BARBARISM, BENEVOLENCE, AND ALTERITY:

ILLUMINATING CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONSHIPS IN THE MEDIEVAL

LEVANT AND THE MODERN MUSEUM

A THESIS

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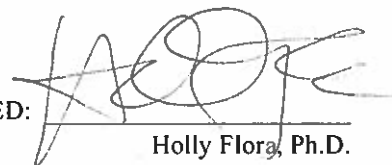OF TULANE UNIVERSITY

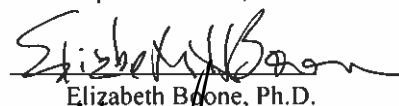FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN ART HISTORY

BY

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Merriam-Webster defines journey as "something suggesting travel or passage from one place to another"; also embedded in this term lies connotations that journeys can be initiated with any number of motivations, but often represent a change and development over time. In other words, a journey is simultaneously a geographical and temporal process or progress. Not only did medieval artists, writers, and pilgrims undertake journeys to disparate places across the Mediterranean, moving their corporal forms through space, they returned with ideas of the places and peoples they encountered. Further, museums today attempt to replicate that journey, presenting a carefully curated intellectual journey for their visitors; as the museum-goer moves from room to room, the illusion of travelling through a variety of geographies and temporalities provides a misplaced sense of accuracy or neutrality.

My objective is to problematize what I see as a gap in modern art historical discourse: contextualizing medieval manuscripts of William de Tyre's *Histoire d'Outremer* or al-Hariri's *Maqamat*, among other works of travel writing, for modern audiences in such a way that does not neglect the historical complexities, interconnected histories, and melding of culture and artistic practices from disparate regions during the Crusader period. Scholars generally agree that representations of Saracen Muslims in medieval manuscripts are inaccurate and embroiled in politics of difference, but simply stating that the constructed images are "false" does nothing to evaluate the impetus of

powerful tropes that persist long after the Crusades are over, nor does it provide a scholarly solution for the seemingly perpetual dichotomy of "East" versus "West" in modern practice.

Interactions between Europe, West Asia, and North Africa predate the founding of Christianity, as evidenced by ancient Greek and Roman sculptures of sub-Saharan Africans and Persians, and while Christianity began to spread from the Levant with the aid of the Roman Empire in the 1st century CE, it would be nearly 200 years after the fall of the Roman Empire until the tenants of Islam are revealed to Muhammad in the mid-7th century. There is documentation that Christians throughout the Levant and Anatolia may have been the first to encounter early Muslim converts shortly after the death of Muhammad in 632 (10 AH), but nonetheless, the Mediterranean quickly became the medium for goods and ideas to travel between the burgeoning Islamic caliphates of West Asia and North Africa and the Christian strongholds in Europe and Turkey.

A key framework for this thesis can be found in Edward Said's landmark 1979 book *Orientalism*, which evaluates the ways in which the "East" or the "Orient" has been presented as a foil to the "West" - in this instance, namely Europe. Said places the nassaince of Orientalism in the Middle Ages, and as Chapters 1 and 3 will illustrate, the medieval representations of the "Saracen" become pervasive and timeless, cropping up throughout the early modern periods and into the present. As Said writes:

> In the depths of this Oriental stage stands a prodigious cultural repertoire whose individual items evoke a fabulously rich world: the Sphinx, Cleopatra, Eden, Troy, Sodom and Gomorrah [...]; settings, in some cases names only, half-imagined, half-known; monsters, devils, heroes; terrors, pleasures, desires. The European imagination was nourished extensively from this repertoire: between

> the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century, [...] what was considered **Orientalist scholarship in Europe pressed ideological myths into service** even as knowledge seemed genuinely to be advancing.[1]

Much of these "ideological myths" stem directly from misunderstandings of Islam, the desire for comparativism, bolstered or pressured by geopolitical or religious aims. Said's book has been met with criticism and critique in the decades since publication by historians like Rifa'at Abou-el-Haj, and others like Linda Nochlin and Oleg Grabar, who each have expanded on his original arguments for art historical methodologies.[2]

In this thesis, the terms "East" and "Saracen" do not connote a reality or truth; rather, when they are used, they are specifically referring to either the medieval European construction, or modern ignorance. For example, William de Tyre's *Histoire d'Outremer* refers to all non-Frankish inhabitants of the medieval Levant - whether Muslim, non-Muslim, Arab, Turkish, or otherwise - as "Saracens," inaccurately generalizing the region into a monolith.[3] Likewise, the term "European" will primarily be replaced by "Frankish," as the idea of a constant, collective European identity is a modern construction; this also serves as a reference to contemporary Arabic and Persian writings that refer to crusading groups as broadly *farangī* (Persian: فرنگی), or Franks. Another example of this can be found in Chapter 3, which includes discussion of a *National Review* article by John Derbyshire, whose frequent references to the "West" serve as a dog-whistle for eurocentrism and white supremacy.

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[1] Edward Said, Orientalism, 63. Emphasis mine.
[2] See Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient" (1982); Oleg Grabar, "On the Universality of the History of Art" (1982); Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj, "Historiography in West Asian and North African Studies since Said's Orientalism" (2000).
[3] See Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 2018) for further discussion of race-making by Frankish Crusaders.

