., pilgrims, would not get to. Despite his secret mission, the author did not neglect to visit, as all other pilgrims were doing, the standard holy sites, whether in Jaffa or in Jerusalem. Subsequently he also went to Mount Sinai, which required extensive preparations because they had to traverse the desert and needed Arab guides (11).

Many times the travelers faced difficult negotiations with the local people over what animals they were supposed to hire for transportation, whether asses or camels, and in order to solve the conflicts, they asked the lord of the city of Gaza, who, after having heard their case, did them "justice and did not force us to take any unless we wanted to" (13). But Bertrandon got sick while on the way through the desert, so one of the Arabs took him back to Gaza. Full of admiration, the

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<sup>111</sup> Ch. Schefer, ed., *Le Voyage d'Outremer* (see note 109), xxxiv–xlv. Of course, we have to keep in mind that in 1438 the Sultan Melik el-Achraf, Seif Eddin Aboul Nasr Barsbay was in his death throes, which temporarily weakened the political situation, but he had arranged everything in time for the succession by his son, Melik el-Aziz Youssouf. Moreover, Syria, which Bertrandon was visiting, was then divided into five territories (xlv), which altogether left a rather curious impression on the European traveler. See also G. Maspero, *History of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Babylonia, and Assyria*, ed. A. H. Sayce, trans. M. L. McClure. History of Egypt, 9 vols. (London: Grolier Society, 1903); Ahmad Darrāj, *L'Égypte sous le règne de Barsbay, 825–841/1422–1438* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1961); J.-C. Garcin, "The Regime of the Circassian Mamluks," *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, Vol. I: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 290–317.

author emphasizes: "The Arab took very good care of me, which they do not normally do for Christians . . . I stayed there for about six hours. When they saw how sick I was, four or five friends of the Arab who was responsible for me, came. They made me get down from my donkey and lie down on a mattress which I was carrying. They treated the illness after their own fashion, kneading and pinching me with their hands so that finally, thanks to all their work, I fell asleep. They took nothing, nor did me any harm" (15).

Not surprisingly, while Bertrandon profiles these particular Arabs as friendly and humanitarians, if not as 'Samaritans' in their selflessness helping him in his desperate situation, he still underscores that this treatment had been highly unusual. Nevertheless, he explicitly conveyed to his European readers how much he as a Christian traveler could count on basic help and support even in the Muslim world, specifically undermining thereby the standard stereotypes of the dangerous foreigners in the religiously so different world in the East.

In Jerusalem he talked with a representative of the Sultan, named Nanchardin, asking for a guide to take a trip to Nazareth and Mount Tabor, which then, however, did not work out, but we get a good sense of the many possibilities to gain close contacts with the local authorities. He subsequently took a boat to cover the distance up to Beirut along the coastline, from where he made his way to Damascus, obviously, as he relates, an international city with merchants from far and wide: "we found several French, Venetian, Genoese, Florentine and Catalan merchants" (20).

At the gate of Damascus, however, he almost got into a fight with a man in the mob, which his driver quickly prevented knowing only too well of the danger for the traveler: "I believe that if I had hit him, we would have been dead. I say this to warn people not to get into any quarrel with them, for they seem to be mean people and not very bright" (20). As we will observe later, this and many other travelers simply had to cope with the ordinary crowds of people on the streets who displayed rowdy and crude behavior and cared little about the protection of human life, since they happily provoked the pilgrims and other non-Arabic travelers. Bertrandon illustrates how he perceived that situation: "In my experience, you must not be too mean with them nor weak nor show that you are afraid. Nor should you show that you are rich, for they are greedy and can be satisfied with little" (20).

Insofar as the author does not attribute those characteristics to Muslims at large, but pinpoints simply the masses as commonly responsible for difficulties on the roads or in cities, we gain a good impression of the degree to which fifteenth-century writers could and did exert some objectivity and open-mindedness. The locals often displayed hostility, but Bertrandon could always smooth the relationship if he bribed them, such as in Damascus, where he convinced a man

to teach him how to operate a Greek fire (23). His contemptuous conclusion consists of a curt comment: "there is nothing a Moor won't do for money" (23).

However, Bertrandon also proves to be as gullible with respect to myths and legends of religious kinds as many other, if not all, Christian pilgrims, as when he hears the account of Jews who had allegedly stoned an image of Jesus Christ which then began to bleed (24), the old blood-libel charge so popular in Europe.<sup>112</sup> This comes as a surprise because otherwise, when he encounters Arabs who might be armed he offers an in-depth description of their weapons and clothing (29). At the same time Bertrandon traveled in disguise, which protected him from being attacked, robbed, or killed a number of times. Yet, he was constantly afraid of being detected, as when he entered a mosque together with his Arab driver (30), or when he entered Damascus: "Since I was dressed like them, I entered the city on horseback, like them" (32). He was fully aware of the risk that he accepted, but the advantages outweighed the dangers he could run into otherwise.

Bertrandon notices that many times the groups of Muslims whom he encountered consisted of many different races: "To explain what this caravan was, there were Moors, Turks, Berbers, Tartars and Persians, all belonging to the sect and law of Muhammed" (33). Being ignorant of the Islamic faith, the author approached a priest who served the Venetian consul in Damascus conversant in that holy book (the Koran), to explain to him their religion, which the man actually did, copying it down on a piece of paper, which Bertrandon later took with him to the Duke Philip, but he does not give us any details in his account of what he actually understood from that explanation (34).

His curiosity, however, to explore as many parts of Syria as possible never stopped, and he did not even hesitate to dress up like a Muslim in order to join a caravan going to Bursa (35–36). Considering how lavishly the author equipped himself on the market, we can easily figure how much money the duke had provided him with for that journey. But he was by far not the only one capable of traveling to the foreign world in the vein of a pilgrim but richly equipped, since pilgrimage sites were frequented by representatives of all social classes and both genders, by young and old since the desire to partake in the sanctity of a space, a shrine, a church, or a relic was extraordinarily strong, both resulting, possibly,

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<sup>112</sup> This topic has already been discussed quite intensively; for a good collection of relevant documents, see Rainer Erb, *Die Legende vom Ritualmord: zur Geschichte der Blutbeschuldigung gegen Juden*. Reihe Dokumente, Texte, Materialien, 6 (Berlin: Metropol, 1993); see also the contributions to *The Blood Libel Legend: A Casebook in Anti-Semitic Folklore*, ed. Alan Dundes (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991); *Ritualmord: Legenden in der europäischen Geschichte*, ed. Susanna Buttaroni (Vienna: Böhlau, 2003); cf. now Birgit Wiedl, "The Host on the Doorstep: Perpetrators, Victims, and Bystanders in an Alleged Host Desecration in Fourteenth-Century Austria," *Crime and Punishment in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, ed. Albrecht Classen and Connie Scarborough. Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture, 11 (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2012), 299–345.

from deep religious devotion and from simple curiosity, if not, which might well have been the norm, a combination of both.

His relationship with individual guides, such as a man called Hoyarbarach, proved to be excellent: "I found him very frank and honest, more so, it seems, than many Christians" (38). He also made serious efforts to learn some Turkish from a Jew of Haifa "who spoke good Tartar and Italian" (38). But this then led to a most fascinating situation which reveals how little the representatives of the contrastive cultures could communicate with each other but still could laugh in a friendly manner about and with each other:

The very first day, when I was with the company outside of Baalbek, I looked in my notes to see how to say barley and chopped hay for my horse ten or twelve Turks gathered around me and burst out laughing when they saw my notes. They were as astonished by our writing as we are by theirs. Since then, they have taken so much effort to teach me to speak, saying a thing so many times and in so many ways, that I finally had to get it. When I left them I knew how to ask for most of the things that I needed for myself and my horse. (38–39)

While traveling from Damascus to Baalbek, he found some good company, although he had no linguistic ability to reach out to the other person: "With the leader was a Circassian Mamluk of the Sultan. He was going to get a brother of his who was in Karamania. When this Mamluk saw that I was alone and didn't speak the language, he accompanied for charity and took me along" (43). The others, however, at one point planned to kill and rob him because he appeared rich to them and since he was a Christian, it would have been easy. That Mamluke, however, saved him, emphasizing, as he later told Bertrandon, that he had warned them of their sinful act: "it would be bad and a sin against their law because I had eaten bread and salt with them. God had made Christians as well as Saracens" (44).