That said, due to the parameters of this thesis, I will not be able to adequately capture the cultural and religious diversity of the medieval Mediterranean. My arguments center specifically on Frankish Christian Crusaders and Arab-Muslim groups in the medieval Levant. Future research can begin to further unpack the beautiful mosaic of peoples of the region, including Jewish communities, Syrian and other Levantine Christian groups, among others.[4] Apart from a brief reference at the end of Chapter 2, this thesis will not probe "Muslim Spain," or al-Andalus, as those geographies remain outside the scope of this project. Despite the narrow geographic perspective of this research, the reality stands that this region was constantly in flux, through pilgrimage, travel, migration, trade, and the rise and fall of political entities. Furthermore, the oft-called "Islamic world" in this period typically refers to areas under Islamic control in West Asia and North Africa. Of course, at certain points throughout history the realm of the "Islamic world" would have extended from Spain to India, into the African continent, and beyond. I have tried to avoid this term for this reason, as it can present Islam as static and unchanging, while simultaneously ignoring modern adherents to Islam in countries across the world. Just as scholars would seldom refer to "Christian art" as a single unit, instead identifying by religion, I have attempted where possible[5] to default to more specific identifiers of style, artist, period, geography, and patronage.

Chapter 1 will seek to evaluate Frankish and other non-Levantine understandings of the Muslim "Other," specifically the idea of the Saracen during the Crusader period,

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[4] Jewish communities also faced anti-semitic imagery in the medieval period. See Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitism* (2014) for discussion.
[5] Of course, this remains complicated by issues of provenance, particularly objects from postcolonial countries.

by looking to illustrations from 13th- and 14th-century manuscripts of the *Histoire
d'Outremer*. Jaroslav Folda's pioneering work in enumerating the illuminations of these
manuscripts is essential,[6] but my analysis will include further probing of iconographic
features used to set "Saracens" apart in some cases. Chapter 2 will pivot to art and
medieval Arabic literature of writers in the Levant and Anatolia to add further nuance to
discussions of "Othering." Here, three illustrated manuscripts of al-Hariri's *Maqamat*, as
catalogued by Oleg Grabar,[7] will find concert with travel writings. The guiding questions
of these two chapters: How did medieval Franks come to know the Muslims of the
Levant and Anatolia, but also Islam and racial connotations more broadly? And how did
Muslims of the Levant and Anatolia come to know the "West," particularly Christian
Franks? The main goal here is to unpack artistic renderings from the 13th and 14th
centuries from both sides of the conflict, and address what I feel has gone relatively un-
nuanced in art historical discourse. While I attempt to form a sort of parallelism in
structure and analytical strategy in these chapters, I intentionally have avoided directly
comparing and contrasting the findings of both to avoid further bolstering what I see as a
false binarism that exists in many discussions of this period. In each chapter, the journey
and the traveller serve as a point of reference to understand encounters, looking to both
manuscript illustrations, medieval historiographies, pilgrimage accounts, and literature.

Building on the findings of Chapters 1 and 2, Chapter 3 jumps forward in time,
opening with an interlude on George W. Bush's infamous 2001 "Crusade" gaffe at the

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[6] See Jaroslav Folda, *The Illustrations in Manuscripts of the "History of Outremer" by William of Tyre*
(1968); Jaroslav Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098-1187* (1995).
[7] See Oleg Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat* (1984).

outset of his War on Terror.  Recognizing that a kind of historical imaginary of the Crusades and the Middle Ages exists today, whether in popular political discourse or embedded within museum practice, this chapter seeks to evaluate varying strategies within modern museums for collecting and displaying Islamic art.  As inheritors of a colonial past that weaponized Islamophobia and Orientalist ideas to serve the aims of empire, museum collections remain replete with looted or otherwise displaced goods from around the Islamic world.  A strong understanding of the early encounters of the Crusader period is crucial for scholars and museum institutions to properly contextualize these objects for display and education in the modern era, as despite globalization there is a tendency to still cling to strict demarcations between "Eastern" and "Western" art in collections.  Whether intended or not, some museums and scholars are reproducing these same constructions of difference, this same "Othering" discourse, not looking to connected histories and shared material cultures; however, in the past two decades, other curators and scholars have begun to look for more meaningful, culturally responsive strategies for exhibitions and permanent collections.

The idea of the inextricable incompatibility of Christianity and Islam, created in the Middle Ages and maintained through Orientalism, became preserved behind the glass and in the collections of museums.  Originally formulated as motivators for a land grab, Frankish notions of hyper-potent opposition became further and further disconnected from their sources - the kind of misdirection a pope, or a king, may benefit from.  Allowing this medieval imaginary to persist provides a platform for the same excuses to repeat themselves today, where imperialist aims can remain bound in the "conflict" of

Christianity versus Islam.  Medieval art, while divorced from its original intents, has

become a vehicle for these ideas, and addressing them at their source - both in their

respective historical contexts, but also in their present material contexts in museums - is a

great task.  The following chapters represent an attempt, within a growing movement of

scholars and institutions, to correct these wrongs.