Could it be possible that that Mamluk was more tolerant than Bertrandon, or any other Christian pilgrim? Though we cannot tell from the author's report, there was no need for him to portray the other in such positive light; hence this little episode illustrates nicely that the stereotypical polarity and hostility between both religions and cultures were not necessarily a constant and all-pervasive feature in the contacts between both worlds. As so often, the individual situation and specific interpersonal relationships certainly have to be taken into account, and so here as well. We cannot fully evaluate the way that both Christians and Muslims, or more generally, Europeans and Arabs, viewed each other in the late Middle Ages by viewing those conditions only from the point of view of Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land.

As an important corrective, this author was not a cleric, only a regular traveler who collected information for his lord, and he was also a writer who paid greatest attention to all cultural differences that he could observe, including the extensive

ritual of breaking camp ("Ten of us would make more noise than a thousand of them," 45), their prayers, washing, and even their habits of relieving themselves: "They relieve themselves like women, but never wipe themselves. If it is only liquid, they wipe their 'thing' on a stone or against a wall or something else" (45).

Then we also learn of a secret drinking party involving a group of Turks, some of whom just had returned from Mecca, and yet still did not care about their own severe transgression of the Islamic law. Obviously, they were well used to alcohol and could consume considerably more than Bertrandon who started to vomit at one point and needed help from one of them "who called me *kardays*, that is, brother, said that he would drink for me so that the others would be satisfied" (49). In addition, his Mamluk taught him how to shoot arrows from the saddle, apparently treating him like a friend who deserved all that extraordinary attention (50).

In the town of Payas on the gulf (southeast of Turkey in the Hatay Province near the border to Lebanon) Bertrandon encountered an Amenian who knew enough of Italian to tell him much about the history of Turkey (53–54). Later the author relates how the women in that country make bread, as he had observed it himself (55), and thus he clearly conveys to us how much he was allowed to traverse all that vast land as a tourist without ever really experiencing serious trouble. Bertrandon never leaves doubt as to the foreignness of his report, but the man from the West could apparently visit virtually every place and town, could go wherever he wanted, even if it sometimes required a disguise. Linguistic problems are fairly easily overcome by means of translators, and by him learning basic vocabulary.

Especially in Turkey (he calls it Turkmenia) Bertrandon was openly welcomed and treated in a friendly fashion, since people invited him into their own private spaces, including the baths: "One day, they took me into the city to the pools and steam baths. I did not dare to undress in order to bathe as they did, for I was afraid that they would see my money" (58). And: "There are no beds, but there are stone seats all around the outside, on which there are mats of very fine wicker on which they dry themselves and comb their beards. I then knew them better than I had ever before" (58).

He delighted in characterizing them as happy and friendly people, but still marveled at the strangeness of some of their customs: "They never wash their hands except when they wash their derrière, or when they say their prayers, or in the baths or when they wash their beards in any handy stream or fountain. They keep their beards very clean" (59).<sup>113</sup> Moreover, we regularly hear Bertrandon voice his fascination with the beautiful countryside, the friendly people, and the

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<sup>113</sup> Kline, trans. (see note 109), already recognized many of these fascinating comments by Bertrandon about the Turkish culture (see her numerous remarks in the footnotes).



Turkish language: "It is a very beautiful language and quick and rather easy to learn" (61). Not surprisingly, when he meets a Cypriot merchant, Antoine who had lived there already for a long time, we are told that he "spoke the language very well" (61), a clear indication of how it was possible for many of the pilgrims and other travelers to communicate with the Arabs or the Turks, among others, apart from using gestures. There are always enough people who have acquired the local languages and then assist the newcomers with their linguistic skills.

At the same time, Bertrandon encountered, even in the most distant corners, Europeans, such as two Cypriots in Karaman "who spoke French rather well" (66). They were ambassadors of sorts and had to reaffirm and renew political alliances with the Great Karman (66). In their company, the author was able to come along to the court of the "king," or "Grand Karaman" and observe the many different rituals and ceremonies involving the ambassador, the translator, and the king, without himself getting involved (68–71).

At one point the traveler continues his journey beyond a certain point at which he had to say good-bye to his guide, whom he praises most positively: "He had been so good to me. And he had done it for charity's sake. If he hadn't been there, I would have made my way only with great difficulty" (75–76). Amazingly, Bertrandon then goes even further and explains the reasons for his emphasis on that man's wonderful character: "I am writing this so that people will not forget that a man, not of our faith, for the honor of God, did many good things for me. Moreover, for the love of God, he willingly gave alms to those who asked" (76).

That Mamluk not only expressed his great respect and perhaps even friendship for Bertrandon, but he also warned him of the Saracens, i.e., the Arabs, "for they can be as bad as the Europeans" (76) or are simply identified as thieves (77). Bertrandon constantly reports of further encounters with extraordinarily friendly people, such as a slave of the Grand Turk, who could communicate with him in Italian and claimed to have some familiarity even with Paris (80–81). Once again the author felt urged to comment: "he was very kind and told me what I had to do" (81).

Nevertheless, he also came across slave markets where Christians were sold, which created great pity in him, although he was completely helpless (84). At one point he assumed the responsibility of taking a Spaniard with him to Constantinople, as a group of Florentine merchants had asked him to do (85), which underscores, here as well, the true extent to which Western merchants traversed the entire Near East and obviously coped quite well, although Bertrandon regularly has to buy various disguises to ensure the safety of his journeys: "I had to buy a high, red hat and a military insignia of brass wire, which I wore all the way to Constantinople" (86). But then he also realized that in some areas there "were more Greeks than Turks" who "hate the Christians more than the Turks do" (87), which sheds intriguing light on the real conflicts in terms of

religion in that context. Probing the same issue somewhat later, he reached the same conclusion:

I found more friendship among the Turks, and would sooner trust myself to them than to the Greeks. It seems to me that they don't like Christians who are loyal to the Church of Rome. The pledges that they have since made, I think were made more from poverty and hunger than from love for the Church of Rome. (95)

Already earlier pilgrims, such as Burchard of Monte Sion, had revealed the curious sentiment that they felt more welcome among the Muslims in the Holy Land than among the local Eastern Christians (Greek Orthodox). Similarly positive comments can be heard from the traveler Ricoldo da Monte Croce (1242/1243–1320).<sup>114</sup> After all, the fact that people in the Holy Land and in the neighboring regions shared, by chance, the same religion, did not necessarily make them sympathetic, neither then nor today. We know, however, that those Oriental Christians played a rather significant role in the establishment of intercultural relations, in preparing the ground for future contacts between Europeans and Arabs or other Eastern people, and could well be identified as one of the key components in the bridge building process between East and West from the late antiquity through the Middle Ages and until today.<sup>115</sup>

As much as Bertrandon was constantly driven by his curiosity to explore further lands, he maintained a critical stance and underlined, when necessary, that some of his accounts were only based on hearsay, such as the one about the land of Prester John: "I don't know if he was telling the truth or not. I simply report and do not guarantee the facts" (89).<sup>116</sup>

Similarly, when in Constantinople, Bertrandon makes the greatest efforts to observe and study everything he can get close to, such as the royal ceremonies and festivities, which intrigued him deeply (96–106), so his account proves to be a first-

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<sup>114</sup> Burchard of Mount Sion, *A Description of the Holy Land*, trans. Aubrey Stewart. Library of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text society, 12 (London: Pilgrims' Text Society, 1896), 102–03; Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (1960; Edinburgh: University Press, 1979), 218–20. See also his study *The Arabs and Mediaeval Europe*. Arab Background Series (1975; London and New York: Longman, 1979). As to Ricoldo, see his *Itinerario ai paesi orientali di Fra Ricoldo di Monte di Croce . . . : scirrito del XIII. secolo*, ed. Fra Vincenzo Fineschi (Florence: Francesco Moucke, 1793).