Crusaders and Pilgrims: Frankish Journeys to the Levant

**Introduction**

In a 13th-century French manuscript of William de Tyre's *Histoire d'Outremer*, the artist renders the exact moment the forces of the First Crusade (1096-1102 CE / c. 488-496 AH) breach the gates of the holy city of Jerusalem centuries prior (Fig. 1). In this bustling scene, Crusaders wield spears, swords, and even utilize a trebuchet, while large numbers of armored infantry climb the towering facade. Amid the chaos and triumph, however, the artist has chosen to leave the Crusader's adversaries markedly absent from the narrative scene, diverging from the historical realities known to the medieval reader and outlined by William de Tyre in the accompanying texts. The soldiers appear battle-ready, yet see no foes to fight. More than mere history, this image serves as almost propagandistic, reinvigorating interest in Crusading.

The First Crusade, the first of many violent conflicts and occupations that would shake the Mediterannean world for hundreds of years, marked the beginning of concerted efforts to categorize and conquer the perceived menace of Islam. To Edward Said, the first inklings of what would eventually become Orientalism began around this initial clash.[1] Manifested in both visual renderings of the Crusades in illuminated manuscripts, and historiographies of lands and peoples outside of Europe, the pilgrim-turned-soldier became uncontented by mere journeys to the holy lands of the Levant, choosing to

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[1] Edward Said, Orientalism, 58-61.

channel aggression into occupation, while simultaneously creating an exaggerated caricature of their enemy, the "Saracen."[2]

In order to understand the lasting implications of cultural, ethnic, and religious interactions between Arab Muslim and Frankish Christian groups during the Crusader period, we first must look at how Franks came to know Arab and Muslim peoples and lands through direct interaction on Levantine soil.  How did these ideas and conceptions translate into iconographic and ideological representations of non-Christian groups, and how did understandings of the 'Other' morph and change throughout the Middle Ages? While these encounters first begin centuries before the Crusader period through pilgrimage journeys to holy sites in cities like Jerusalem, relationships during and following the First Crusade become more fragmented, nuanced, and at times, conflicting. At the turn of the 14th century, images of the Saracen became codified, relying on a handful of visual tropes to mark them as enemies. By tracing Frankish representations of Levantine lands and Saracen adversaries in art and historiography through the 14th century,  this chapter seeks to unravel the inception of European ideas of alterity, complicated by manifold and sometimes conflicting tropes about Islam and the lands to the "East."

**Frankish Journeys in the Levant**

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[2] On a semantic note, "Saracen" was generalizing term used widely in medieval times by Christian writers referring to Muslim and Arab peoples.  "Saracen" attempts to paint the inhabitants of the Levant as a monolith, which remains common in medieval Frankish perspectives.  Since non-Levantine viewpoints are the subject of this chapter, I use this term here to specifically refer to Muslim and Arab groups that interacted with Frankish Christian groups during the time of the Crusades.

*Pilgrims*

Following Constantine the Great's conversion to Christianity and subsequent

promulgation of the religion, the Levant suddenly swelled with a rapid increase of

pilgrims to the holy sites of the region.  In the centuries immediately preceding the

introduction of Islam, Christian pilgrims from Byzantium, European polities, and

Christian communities in West Asia flocked to the holy city of Jerusalem to, both

metaphorically and literally, walk in the steps of Jesus.  As a way to commemorate their

journey, the pilgrims would often return with mementos of their travels; the practice of

collection of *eulogiae*, or tertiary relics such as soil, stones, or oil from the Holy

Sepulchre, became commonplace.[3]  Of the practice, a 6th-century pilgrim known as

Gregory of Tours wrote:

> Marvelous power appears from the tomb where the Lord's body lay. Often the
> ground is covered with a natural radiant brightness; then it is sprinkled with water
> and dug up, and from it tiny [clay] tokens are shaped and sent to different parts of
> the world.  Often ill people acquire cures by means of these tokens. [...] But what
> do I rashly dare to say about them, since faith believes that everything the sacred
> body touched is holy?[4]

Gregory's description elucidates two main details of the practice.  First, *eulogiae* embody

holy properties through past contact with Christ's sacred body, as the earth from outside

the Holy Sepulchre is tied to the curing of illnesses.  Second, these tokens of clay do not

remain near its source in Jerusalem, but rather will be "sent to different parts of the

world."  The mobility of these relics speaks to the desire of pilgrims to return to their

homelands with a piece of the holiness of the Levant.  This holiness was simultaneously

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[3]  Katja Boertjes, "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented," 170.
[4] As translated in Ora Limor, "Earth, stone, water, and oil," 7.

inextricable from the land and unbound from it: the ground was holy, the waters were

holy, simply through their adjacency to the biblical individuals and histories of the

Christian faith, and that holiness could be transported to places far beyond Jerusalem.

By the 5th and 6th centuries, the practice of collecting *eulogiae* was

complimented by the mass production of man-made souvenirs, known as *ampullae*, to

better serve the travellers and pilgrims.  Many of these early *ampullae* take the form of

small pewter vessels with short necks and bulbous bellies, and include iconography from

the Holy Land.[5]  One such ampulla from the late-6th or early-7th century in the

Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 2) includes details and text on both sides of the piece.

The front of the ampulla depicts two figures, believed to be pilgrims, flanking an image

of the Cross and Christ.  The Greek inscription reads, "Oil of the wood of life from the

holy sites of Christ," which indicates that the ampulla likely contained

sacred oil.  The reverse side depicts the biblical scene of the Women at the Tomb, with

the inscription "The Lord is risen."[6]  What is interesting, if not unique, about the

iconography on the reverse of this ampulla is the central depiction of the Holy Sepulchre;

its centrality underscores the importance of this particular site as a spot of holiness, or as

an encounter with the divine.  Just as in the biblical story of the women arriving at the

tomb to find Jesus departed and risen, those who made the pilgrimage to the Holy

Sepulchre, as the original owner of this ampulla likely did, left with the parallel

experience of encountering the miracle of an empty tomb.  The inclusion of both

[5] Katja Boertjes, "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented," 171-2.
[6] As translated by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

contemporary pilgrims and biblical figures collapses time and space, inserting Christians

into a history that, to them, is still unfolding.

As Katja Boertjes has highlighted, the production of ampullae completely

disappears after the end of the 7th century.  She writes:

> There is no record of ampullae originating from the Holy Land between the late
> seventh and middle of the twelfth century.  During the second half of the twelfth
> century, the production of pewter pilgrimage ampullae in Jerusalem revived - a
> dating that is mainly based on the way the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is
> depicted on the souvenirs. The ampullae production in Jerusalem during the
> Crusader period coincides with the mass production of badges and related
> materials in various other places of pilgrimage, particularly in Western Europe.[7]

This sudden revival of the production of ampullae appears, as Boertjes alludes to, the

century immediately following the fall of Jerusalem to Crusaders, an absolutely crucial

detail.  During the Council of Clermont in November of 1095, Pope Urban II entreated

Frankish knights to wrestle the Holy Land from the grasp of Islamic rulers, specifically

citing the Muslim control of the Holy Sepulchre as a situation in need of immediate

deliverance.[8]  Under the heavy pressure from church leaders and the rallying cry of *Deus

vult!*, the Crusader period began "in the melodramatic fashion which was to be typical of

it thereafter."[9]  The following year would mark the beginning of the First Crusade and the

establishment of Frankish outposts in Arab and Islamic lands of the Levant that would

become known as the Latin East.  The reintroduction of *ampullae* parallels these elements

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[7]  Katja Boertjes, "The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented," 173-4.
[8] Jonathan Riley Smith, "The Crusading Movement and Historians" in *The Oxford History of the Crusades*,
1.
[9] Jonathan Riley Smith, "The Crusading Movement and Historians," 1.  In *The Oxford History of the
Crusades*.

of control and possession; pilgrims and Frankish settlers in Jerusalem alike owned a piece

of the Holy Land, whether *eulogiae* in a pewter vessel or in occupied land.

Frankish presence in Jerusalem changed the fabric of the city, even if only in the

desires and minds of the occupiers.  The Holy Sepulchre underwent extensive expansion

by the Franks shortly after initial occupation of the city, explaining the different

architectural iconography between 6th- and 7th-century *ampullae* and that of the 12th

century.  Building on Byzantine renovations and repairs from a fire nearly a century

earlier, the architectural changes aligned with other tastes rather than replicating previous

forms of the church (Fig. 3).[10]  As Robert Ousterhout has dutifully outlined, echoing

Folda's research, the construction had many facets: the creation of the Cloister of the

Canons, the reformation of the Chapel of St. Helena as an extension of a Byzantine crypt,

the westernization of the courtyard in Romanesque style, expansions of the Chapel of

Calvary, and the erection of the crusader choir.  Other aspects were retained but

expanded, specifically the Byzantine Anastasis Rotunda, one of the most recognizable

features to contemporary visitors.[11] Dedicated in 1149 (543-544 AH), the new Holy

Sepulchre was all-encompassing, bringing disparate holy sites all under one roof.  Two

lintels above the south transept, facing a large courtyard, commemorated the historic

moment (Fig. 4).[12]

This renovation was further explained by William de Tyre, a Christian of

European heritage who would go on to write one of the most well-known contemporary

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[10] Robert Ousterhout, "Architecture as Relic," 9.
[11] Robert Ousterhout, "Architecture as Relic," 9-10.
[12] Molly Lindner, "Topography and Iconography in Twelfth Century Jerusalem," 81.

accounts of the Crusades: *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum (Historia),*

or 'The History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea.' Scholars have described William's

*Historia* as "remarkable," and note that "William's purpose was to present a favourable

picture of the Latin East, while at the same time admitting and explaining its chronic

weaknesses and repeated political misfortune."[13] Born in 1130 in Jerusalem, only three

decades after the city's fall to Crusaders, William de Tyre achieved esteem under the

newly seated Christian King of Jerusalem, and was promoted from royal chancellor to