<sup>115</sup> See now the contributions to *Orientalische Christen und Europa: Kulturbegegnung zwischen Interferenz, Partizipation und Antizipation*, ed. Martin Tamcke. Göttinger Orientforschungen: Syriaca, 41 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012). The authors deal with reception processes, introspection among the Oriental Christians, the history of missions, the interaction between the Oriental Christians and Europeans, and the coexistence of Muslims and Christians in the East.

<sup>116</sup> This myth, often copied especially in medieval and early modern travel literature (Marco Polo, John Mandeville, etc.) has been studied already from many different perspectives; see, for instance, L. N. Gumilev, *Searches for an Imaginary Kingdom: The Legend of the Kingdom of Prester John*, trans. R. E. F. Smith. Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

rate record of how late-medieval Europeans could, and sometimes did, perceive the Holy Land, the Ottoman Empire, and the lands on the Balkans. As much as the author certainly tried to present himself in the best light, he was also deeply concerned with staying close to the truth and to provide accurate information, as he confirms at the end: "I beg my readers not to impute to me pride, or conceit, or boastfulness. I have done this for two reasons: one, should any nobleman want to go that way he can ask for this road and will find that I have told the truth; two, because my much respected lord the Duke commanded that I have this written down, based on a few notes which I had made in a little book when I had the leisure to write" (169–70).

### 10. The Helpful Saracen in Margery Kempe's *Book* A Mystical Woman's Perception of the Foreign World

The most unusual mystical account of Margery Kempe also provides some intriguing glimpses into the way that some European pilgrim travelers could experience the foreign world in the Holy Land in concrete, personal terms. Overall, admittedly, Kempe does not offer many comments about the Muslim and Arab world there; instead she focuses, as most pilgrims naturally do, on the various sites where she went to pray and to partake in the spiritual quality of a chapel or a church. But she regularly experienced, just as she had back in England, much criticism and open hostility by her fellow pilgrims who disliked her heavily for her often rather outrageous behavior, especially her excessive crying in public, which always served her as an expression of her mystical experience or longing for the Godhead.<sup>117</sup>

When the company of pilgrims reached the mountain "Qwarentyne" where Christ was said to have fasted for forty days, Kempe also wanted to climb up the elevation, but she faced great physical challenges. Her Christian fellows simply denied her any help, once again hoping to leave her behind so that they could avoid further embarrassment: "And thei seyde 'nay', for thei coud not wel helpyn hemself. Than had sche mekyl sorwe, for sche myth not comyn on the hille."<sup>118</sup> In

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<sup>117</sup> Recent research has recognized in Kempe a significant female voice from the late Middle Ages; see, for instance, *A Companion to the Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. John H. Arnold (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004); Marea Mitchell, *The Book of Margery Kempe: Scholarship, Community, and Criticism* (New York, Bern, et al.: Peter Lang, 2005); David Wallace, *Strong Women: Life, Text, and Territory, 1347 - 1645*. Clarendon Lectures in English 2007 (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Valentina Castagna, *Re-Reading Margery Kempe in the 21st Century* (Bern, Berlin, et al.: Peter Lang, 2011).

<sup>118</sup> *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. Barry Windeatt. Longman Annotated Texts (Harlow: Pearson Educational Limited, 2000), 172–73. See also *The Book of Margery Kempe: A New Translation*,

that moment, however, an Arab man came to her rescue: “an anon happyd a Sarazyn, a welfaryng man, to comyn by hir, and sche put a grote in hys hand, makyng to hym a token for to bryng hir on to the Mownt. And as-swythe the Sarazyn toke hir undyr hys arme and led hir up on to the hey Mownt wher owyr Lord fastyd fowrty days” (173).

For whatever reason, Margery succeeded in reaching out to the Muslims everywhere who treated her with great respect, at least as she perceived it, especially since she met them particularly when she had run into difficulties: “Also the Sarazines mad mych of hir and conveyd hir and leddyn hir abowtyn in the cuntre where ache wold gon. And sche fond alle pepyl good onto hir and gentyl, saf only hir owyn cuntremen” (174).

The sarcasm here could not be more biting, since she directly criticizes the other Christian pilgrims from England for their failure to help and support her according to Christian values, while the Muslims demonstrate the very opposite behavior, although they adhere to the very opposite religion. Of course, this does not mean at all that she rejects the Europeans altogether; on the contrary (see, e.g., 180), but she has her axe to grind with those who had been supposed to help and assist her on the long journey, as one would expect from pilgrims.

## 11. Locations of Contacts Between East and West

Especially the Mediterranean offered itself as the ideal staging ground for contacts between Arabs Muslims, Jews, and Christians, and it is here where we encounter the most examples of merchants, travelers, artists, architects, medical doctors, philosophers, and diplomats traversing through the entire space, crossing many borders all the time, coping with a host of different languages and religions.<sup>119</sup>

As Ragnhild Johnsrud Zorgati emphasizes, particularly the Iberian Peninsula proved to be, at least until 1492, a unique space where different cultures, religions, and languages met and meshed to some extent, as a large corpus of legal documents from both sides of the cultural divide indicates. According to Ryan Szpiech, who published a review of Zorgati's *Pluralism in the Middle Ages: Hybrid Identities, Conversion, and Mixed Marriages in Medieval Iberia*,

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*Contexts, Criticism*, trans. and ed. Lynn Staley. Norton Critical Edition (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2011).

<sup>119</sup> See now the contributions to *Lateinisch-griechisch-arabische Begegnungen: Kulturelle Diversität im Mittelmeerraum des Spätmittelalters*, ed. Margit Mersch and Ulrike Ritzerfeld. Europa im Mittelalter, 15 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009); Michael Borgolte, *Christen, Juden, Muselmanen: Die Erben der Antike und der Aufstieg des Abendlandes 300 bis 1400 n. Chr.* Siedler Geschichte Europas (Munich: Siedler, 2006).

The work is essentially a comparative legal study that weighs the similarities and differences between Christian and Muslim legal discourses about the interaction of different minority groups. As Zorgati explains, the goal of the work is to investigate “the perspectives that Muslim and Christian elites took on the pluricultural character of their societies by analyzing how their texts erected boundaries between religious communities. This book therefore constitutes an investigation into legal texts understood as boundary-maintaining mechanisms” (20). As she clarifies in the conclusion, her intention is not merely to “investigate” this understanding, but to call it into question (171). Zorgati elaborates this comparison of legal texts by looking at how they dealt with two issues of inter-religious contact: conversion (treated in chapters 1-3) and mixed marriages and sexual unions (chapters 4-6). The documentation and analysis of these two issues take up the bulk of the work.<sup>120</sup>

As Zorgati underscores, approaching her task from different perspectives in the various chapters, conversion efforts were of great significance and caused numerous legal problems, but they happened and indicate the plurality of cultural, personal, artistic, economic, legal, and intellectual connections and contacts between the Muslim and the Christian population on the Iberian Peninsula, at least as far as up to the fourteenth century.

It might as well be possible, if not even very likely, that Andalusian Arabic literature and music somehow influenced the world to the north, irrespective of the enormous linguistic barrier between Arabic and Catalan and Occitan. Maria Rosa Menocal has suggested, for instance, that the first *troubadour*, William IX of Aquitaine, might have been deeply determined by the art of love poetry as it was practiced in Muslim Spain during the eleventh century, or in the Holy Land, where he spent several years from 1100 onwards after the first Crusade had successfully besieged and conquered Jerusalem. Emphasizing the need to distinguish between Islam proper and the material Arabic culture on the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula and of Italy, he claims,

The salient features of the world with which William of Acquitaine or the readers of the *Disciplina clericalis* of Petrus Alfonsi came into contact, and which we can legitimately claim they might have known in any degree, were secular. Thus, the ultimate sources of many of the cultural phenomena that became a part of the European mainstream because of the impact and prestige of Andalusian culture may be irrelevant, by and large.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ryan Szpiech's review of Ragnhild Johnsrud Zorgati's *Pluralism in the Middle Ages: Hybrid Identities, Conversion, and Mixed Marriages in Medieval Iberia* (New York: Routledge, 2012) in *The Medieval Review* 12.06.35 (online, June 2012). See also the contributions to *Hybride Kulturen im mittelalterlichen Europa: Vorträge und Workshops einer internationalen Frühlingsschule*, ed. Michael Borgolte and Bernd Schneidmüller. Europa im Mittelalter, 16 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2010).