Archbishop of Tyre in 1175.[14] In his later writings, he would describe the motivations

for the expansion of the Holy Sepulchre:

> ...there was only a rather small chapel here, but after the Christians, assisted by
> divine mercy, had seized Jerusalem with a strong hand, this building seemed to
> them too small. Accordingly, they enlarged the original church and added to it a
> new building of massive and lofty construction, which enclosed the old church
> and in marvelous wise included within its precincts the holy places.[15]

William's focus on the size of the church underscores the necessity of expansion to

satiate the desires of the Franks. With a new population of Christian residents, a newly

established archdiocese and Kingdom of Jerusalem, and continued pilgrimages from

Western Europe, the preeminent holy site needed to resize and reconfigure to fulfill its

many roles in Christian practice. It was at once a place of worship, a place of

community, and a place of pilgrimage.

Despite the excitement of contemporary writers like William, who see the

expansion and rededication of the Holy Sepulchre as momentous occasion, one cannot

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[13] C.J. Tyerman, "William of Tyre," 173.
[14] C.J. Tyerman, "William of Tyre," 174.
[15] William de Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done beyond the Sea*, as translated by Emily Atwater Babcock and
A. C. Crey, 344.

help but be reminded of the original goal of the Crusades outlined by Pope Urban II: to purge the region from the perceived scourge of Islamic rule. This sort of purging is evident in the writings of another 12th-century pilgrim, known as John of Wurzberg, who wonders at the Islamic inscriptions present on the Dome of the Rock, but writes that he does not know who wrote them or what they meant.[16] This strange sort of cognitive dissonance from John, who would have known that the inscriptions were Islamic in nature by their Arabic script and placement on the site, speaks to the thorough recontextualization of Jerusalem in western thought after the First Crusade. Westernizing the architecture of Jerusalem served as more than simple renovations; many of the changes to the Holy Sepulchre in the 12th century remain visible today, marking a dubious legacy of Frankish presence in the city. While the First Crusade was successful for Frankish forces for only a short period, it would not be the last struggle for control of West Asia or North Africa by Frankish Crusaders.

*Codifying Difference: Racialization in Crusader Manuscripts*

As with the tangible, brick-and-mortar manifestations of established Frankish rule in the Holy Land, the ideas and stories constructed by European occupiers also long outlasted their presence in the region. William de Tyre's *Historia* was translated and abridged from its original Latin to Old French within the century following his death in 1186,[17] becoming known as the *Histoire d'Outremer*, which roughly translates to 'The History across the Sea' or 'The History Overseas.' For Frankish Crusaders returning to

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[16] Robert Ousterhout, "'Sweetly Refreshed in Imagination,'" 156-7.
[17] Philip Handyside, "L'Estoire D'Eracles in Outremer."

Europe or continuing to crusade throughout West Asia and North Africa, William's story

held a special pertinence: it was a memento of the first real victory, the moments of

seemingly divine intervention that allowed for a successful seizure of Jerusalem. Even

more than that, these *Histoire d'Outremer* manuscripts could be weaponized as a

mobilizing tool for the Franks, a venue where religiously and ethnically charged

iconography representing Muslim and Arab groups as dangerous, deadly, or unworthy of

the holy city could serve to stoke flames of revenge. These depictions were not

innocuous, created simply to show difference; instead, they were racializing and

subjugating in nature, encouraging further crusades to avenge God's will in the Holy

Land.

In his 2015 article "Monstrous Muslims?", Benjamin Bertrand identified a trend

in *Histoire d'Outremer* manuscripts between the 13th and 14th centuries in France.[18]

Upon examination of several 13th-century manuscripts, he discovered that 13th-century

artists did not discriminate iconography between crusading Franks and Saracens, with

figures regardless of background rendered in the same stylized manner. Bertrand notes,

however, that the turn of the 14th century marks the rise of racialized, 'Othering'

depictions of Saracen Muslims, citing a change in miniatures in the corpus of *Histoire*

*d'Outremer, Les Grandes Chroniques de France,* and *Roman d'Alexandre en Prose*

manuscripts. One manuscript in the Bibliothèque nationale of France stands apart as

exemplary of this trend, and miniature conventions more generally from the 14th century:

*Li rommans de Godefroy de Buillon et de Salehadin et de tous lez autres roys qui ont esté*

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[18] Benjamin Bertrand, "Monstrous Muslims?" 83.

*outre mer jusques a saint Loys qui darrenierement y fu,* or MS fr. 22495, which also contains the text of William de Tyre's *Histoire d'Outremer.*[19] The miniatures contained in this volume underscore elements of difference between Christian crusaders and their Saracen foes, relying on visual cues to provoke certain associations for the medieval viewer.