<sup>121</sup> Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage*. Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 35.

By disentangling the Islamic world from the Arabic and Andalusian one, she hopes to have established a bridge to the early courtly culture to the north, where the poets and artists full of curiosity looked to their southern neighbors and picked up their inspirations (37). Quite correctly she points out the many direct contacts between Arabic and Christian scholars—an opposition that actually fails to address the critical issues of cultural contacts and exchanges since both groups lived in southern Europe, and only the latter term is based on a religious connotation—in Toledo, Andalusia, Southern Italy, and Sicily: “Contacts with the seats of learning and translation in southern Europe were anything but rare, indeed they were virtually incestuous at times” (49). For her, the term ‘reaction’ would have been the operative one, as she tries to illustrate with the case of Dante: “his work may have been a considered reaction against its [the Arabic] encroaching presence in his intellectual milieu” (52).

Unfortunately, as convincing Menocal seem to be in her argument, and as much as she also refers to the loud chorus of scholarly voices from the nineteenth century supporting her claim (Sismonde de Sismondi, Claude Fauriel, Stendhal, E. J. Delecluze, Eugène Baret, Madame de Staë, or Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 80–81), final proof really escapes her, even though Arabic love poetry, *muwashshaḥa*, with its famous *kharjas*,<sup>122</sup> could somehow be conceived as a potential reservoir of images, concepts, values, and ideals which later might have had an impact on courtly love poetry in the Provence:

Provençal and other courtly love poems that are not explicitly dialogic often involve the same kind of denial of the validity of such love. This poetry is filled with variegated but analogous devices, such as structurally pairing emotions that cancel each other out and create voids and that in other ways indicate in a fashion quite similar to that of the *muwashshaḥa* at the essential unproductiveness of such love. (109)

Of course, on the scholarly level, the contacts were certainly present through an intensive translation process, especially at the university of Salerno in southern Italy and the university of Toledo in Spain, which in many ways radically transformed Western sciences, medicine, and philosophy.<sup>123</sup> The Iberian Peninsula

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<sup>122</sup> Richard Hitchcock, *The Kharjas: A Critical Bibliography*. Research Bibliographies & Checklists, 20 (London: Grant and Culter, 1977); Richard Hitchcock and Consuelo López-Morillas, *The Kharjas: A Critical Bibliography. Supplement*, 1. Research Bibliographies & Checklists, 20.1 (London: Grant & Cutler, 1996); Henk Heijkoop and Otto Zwartjes, *Muwaššah, zajal, kharja: Bibliography of Strophic Poetry and Music from al-Andalus and Their Influence in East and West*. The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World, 21 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004). Margit Frenk Alatorre, *Las jarchas mozárabes y los comienzos de la lírica románica*. Serie Estudios de lingüística y literatura, 1 (México: Colegio de México, 1975); Otto Zwartjes, *Love Songs from al-Andalus: History, Structure, and Meaning of the Kharja*. Medieval Iberian Peninsula: Texts and Studies, 11 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1997).

<sup>123</sup> Derrick Melville Dunlop, *Arabic Science in the West*. Pakistan Historical Society Publications, 35

at large and its southern portion in particular can clearly be identified as a territory where three cultures met, interacted with each other, exchanged, and found, despite much hostility and violence over the centuries, some form of *convivencia*. For instance, as we read in *The Arts of Intimacy*: “The courts of Peter I and Muhammad V were alive, and constantly transforming, each in the mirror to the other—so that even statements of separateness and domination bear the unmistakable marks of complicity, and of desire . . . . That opposition is remote, and constructed; the artistic language of domination and sovereignty found its most immediate reflections not in struggles between ‘faithful’ and ‘infidel’ but in internal struggles for power among those of the same religious and political group.”<sup>124</sup>

Spanish literature, such as the *Poema de Mio Cid*,<sup>125</sup> is filled with examples of surprising interactions between Muslims and Christians, not to forget the Jews,

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(Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, [1958]); Ziauddin Ahmad, *Influence of Islam on Western Civilization* (Karachi, Islamabad, et al.: National Book Foundation, 1978), mentions Arabic science, medicine, chemistry, geography, mechanical inventions, philosophy, music, agricultural, the arts as important areas that influenced the West, but no direct influence of Arabic literature on medieval or early modern literature. His comments on the deep impact of the collection of stories in *The Arabian Nights* on all of Western literature (19–21) seems too generic to help us in our investigation. Stephen O’Shea, *Sea of Faith* (see note 32); cf. also *A Shared Legacy: Islamic Science East and West: Homage to Professor J. M. Millàs Vallicrosa*, ed. Emilia Calvo (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2008); see now the contributions to *Wissen über Grenzen: Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, ed. Andreas Speer and Lydia Wegener. *Miscellanea mediaevalia*, 33 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006). For the situation in Spain, see Julio Samsó, “La ciencia española en la época de Alfonso el Sabio,” *Alfonso X, Toledo 1984* (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, Dirección General de Bellas Artes y Archivos, 1984), 89–101. Perhaps, however, we would have to widen our perspective considerably, following Christopher I. Beckwith’s suggestion that much of the innovations in medieval sciences really originated in Central Asia, with the Arabic world serving primarily as a medium, not as the origin. See his *Warriors of the Cloisters: The Central Asian Origins of Science in the Medieval World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). As far as medieval Europe was concerned, however, the contact with Muslim scholars proved to be highly instrumental; see John Freely, *Light from the East: How the Science of Medieval Islam Helped to Shape the Western World* (London: Taurus, 2011). See now also the contributions to *Beyond Religious Borders: Interaction and Intellectual Exchange in the Medieval Islamic World*, ed. David M. Freidenreich and Miriam Goldstein. *Jewish Cultures and Contexts* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011). For a review, see Sharon L. Albert, in *The Medieval Review* 12.11.15 (online, Nov. 2012). As Allison P. Coudert in her contribution to this volume argues, however, East Asia, especially China and Japan, were certainly far ahead of Europe in terms of sciences, political structure, economics, and probably also literature and the arts during the early modern age, which made it very difficult for Jesuit and other missionaries and (Dutch) traders to gain a foothold in those countries.

<sup>124</sup> Jerrylynn D. Dodds, María Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 261.

<sup>125</sup> *Poema de mio Cid*, ed. Colin Smith. 20th rev. ed. *Letras hispánicas*, 35 (Madrid: Cátedra, 1996).

and this well into the fifteenth century.<sup>126</sup> But we have always to be careful not to confuse examples of fairly close cooperation between Christians and Muslims, such as in the *Poema de Mío Cid*, for pragmatic or personal reasons, with a false impression of tolerance in religious terms. El Cid always fights, when an opportunity arises, against the Moors, but he also counts Moorish rulers among his friends, all depending on the circumstances and particular conditions.

In the same vein, as much as Western scholars were deeply influenced by their Arab colleagues via various stages of translations, this does not mean at all that they thereby overcame their religious stereotypes and might have lowered their negative attitudes toward people from the East at large or from the Muslim faith. They certainly established considerable respect for the accomplishments of the Arabs, especially because the latter had preserved already since the ninth century the ancient Greek knowledge and philosophy more and better than anyone else in the West by way of Arabic translations. But the European scholars remained Christians and clearly defended their own cultural and religious supremacy. Similarly, there were no indications of any Arabic scholars at that time to convert to Christianity. Both sides remained well separated from each other, though there were numerous contact zones and individual exchanges throughout time.