Folio 19r (Fig. 5) depicts a battle scene between the two groups. Four crusaders enter from the left, wearing full-coverage armor over their faces and arms, riding on horses in red with cross motifs. The Saracens enter from the right on horses donned in gold, and the treatment of their faces and clothing clearly marks them as the Other. None of the Saracens wear armor, helmets, or shoes, which appears to paint them as primitive and unprepared for battle; the decapitated heads of Saracens under the horses' hooves echo that sentiment. The artist has rendered two patterns to set them apart from the Crusaders, visible on their shields and horses: first, the black profile of a face, and second, the black profile of a boar or pig. In lieu of helmets, the Saracens are shown with turbans or other headdresses, furthering the contrast between the West and the East. Their faces are contorted in an extreme way, and the artists rendered each Saracen soldier with large noses, beards, red eyes, and furrowed brows.

Other images in the manuscript show similar representations of Saracens, relying on several key features to differentiate them from Crusaders. The Saracens do not wear armor or helmets, only tunics and headwraps. Their skin is dark, their facial features are exaggerated, and Saracen soldiers are often shown as being violent and cruel (Fig. 6).

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[19] Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 22495.

Despite the images of violent behavior, however, they are shown as being poor fighters, unprepared for battle, and at a constant disadvantage to their Crusader counterparts (Fig. 7).

Another manuscript that illustrates the conventions of representing alterity in the 14th century is the *Chroniques de France ou de St Denis* (MS Royal 16 G VI).[20] This manuscript does not contain the text of the *Histoire d'Outremer*, but rather *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, which has been referred to as "one of the biggest achievements of medieval French historiography" by the British Library.[21] Believed to have been drafted from its original Latin into French by monk-historians in the Abbey of St. Denis near Paris, the original text was written to document the history of France from the reign of the Trojans to the death of Saint Louis IX of France. Produced contemporaneously with MS fr. 352, this particular *Grandes Chroniques* manuscript was commissioned for Prince John the Good during his reign as Duke of Normandy; he would go on to ascend to the French throne in 1350.[22] The 418 miniatures within the work highlight the works of Saint Louis IX as both a Crusader and a king, likely as a pragmatic message to young Prince John on ideal kingship; of course, Saint Louis's status would only be heightened by his canonization by Pope Boniface VIII in 1297.

On folio 155r, the artist confronts the viewer with another image of Saracen cruelty (Fig. 8). Identified by the British Library as the Saracen sacking of Jerusalem, the artist sets the graphic miniature upon a deep red checkered background, illustrating a

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[20] London, British Library, Royal MS 16 G VI.
[21] "Royal Vernacular Chronicles." The British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts, 2005.
[22] Ibid.

flurry of swords and blood as Saracens execute Christians residing in the Holy City.  The

style of the facade of the city, while of indeterminate heritage, does not seem to faithfully

mirror the walls of Jerusalem; rather, the architecture appears to be simply evocative of

the location within the narrative.  In this image, the Saracen adversaries indeed wear

armor and are shown as formidable foes, but their curved swords and purported violent

nature diverge sharply from the composed, noble, and almost Classical images of

Christian figures on the right.[23]  On the ground, three Franks lie dead and bleeding, one

with the curved sword of a Saracen soldier still buried in his head.  On the walls of the

city, a Saracen soldier, holding the hair of a kneeling Christian man appearing to appeal

for aid, raises his sword to decapitate him.  Notably, the skin tones of the Arab-Muslim

men appears identical to that of the Frankish men, with the artist choosing to highlight

difference through the armor and weapons they wield instead.

Folio 442r includes a miniature that depicts a striking scene, described as a

treacherous attack by Saracens (Fig. 9).   A large group of Saracen soldiers ambush three

Frankish crusaders on horseback, who are clearly outnumbered and overpowered.  Each

is wearing a tunic and walks barefoot.  Like the depictions in MS fr. 22495, the dark skin

tone, contorted features with heightened facial expressions, and "Eastern" headdresses of

the Saracens clearly delineate their group as being markedly different from the mounted

Frankish soldiers.  Furthermore, though this image is not yet violent, it is quite

foreboding; between the spears the leading Saracens wield and the uplifted curved swords

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[23] The right side of the image depicts the Patriarch of Jerusalem before Emperor Constantine, and
Constantine sending envoys to Charlemagne in response to the attack.  See the British Library's Catalogue
of Illuminated Manuscript's detailed record for Royal MS 1 G VI.

others carry, the artist's hand appears to communicate the purported menacing nature of the Saracens, alluding to a potentially harmful situation for the Christian Crusaders.

To further underscore their perceived distance from Christianity, the caption of the image notes the Saracens "requiert le bapteme." Combined with the depiction of the Saracens as being barefoot, unarmored, and using different kinds of weaponry, this statement, while being fundamentally a religious one, also has an imperialist dimension; the Saracens in the image require intervention from God to change them from their unrighteous condition, with the implication that Crusaders could serve as the hand of God by eliminating their wickedness from God's Holy Land. The resulting sentiment from these two folios is that it is the Saracens' divergent religious beliefs that leaves them primitive and unrefined, and therefore, require conversion to Christianity. By depicting Saracens as barbaric, violent, evil people, not even civilized enough to wear shoes, the programme of miniatures in MS Royal 16 G VI appears to seek to subjugate the peoples to the "East" by inciting fear and vengeance in the minds of its European audience.