One fascinating example of direct contacts and significant influence on Latin scholars that deserves to be mentioned in passing was the Sicilian Muslim scholar al-Idrisi, who completed his geographical treatise *Kitāb Nushat al-mushtāb fi 'khtirāb al-āfāk*, also called *Kitāb Rudjār* (The Book of Roger), in 1154 on behalf of the Norman King Roger II of Sicily. We only know that he died around 1165, or possibly 1175–1176,<sup>127</sup> but otherwise most details about him remain obscure or

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<sup>126</sup> *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain*, ed. Vivian B. Mann, Thomas F. Glick, and Jerrilynn D. Dodds (New York: G. Braziller in association with the Jewish Museum, 1992); *Tolerancia y convivencia étnico-religiosa en la Península Ibérica durante la Edad Media: III Jornadas de Cultura Islámica*, ed. Alejandro García Sanjuán. *Collectanea*, 73 ([Huelva]: Universidad de Huelva: Ilmo. ayuntamiento de almonaster la Real, 2003); H. Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII: perspectivas alfonsíes* (Madrid: Plifemo, 2006); María Jesús Fuente, *Identidad y convivencia: musulmanas y judías en la España medieval* (Madrid: Polifemo, 2010). See now also Paola Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew: Conversion and Inquisition in the Medieval Crown of Aragon, 1250–1391*. The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). For more critical perspectives, see David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>127</sup> David Abulafia, "Local Trade Networks in Medieval Sicily: The Evidence of Idrisi," *Shipping, Trade* (see note 17), 157–66. He recognizes, above all, "This encomium led Idrisi to describe how Roger the Great Count had seized the island from quarrelling and tyrannical petty governors. Rather than presenting him as someone who was ever ready to arrange a surrender treaty, he portrayed Roger I as a ruthless figure who never set down his sword, conquering Sicily systematically zone by zone. But once the island was under his command, he set in place a system of justice and guaranteed the practices of the different religions, as well as the right to be governed by the law-code of the group to which one belonged. He ensured that his subjects lived in peace



contested (birth in Ceuta or in al-Andalus?) probably because his Muslim contemporaries regarded him as a renegade for having lived at the court of a Christian king and for having expressed his praise of him in his book.<sup>128</sup>

But that is precisely the reason why al-Idrisí attracts our attention, being one of those scholars who had crossed the strict boundary between both religions for pragmatic reasons, probably without even abandoning his own faith.<sup>129</sup> His treatise, in Latin translation called *Opus geographicum sive: Liber ad eorum delectationem, qui terras peragrarare studeant*,<sup>130</sup> was not only based on the two ancient authors Ptolemaeus and Orosius, but also on numerous eye-witness accounts provided by people whom the author had sent to many different parts of the then known world. It also contains a famous world map, the *Idrisí-Map*, which has survived in seventy large pages containing 2064 names of cities (365 in Africa, 740 in Europe, and 959 in Asia; fig. 2). The enormous significance of that map consists of its high degree of accuracy, with most cities located according to correct latitudes, while the longitudes were left out deliberately because they were regarded as unreliable and contradictory. Altogether, this *Idrisí-Map* counts as the oldest large-size world map, apart from the *Peutinger Map* from ca. 365 C.E., which focuses mostly on the roads (fig. 1).<sup>131</sup>

Idrisí also wrote a detailed description of Sicily, but, if we can trust the Italian translation by Francesco Tardia, there are no references to the people, the culture, the religion, or anything reminiscent of the actual conditions among the local population in his tract. We would not even know that here we deal with a book by an Arabic author because he never identifies himself and never refers to specific

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and safety and were able to pass on their possessions to their children. Such praise might indeed have been attached to a Muslim ruler; Idrisi, however, side-stepped the embarrassing fact that this Roger was a Christian conquering Muslim" (159).

<sup>128</sup> But see now Annliese Nef, "Al-Idrisí: un complément d'enquête biographique," *Géographes et voyageurs au Moyen Âge*, ed. Henri Bresc and Emmanuelle Tixier du Mesnil (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2010), 53–66. Most scholars lean in the direction to identify his birthplace as Ceuta; hence he originated from Northern Africa. See Idrisi, *La première géographie de l'Occident*, ed. Henri Bresc and Annliese Nef, trad. du chevalier Jaubert [1836–1840], rev. par Annliese Nef (Paris: Flammarion, 1999).

<sup>129</sup> G. Oman, "al-Idrisí," *The Encyclopedia of Islam*. New Edition, ed. B. Lewis, V. L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat, and J. Schacht. Vol. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill; London: Luzac & Co, 1971), 1032–35.

<sup>130</sup> Ed. A. Bombaci, U. Rizzitani, et al. Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli. 9 vols. (Napels and Leiden: Brill, 1970–1984); this is the Arabic text edition; for a French translation, see *Géographie d'Edrisi*, trans. de l'arabe en français d'après deux manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du roi et accompagnée de notes, par P. amédée Jaubert. Recueil de voyages et de mémoires publié par la Société de géographie, 5–6 (Paris: Impr. royale, 1836–1840).

<sup>131</sup> Konrad Müller, *Weltkarte des Arabers Idrisi vom Jahre 1154* (1928; Stuttgart: Brockhaus/Antiquarium, 1981), 20–22. As he emphasizes, most of the geographic names are still recognizable today. The map was originally a wall map, but has survived only fragmentarily in books (5–6).

cultural aspects.<sup>132</sup> We read, for instance: “Da Legab alla Città di Catania (26) sei miglia, situata vicino al mare, ed ha un porto delizioso, e dalla parte Occidentale di Catania ví è un grandissimo fiume Moise (27), che si meschia col mare di Catania” (61). Without any hesitation, the author includes references to Christian churches: “Da quì alla Chiesa di San Marco (194) sette miglia tra Occidente e Tramontana” (131–32). In the introduction we are briefly informed that Sicily used to belong to the Muslims: “in mezzo a questi sta la Città antica chiamata Chalesa (4), nella quale anticamente in tempo di Moselmane (5) era la sedia regia” (47; in the middle is located the ancient city called Chalesa which used to be, during the Muslim rule, the royal residence).

However, beyond that the author completely refrains from commenting on the Muslim culture there. It might be, of course, that the seventeenth-century Christian translator occluded all those passages where mention might have been made about the Arabs in Sicily, but I could not verify that at all. We can only be certain that the text had originally been written in Arabic, so obviously for an Arab-speaking audience. But the description itself does not provide any information relevant for Muslims, or Arabs for that matter.

Parallel to Idrísí, Adelard of Bath (ca. 1070–after 1146) undertook a lengthy journey to Sicily and from there to Antioch and Syria, during which he translated Arabic texts and thus became one of the earliest European scholars to serve as a conveyer of Arabic knowledge to the West, focusing, above all, on mathematics and astronomy, then on the abacus and the astrolabe.<sup>133</sup> He wrote the first complete translation of Euclid’s *Elements* based on an Arabic source, which then became in turn the source for all other European versions of this famous mathematician’s teachings in the Middle Ages. He also wrote an instructional text on cosmology and the use of the astrolabe.<sup>134</sup> To what extent individual Arabic

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<sup>132</sup> *Descrizione della Sicilia cavata da un libro arabico di Scherif Elidrisi*, trans. P. d. Magri, corredata di prefazione, e di copiose annotazioni da Francesco Tardia (Palermo: n.p., [1764]). This is item no. 7 in vol. Mm.58.41 in the Cambridge University Library; otherwise very difficult to trace, even in the major catalogues. See now Edrisi, *La Sicilia nel Libro di Ruggiero*, ed. Carlo Ruta. Piccola biblioteca, 6 (Palermo: Edi. bi. si., 2004).

<sup>133</sup> *Adelard of Bath: An English Scientist and Arabist of the Early Twelfth Century*, ed. Charles Burnett. Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts, 14 (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1987); Louise Cochrane, *Adelard of Bath: The First English Scientist* (London: British Museum Press, 1994); see also *Die astronomischen Tafeln des Muhammed ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī in der Bearbeitung des Maslama ibn Ahmed al-Madjrīfī und der lateinischen Uebersetzung des Athelhard von Bath auf Grund der Vorarbeiten von A. Björnbo und R. Besthorn in Kopenhagen*, ed. and commentary by H. Suter. D. Kgl. danske vidensk. sels. Skrifter, 7. Raekke, historisk og filosofisk, af. II.1 (Copenhagen: A. F. Høost & Son, 1914).