MS fr. 22495 and MS Royal 16 G VI are exemplary of the trend towards othering depictions that rises at the onset of the 14th century, where Saracens - whether that means Seljuk Turks, Fatimids from North Africa, or other Arab peoples, Muslim or not, that the Crusaders encountered on their path to the Holy Land - became typified in visual imagery by French illuminators as being markedly cruel, backwards, primitive, and without claim to the Holy City of Jerusalem. In MS fr. 22495, the artist relies on a handful of racialized tropes to illustrate elements of difference, including dark skin, turbans, red eyes, and bare feet. The Saracens shown in MS Royal 16 G VI live in a strange middle ground of being

simultaneously unskilled in warfare and viciously cruel, successful in sacking the city of

Jerusalem with much bloodshed.  In one image, they are shown as armored, fearsome

enemies, decapitating Christian residents of the Holy City.  Later in the manuscript,

however, the markers of ethnicity in the renderings of Saracen Muslims become

unmistakable, as folio 442r again depicts a group of contorted, dark-skinned, barefoot

adversaries; the scene incites suspense in the mind of the viewer, as it raises fear of

violence while at the same time being mollified by their heathenish appearance. The

propagandistic features of these manuscripts are clear, with the illustrations encouraging

further crusades to avenge Frankish Crusaders of the past while also looking towards a

future when the Holy Land falls again into Christian hands.

*Shared Memories,*

Produced in Paris around 1350, MS fr. 352 diverges from this pattern, and

represents part of the influx of crusader manuscripts that proliferated in France during the

reign of Philip VI Valois of France, who hoped to reinvigorate interest in continuing

crusades to Jerusalem.[24] MS fr. 352 is unique among its contemporaries in two distinct

ways: first, the Westernizing treatment of the architecture of the Levant, and second, the

relative lack of depictions of Saracen adversaries in narrative scenes, including the

climax on folio 62r, which portrays the Fall of Jerusalem.  In fact, only four miniatures in

this manuscript - folio 28r, folio 42v, folio 49v, and folio 61r - depict Saracen Muslims,

giving room for a unique opportunity to examine a more nuanced "Other."   Indicative of

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[24] Susanna Throop, "Mirrored Images," 3.

MS fr. 352's specific function and patronage, in this particular manuscript, the absence of

Saracens speaks more than their inclusion.

The first image of the four miniatures in MS fr. 352 depicting Levantine peoples

appears in the upper left of folio 28r (Fig. 10). Labelled "de la fame Solimant et ses

enfants,"[25] this miniature has been identified by Folda as an image of the captured wife

and sons of Kilij Arslan I, the Seljuk Sultan who ruled during the onset of the First

Crusade.[26] Two wooden ships with oars, sails full on a blue sea complete with fish and

an anchor, stand against a checkered gold and blue background. Three crusaders,

wearing helmets and armor, occupy the foreground in the first boat, gesturing towards the

captives and other crusaders in the second. The captive sons of Kilij Arslan are four

blond-haired young men, and his wife wears a pointed red hat. While the headwear of

Kilij Arslan's wife certainly differs from the grey helmets of the crusaders, the facial

features of the Turkish captives are very similar to that of their Frankish captors.

On folio 42v, the second image of Saracen Muslims is labelled "de la prinse

Dantioche" (Fig. 11). A crowd of helmeted crusaders, armed with spears and swords

stand in wait outside the city of Antioch. Atop the walls of the city, Folda has identified

the two figures in discussion as Bohemond I (c. 1054 - 1111 CE / c. 445 - 504 AH),[27]

who is heavily armored with an embossed blue shield, and Firuz, wearing red. In 1098,

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[25] Paris, Bibliothèque nationale of France, MS fr. 352. Folio 28r.
[26] Jaroslev Folda, *The Illustrations in Manuscripts*, 251-60.
[27] Bohemond I of Antioch was a leader of the First Crusade who is best known for his role in the Siege of Antioch. See Jonathan Riley-Smith, ed., *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, 1999.

Firuz, a Turk[28] who was stationed on a crucial section on the walls of Antioch, entered

into a deal with Bohemond to serve as a clandestine agent to aid the crusaders in

conquering Antioch.[29]  At the time of the deal, the Crusaders had been sieging Antioch

for eight months,[30] and while Bohemond likely had no way of knowing Firuz's

motivations, the plan they contrived together was successful.  The Crusaders finally took

the city on October 21, 1097.  As Harrari notes, without Firuz's betrayal of the city, the

Crusades to the Levant would likely be regarded today as "a curious historical anecdote,

demonstrating nothing except the doomed irrational projects undertaken from time to

time by medieval Franks in defiance of objective reality."[31]

Folio 49v holds the largest image of Saracen adversaries (Fig. 12).  This half-page

miniature portrays a busy battle scene on a red and blue checkered background, with a

cluster of mounted Franks and Saracens fighting with swords and spears.  Identified as

being a fight outside of Antioch in the Turkish tents,[32] the ground under the scuffle

appears littered with the decapitated heads of Seljuk Turks.  Armor and helmets serve as

the primary marker of difference between the two groups; the Crusaders charge forward

with grey helmets, armor and shields with cross motifs, and banners of various styles,

while the Saracens wear blue-tinted helmets and carry banners with a shape similar to the

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[28] Not much is known about Firuz, who is mentioned by both Christian and Muslim chroniclers of the Crusades.  In some texts, he is identified as being a Christian Armenian convert to Islam, while others identify him as a Seljuk Turk.  Regardless, he remains an interesting figure due to his polarization.  See Harrari, "The Gateway to the MIddle East."