<sup>134</sup> *Adelard of Bath: An English Scientist and Arabist of the Early Twelfth Century*, ed. Charles Burnett. Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts, 14 (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1987); Richard C. Dales, *The Scientific Achievement of the Middle Ages. Sources of Medieval History*. Pennsylvania Paperback, 57 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1973); Elspeth

scholars such as Idrísí and others influenced their European counterparts continues to be a matter of debate, although it seems most likely by now that their understanding of the world deeply impacted the way Western cartographers created their work, whether we think of the dominant position of Africa on the maps or the depiction of the moon mountains, the Western Nile, the geography of northern Africa, and of the Indian Ocean.<sup>135</sup>

As most research now indicates, Idrísí found extensive reception first in southern Italy during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, while in the fifteenth century the influence of the Ptolemaic maps became dominant.<sup>136</sup> He is, in other words, another brilliant example of the results of intellectual exchanges between East and West, which laid the foundation for the extensive scientific evolution since the twelfth century in Europe which would not have been possible without those contacts with Muslim scientists both in southern Italy/Sicily and Toledo, Spain.

## 12. Travel as a Medium of Cultural Contacts

One of the central mediums for the encounters between representatives of foreign worlds has always been travel, but the number of reasons for travel has been almost legion. Most travelers indeed come into contact with new cultures, people, languages, customs, religions, and the like, but not everyone who leaves home to go on a journey demonstrates a real interest in the foreign or understands how to communicate with the people of other cultures/languages. In fact, considering modern mass tourism, the vast majority of travelers today simply hope for a change of pace, tastes, weather, smells, and environments, but they do not learn the foreign language and the foreign culture, so simply transfer their own social conditions to the foreign context without the latter really having an impact on them. If they could simply have the southern beach in their own neighborhood back home, for instance, and could also find the time to relax and to enjoy the

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Whitney, *Medieval Science and Technology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004). For a very useful survey of the history of research on this topic, see Alain Touwaide, "Transfer of Knowledge," *Handbook of Medieval Studies: Terms – Methods – Trends*, ed. Albrecht Classen. Vol. 2 (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 1368–99.

<sup>135</sup> Carsten Drecoll, *Idrísí aus Sizilien: Der Einfluß eines arabischen Wissenschaftlers auf die Entwicklung der europäischen Geographie*. Deutsche Hochschulschriften (Egelsbach, Frankfurt a. M., Munich, and New York: Dr. Hänsel-Hohenhausen, 2000), 14–19, et passim. For a summary of his findings, see 149–50. He emphasizes in particular the great impact which Idrísí's map had on the development of the portolan maps. See, for instance, *A Portolan Atlas of the Mediterranean Sea and Western European Waters (with a World Map)*, attributed to Juan Oliva. Facsimile ed. with an intro. by John A. Wolter (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1987).

<sup>136</sup> Drecoll, *Idrísí aus Sizilien* (see note 135), 58–60.

foreign environment without transgressing their own cultural framework too much, most would then simply be content because the foreign could be just too frightening for most, or too complicated and alienating—certainly a universal experience both in past and present.<sup>137</sup>

### 13. Curiosity Among Muslim Travelers?

Many medieval travelers, especially Christian ones, did not—at least not officially—pursue the goal of satisfying their curiosity; instead their intention was to reach important sites with relics and altars, to gain absolution from their sins, and to touch holy ground at least once, that is, to go on a pilgrimage and to carry out the relevant rituals and ceremonies required to gain them the deeply desired absolution of their sins.<sup>138</sup> Even if they then were to take some water from the river Jordan, or some soil from holy ground with them in order to help others back home suffering from sickness that could not be healed by ordinary means, they had met their own objectives. But all this did not lead to actual cultural encounters and/or an intercultural exchange, especially when they traveled in groups, as was the norm, and were led by professional guides, mostly Venetians, hence were well taken care of and did not face any serious problems in the foreign and with the foreign.

Interestingly, a very similar observation can be made with regard to Muslim travelers in the Middle Ages who were commonly aiming for acquiring spiritual and worldly knowledge, the so-called *rihla*. As Hourì Touati emphasizes, “In Islam, travel and the discourse that travel produced did not draw their meaning from a historical and anthropological relationship with the other.”<sup>139</sup> Although Muslim travelers normally did not aim for any kind of self-isolation and closure separating them from all other religions and non-Arabic cultures, their overarching intent appears to have been the establishment of a cultural identity within and among themselves, especially in the Middle ages. Following Touati, “What was at stake in the construction was to make sure that this georeligious and

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<sup>137</sup> The number of relevant studies on tourism and its cultural significance is just legion; but see, for instance, Greg Richards *The Impact of Culture on Tourism* (Paris: OECD, 2009); or the contributions to *Tourism, Power and Culture: Anthropological Insights*, ed. Donald V. L. Macleod (Bristol: Channel View Publication, 2010).

<sup>138</sup> See the useful bibliographical research tool, *Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages: A Research Guide*, ed. Linda Kay Davidson and Maryjane Dunn-Wood. Garland Medieval Bibliographies (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993).

<sup>139</sup> Hourì Touati, *Islam & Travel in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 3.

geopolitical unity become a space that dogmatically guaranteed the truth of a 'living together' willed by God" (3).

Traveling outside of the Muslim world normally was initiated by rulers who sent out their ambassadors, or it was the result of commercial interests, not of curiosity and desire to learn from the foreign. Often when we read Arabic travelogues, we notice that the "reader is invited on a voyage to an India of books and culture, a 'fundamental India' rather than a real one."<sup>140</sup> Self-confirmation was the primary goal, especially regarding the spiritual and the intellectual: "Muslim men of letters from Andalusia to Iraq dreamed of conquering the wisdom of that distant yet congenial part of the world."<sup>141</sup>

From this perspective it becomes understandable why so few Arab and/or Muslim travelers ever ventured out to explore the exotic west because there they could not acquire the kind of desired knowledge which was determined by authorial figures. "Hence the Muslim men of letters of the Middle Ages decided that authorized knowledge was the only legitimate knowledge, and that the only authorized knowledge was genealogical."<sup>142</sup> There was, as Touati confirms, a kind of fear among Muslims at large and Muslim literates in particular that the essential knowledge produced by the prophet could get lost in the course of time, hence the perpetual need to retrace, re-invigorate, and preserve that knowledge. That, however, was only possible through traveling to the centers of learning, to visit the learned, and to acquire parcels of their wisdom.

Logically, then, Muslim travel primarily aimed at Muslim territory, so the individuals mostly stayed within their own cultural framework and did not embark on any kind of major intercultural experiences. Preservation of the religious and intellectual tradition was of highest priority, yet this also closed off the West as a possible goal for travelers. By contrast, Muslim travelers from as far west as Andalusia made it all the way to Iraq, for instance, to seek out great scholars, such as the lexicographer Ibn-al-A'rabī (d. 231/ 845).

Numerous other famous travelers from the Muslim world could be cited, whether they went as far as to India or the Caspian Sea, to Zanzibar or Andalusia, yet most of them stayed within the *oikoumene* of Muslim religion and culture.<sup>143</sup> One of the reasons might thus well have been the realization that Western Europe did not have that much to offer to them in terms of intellectual learning, philosophy, medicine, architecture, and the arts, whereas the Europeans were deeply in awe of the Arabic world, at least in those terms and only during the high and late Middle Ages.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Touati, *Islam & Travel in the Middle Ages* (see note 139), 5.

<sup>141</sup> Touati, *Islam & Travel in the Middle Ages* (see note 139), 5.

<sup>142</sup> Touati, *Islam & Travel in the Middle Ages* (see note 139), 6.

<sup>143</sup> Touati, *Islam & Travel in the Middle Ages* (see note 139), 119.

<sup>144</sup> See the contribution to this volume by Jens T. Wollesen who points out numerous cases of

Of course, this does not mean that Muslims never traveled to the Western frontiers; on the contrary. There, however, they were mostly concerned with defending their own territory and culture. "That dual function of consecration and conjuration gave the sojourn at the frontier its ritual prestige. By giving it a normative content, jurists and traditionists lent it enormous powers of sanctification."<sup>145</sup> Dying in a frontier town or city meant that the dead Muslim had turned into a martyr for his faith. It seems difficult to imagine how then contacts could be made with representatives of the Christian world, and yet that is also a phenomenon that we need to pursue further in our investigations. After all, travel has always constituted a unique operation bringing the self in contact with another culture, certainly something of a mystical and fascinating kind, attracting and deterring at the same time, here disregarding the mundane, but certainly influential experience by countless merchants, warriors, and diplomats.<sup>146</sup>

## 14. Jewish Travelers in the Middle Ages

In a way, the very opposite of the Muslim traveler was the Jewish traveler, since we always find more Jews living in the Diaspora than in Palestine, both before the destruction of the First Temple and after the Babylonian captivity. Jews worked both as merchants and as ambassadors, and they constantly traversed many countries and continents throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern Age, constantly making them truly into multilingualists, cosmopolitans, and translators of many different cultures.<sup>147</sup> One of the most famous Jewish travelers, also a poet and philosopher, was Judah Halevi (1085–114) who spent his life in Granada, Spain, but then, late in life, left home and moved to Jerusalem where he appears to have died as the victim of a crusader.<sup>148</sup> Another major traveler was Saadya

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European art work influenced by Arabic or Muslim models.

<sup>145</sup> Touati, *Islam & Travel in the Middle Ages* (see note 139), 220.

<sup>146</sup> Francine-Dominique Liechtenhan, "Le voyageur ou *peregrinationum scriptor*: Un homme de métier à la fin du Grand Siècle," *Écrire le voyage*, ed. György Tverdotia (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1994), 143–52; here 147; Michel Bideaux, "Le voyage littéraire: Genèse d'un genre," *Les Modèles du récit de voyage. Littéraires*, 7 (Nanterre: Centre de recherches du Département de français de Paris X-Nanterre, 1990), 179–98. See now the excellent contributions to *Cosmopolitanism and the Middle Ages*, ed. John M. Ganim and Sheyne Aaron Legassie. *The New Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013).

<sup>147</sup> Albrecht Classen, "Multilingualism in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Time," *Neophilologus*. 97.1 (2013): 131–45 While I focus here mostly on literary examples from the Middle Ages far into the seventeenth century, the Jewish examples open new perspectives, incorporating the rich world of the Eastern Mediterranean where many different cultures coexisted. See now Schneider, *Vom Dolmetschen im Mittelalter* (see note 13), 82–84.

<sup>148</sup> Cyril Aslanov, "Jewish Pilgrimage," *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, ed. Larissa J. Taylor, Leigh

Gaon (882–942) who also visited the Holy Land and described his extensive tour via Baghdad to Aleppo. Rabbi Jacob ben Nathaniel ha Cohen traveled through Egypt and Palestine also during the time of the Crusades. Abraham Ibn Ezra (1088–1165) originated from Toledo, Spain, and went to see Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Rhodes, Italy, France, and England, where he spent some time in 1157.

Equally famous is the traveler and writer Benjamin of Tudela who visited Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Baghdad between 1166 and 1171. Apart from many different neighboring regions and towns, Benjamin also refers to India and China, whether he extended his tour to those Eastern regions or not. But he was probably one of the first to mention China within the medieval context. Before examining some of these Jewish accounts, suffices it here to underscore how much those medieval travelers made significant contacts with people, cultures, and countries and thus were major contact points between East and West.<sup>149</sup> In fact, the entire history of travel undergirds the central issue to be discussed here because travelers are those that make contacts and reach out to other cultures in order to cope with the foreign world.

As unstable as travel itself proves to be all the time throughout history until the present, as much it constitutes the fundamental human operation employed to move out of the traditional intellectual and cultural framework and to reach new insights and to gain new experiences. This does not make all travelers automatically into the harbingers of new perspectives, but their very own move constitutes always the potential for critical changes, for building bridges, for sharing knowledge and ideas. Some travelers might return home with their stereotypes and prejudices even reconfirmed, especially those travelers who are filled with fear and insecurity, and who do not have the intellectual curiosity and capability to reach out to the other, learning a new language, and accepting the otherness of the foreign world. But the exception confirms the rule.

One of the earliest examples from Jewish culture was the Jew Isaac who served as Emperor Charlemagne's ambassador to Persia. As the chronicler Eginhard reports in his *Annales Francorum* for 801, first ambassadors arrived from Persia and met the emperor, informing him that Isaac was following them after a four-year stint at the court of the King of the Persians, bringing with him many presents, including an elephant, named Abdul Abbas (1). The question of linguistic competence is not raised here, but it is clear that some translators must have been

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Ann Craig, John B. Friedman, Kathy Gower, Thomas Izbicki, and Rita Tekippe (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 315–16. As is clear both from this really brief entry and the dearth of much other research on this topic, Jewish travelogues still require extensive analysis and further interpretations.

<sup>149</sup> *Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages: 19 Firsthand Accounts*, ed. and with an intro. by Elkan Nathan Adler (1930; New York: Dover, 1987).

available since the two ambassadors arrived ahead of Isaac and managed to communicate with the ruler. Charlemagne himself seems to have sent a group of diplomats along with the Jew Isaac to the East to request an elephant from Hārūn al-Rāshid, who might have received it from India, but possibly also from Africa. Whether Abulabaz was Hārūn's only elephant, as Eginhard claims, cannot be confirmed and does not matter in our context. There are many reasons for this odd diplomatic exchange between the Carolingian and the Arabic court, unlikely at first sight, but certainly a clear indication of how much already at that time contacts between East and West existed irrespective of the enormous distances. As Paul Edward Dutton speculates,

The gift itself and the mission of the emissaries to and from the east may have been related to Charlemagne's harassment of the Umayyad rulers of Spain, against whom Hārūn was happy to have some support. But . . . this gift exchange meant different things to the two sides: for Hārūn the extension of his vast empire with Charlemagne as his western supporter or even subordinate, while for Charlemagne and his biographer Hārūn's act signaled his recognition of the Frank's singular power over the Roman west.<sup>150</sup>

While physical distances that had to be covered in the past without the availability of modern technology today appear rather daunting to us, and hence also the cultural and linguistic distances, a sensitive analysis of the sources from the early Middle Ages already signal how easily completely different cultures and religions could communicate with each other.<sup>151</sup>

If we ever might have thought that in the early Middle Ages the international contacts might have been radically reduced to a myopic focus on Europe, then *The Book of Ways and Kingdoms* (ca. 817) by Abu'l Kasim Obaidallah ibn Khordādheh will teach us the very opposite, especially with respect to Jews who, as he points out, "speak Arabic, Persian, Roman, the Frank, Spanish, and Slav languages. They journey from West to East, from East to West, partly on land, partly by sea" (2). Here we come across the first references to China, which seems almost naturally connected with Western Europe through trade maintained by Jews: "Sometimes these Jew merchants, when embarking in the land of the Franks, on the Western

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<sup>150</sup> Paul Edward Dutton, *Charlemagne's Mustache and Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age*. The New Middle Ages (New York and Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 60–61. See also F. W. Buckler, *Hārūnu 'l-Rashid and Charles the Great*. Monographs of the Mediaeval Academy of America, 2 (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1931), 30–31.

<sup>151</sup> Richard Hodges, "Charlemagne's Elephant and the Beginning of the Commodisation of Europe," *Acta archaeologica* 59 (1988): 155–68; Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300–900* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 273, 513, 710. For the political relationship between the Caliph and the Frankish ruler, see Giosuè Musca, *Carlo Magno ed Harun al Rashid*. Università degli studi di Bari. Istituto di storia medievale e moderna. Saggi, 1 (Bari: Dedalo litostampa, 1963).



Sea, make for Antioch (at the mouth of the Orontes); thence by land to al-Jâbia, where they arrive after three days' march. There they embark on the Euphrates and reach Baghdad, whence they sail down the Tigris, to al-Obolla. From al-Obolla they sail for Oman, Sind, Hind, and China" (2–3).

In his extensive diary, the Jew Eldad the Danite (ca. 880) gives a detailed account of his international travels that take him to destinations as far apart as Yemen and Andalusia, then Ethiopia and Persia. At one point he and another Jew were taken prisoner by the Ethiopians who turned out to be cannibals. Because his friend "was fat and healthy and pleasing, [they] slaughtered and ate him, . . . but me they took, for I was sick on board ship, and they put me in chains until I should get fat and well" (6).

In 960 the German Emperor Otto I sent as ambassador to the Caliph Abdurrahmane Al-Haji III the Jew Chisdai Abu-Yusuf, who successfully concluded a treaty between both sides.<sup>152</sup> Originating from Cordoba, Spain, Chisdai heard of an alleged Jewish kingdom in Asia (the Khazars?) and made numerous efforts to send an official letter there by way of the Jew Isaac ben Nathan. As imaginary as that Oriental kingdom really was, the letter itself impressively reveals the global concept possible at that time, as when Chisdai tries to explain to his addressee where the kingdom of Cordoba might be situated: "It is situated at the left of the sea which flows between your country and the great sea, and compasses the whole of your land. Between this city and the great sea beyond which there is no farther habitable territory, are nine astronomical degrees" (24).

One of the most famous Jewish travelers was Benjamin of Tudela who left us an extensive account of his experiences, taking him from Navarra to Rome and then on to Egypt and Persia (1165–1173). Sandra Benjamin comments on his travel experiences as follows: "Benjamin was by no means the first person to travel extensively in this region, nor even the first to write about it, but he was the first (whose journal has survived) who wrote in a straightforward manner, more fact than fable."<sup>153</sup> His letters clearly record the extensive itinerary: Barcelona, Narbonne, Lunel, Marseille, Pisa, Lucca, Rome, Salerno, Taranto, Oría, Otranto, Thebes, Saloniki, Constantinople, Cyprus, Antioch, Beirut, Tyre, Haifa, Nablus, Jerusalem, Askalon, Tiberias, Damascus, Aleppo, Baghdad, Sura, Pumbeditha, the frontier of Khuzestan, El-Cathif, Cairo, Gizeh, Alexandria, Messina, Palermo, and then to Tudela again.

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<sup>152</sup> We have heard already of the court of Otto I above; then, however, it was a diplomatic visit from the court in Córdoba.

<sup>153</sup> Sandra Benjamin, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue* (Cranbury, NJ, London, and Miiissauga, Ontario: Associated Presses, 1995), 9.

Throughout the entire, and especially the late, Middle Ages Christian pilgrims also embarked on huge, very extended travels, crossing many lands, traversing the Mediterranean, visiting countless religious sites both in the Holy Land and in Egypt, Syria, and elsewhere, so they had constantly to cope with foreign cultures, languages, and religions. In this regard neither the Muslim nor the Jewish pilgrim represented a major exception, although the religious orientation was slightly different, that is, in content, but not really in form. Critically examined, we always observe, on the surface, a strong motivation to search for spiritual salvation already here on earth by way of reaching a holy site or a holy land. But we can also be certain that most pilgrims, of whatever religion, were also driven toward the foreign world out of a certain sense of curiosity and general interest in the exotic otherness beyond the familiar territory back at home.<sup>154</sup>

Benjamin's account, however attracts our attention perhaps more than most of the Christian pilgrimage reports because he traveled considerably earlier, focused on the international communities wherever he encountered them, and represented a Jewish perspective which was, by default, beyond all national and cultural boundaries. Already his comments about Montpellier, early on in his journey, indicate how much he pursued both a scholar's and a religious person's concerns, without ignoring financial and economic aspects:

Thence it is four parasangs [one parasang is about 3.25 English miles] to the city of Beziers, where there is a congregation of learned men. At their head is R. Solomon Chalafta, R. Joseph, and R. Nethanel. Thence it is two days to Har Gaash which is called Montpellier. This is a place well situated for commerce. It is about a parasang from the sea, and men come for business there from all quarters, from Edom, Ishmael, the land of Algarve, Lombardy, the dominion of Rome the Great, from all the land of Egypt, Palestine, Greece, France, Asia and England. People of all nations are found

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<sup>154</sup> Mary B. *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400 - 1600* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1988); see also the contributions to *À la recherche de légitimités chrétiennes: représentations de l'espace et du temps dans l'Espagne médiévale, IXe–XIIIe siècle. Actes du colloque tenu à la Casa de Velázquez, Madrid, 26–27 avril 2001*, ed. Patrick Henriët. Annexes des cahiers de linguistique et de civilisation hispaniques médiévales, 15 (Lyon: ENS éditions; [Madrid:] Caa de Velázquez, 2003); Dawn Marie Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe, 1100–1389*. Studies in Medieval History and Culture, 18 (New York and London: Routledge, 2003); *Voyage, quête, pèlerinage dans la littérature et la civilisation médiévales: Actes du colloque organisé par le C.U.E.R.M.A. les 5, 6, 7 mars 1976*, ed. G. Andrieu et al. Seneffiance, 2 (Aix-en-Provence: Edition CUER MA, 1976), to *Dieseits- und Jenseitsreisen im Mittelalter*, ed. Wolf-Dieter Lange. Studium universale, 14 (Bonn: Bouvier, 1992); to *Reisen und Reiseliteratur im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Xenja von Ertzdorff and Dieter Neukirch with Rudolf Schulz. Chloe, 13 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1992); to *Raumerfahrung, Raumerfindung: erzählte Welten des Mittelalters zwischen Orient und Okzident*, ed. Laetitia Rimpau and Peter Ihring (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005); and to *The "Book" of Travels: Genre, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage, 1250–1700*, ed. Palmira Brumett. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, 140 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009); *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, ed. Larissa J. Taylor, Leigh Ann Craig, et al. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

there doing business through the medium of the Genoese and Pisans. In the city there are scholars of great eminence . . . They have among them houses of learning devoted to the study of the Talmud. Among the community are men both rich and charitable, who lend a helping hand to all that come to them.<sup>155</sup>

While Christian authors tended to ignore other population groups wherever they went and focused, instead, on their own religious sites, especially within that world still relevant for Christianity—Cairo, for instance, being a remarkable exception, as reflected by the fifteenth-century German pilgrimage author Arnold von Harff, who demonstrated great interest in the intrinsic culture of that metropolitan city<sup>156</sup>—Benjamin notes not only the presence of merchants from all over the known world, but also realizes how much the Genoese and Pisans control all business. The market, in other words, is not determined by religious or national criteria; instead the central issue here proves to be money, which was the key catalyst in all global business already then.

Nevertheless, Benjamin regularly alerts his audience about the presence of great Jewish scholars and gives precise data about the number of people of Jewish identity living in one community: “From there it is two parasangs to Posquières, which is a large place containing about forty Jews, with an Academy under the auspices of the great Rabbi, R. Abraham . . .” (4). In Genoa, however, as we learn, live only two Jews (5), while in Lucca forty (5). He demonstrates his surprise that in Rome, the “head of the kingdom of Christendom” (5), the Jewish community comprised three hundred “who occupy an honourable position and pay no tribute, and amongst them are officials of the Pope Alexander, the spiritual head of all Christendom” (5).

Although a Jew, Benjamin makes a great effort to discuss all major features in that city, whether pertaining to ancient Rome or the Christian history, without ignoring the Jewish population of three hundred people (7). This quickly emerges as a remarkable criterion to differentiate Jewish from Christian pilgrimage accounts, even if only to some degree, because the latter regularly prove to be much more focused on the Christian holy sites with relics wherever they could be found, especially in the Holy Land. As we will see, many of the Jewish authors also pursued such a religious focus, but we can regularly notice how much they also paid attention to the representatives of other religions without voicing any kind of specific opposition, anger, or hostility.

As to Salerno, the author underscores first that the local university is maintained by the Christians, but then also adds, once again, a reference to the exact number

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<sup>155</sup> *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*. Critical Text, Translation and Commentary by Marcus Nathan Adler (London: Oxford University Press, 1907), 3.

<sup>156</sup> Albrecht Classen, “Travel Space as Constructed Space: Arnold von Harff Observes the Arabic Space,” *German Studies Review* 33.2 (2010): 375–88.