[29] Yuval Noah Harrari, "The Gateway to the Middle East: Antioch, 1098," 62-63.

[30] Jonathan Riley-Smith, ed., *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, 390.

[31] Yuval Noah Harrari, "The Gateway to the Middle East: Antioch, 1098," 71.

[32] Jaroslev Folda, *The Illustrations in Manuscripts*, 251-60.

double-headed eagle of the Seljuk Empire. While the scene depicts a violent battle, there are no dead Crusaders depicted at all.

Under the written description "du signe que dieux envoia au duc," folio 61r contains the final miniature with the inclusion of Saracen Muslims (Fig. 13). The scene derives from a miraculous vision that appeared to discouraged, battered Crusaders immediately before their final success in Jerusalem, recorded by the anonymous author of the *Gesta Francorum* in 1100 CE:

> But, while we hesitated, irresolute, and the enemy exulted in our discomfiture, the healing mercy of God inspired us and turned our sorrow into joy, for the Lord did not forsake us. While a council was being held to decide whether or not our machines should be withdrawn, for some were burned and the rest badly shaken to pieces, a knight on the Mount of Olives began to wave his shield to those who were with the Count and others, signalling them to advance. Who this knight was we have been unable to find out . At this signal our men began to take heart, and some began to batter down the wall, while others began to ascend by means of scaling ladders and ropes.[33]

In the image, Godfrey of Bouillon stands atop a constructed wooden tower, which he would later use to breach Jerusalem's walls. He gazes and points at the miraculous sighting on the Mount of Olives, as the Franks below lie in wait. Within the city walls, four Fatimid soldiers stand at the ready, while a Fatimid ruler gazes at the vision. While Folda has not identified this figure, I would argue it is likely Iftikhar al-Dawla, the Fatimid governor of Jerusalem in 1099. While not much is known about Iftikhar al-Dawla after his escape from Jerusalem, Nicolle has argued that he may in fact have been the governor of the whole of Palestine, citing evidence that he also ruled at Ascalon after

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[33] Anonymous author, the account of the Siege of Jerusalem in *Gesta Francorum*. From August C. Krey, *The First Crusade*, 260.

the fall of the Holy City.[34]  The representation of Iftikhar al-Dawla, however, differs from other Saracen Muslims in previous miniatures; he wears red, but is shown with full dark hair, held by some sort of headwrap, and a dark beard.  I attempted to locate contemporary images of Iftikhar al-Dawla to see if this could be intended to capture the particular characteristics of his face and hair, but could not find any likely due to his relative obscurity.  This lack of historical images of this individual is indicative that this image in fact does attempt to use othering conventions and tropes to provide visual cues to the reader on his ethnicity and role in the narrative.

Another striking feature of this manuscript is the treatment of the architecture of the Holy Land.  Within the miniatures previously examined, the trend to Westernize the architecture of cities within the Levant is visible; apart from the strange Turkish tents on folio 49v (Fig. 12), there does not appear to be an effort to accurately capture the architectural styles or geographic markers of spaces and places encountered in crusades to Holy Land.  Particularly notable are the representations of Jerusalem on folio 1r (Fig. 14) and folio 62r (Fig. 1).  Missing from the image are the recognizable elements of the medieval city: the Dome of the Rock, the Holy Sepulchre, and all the Byzantine architecture that would have been present in 1099.  Instead, in the foreground of folio 62r, our eyes are drawn to the imposing facade of a large Gothic fortress, with elements of both a church and a castle.  The architecture is unmistakable, including pointed arches, spires, and Gothic style windows.  The towers and walls of the building are large and daunting, taking up the majority of the space in the illustration.

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[34] David Nicolle, *The First Crusade: 1096-99*, 19.

The illumination of the Fall of Jerusalem is a dynamic, vivid rendering of the very moment in which the first Crusaders conquer the Holy City.  In the bottom right, a group of armored men stand beneath a trebuchet, and several large stones are already airborne.  Uniformed Crusaders in blues, pinks, and tans rise across the facade, wielding shields, swords, and spears with sigils.  The diagonal upward trajectory of the Crusaders guide the eyes to the upper portions of the image, where the interior of the structure is visible.

Within this Gothic building, we can see scenes from the Passion of the Christ, progressing from left to right: the Scourging of Christ, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion, and the Mourning at the Tomb.  In the background of the image, the Ascension of Christ is visible, his feet protruding from a cloud at the upper left.  Colors and patterns abound in the image, giving the illumination a sense of movement, narrative, action, and vitality.  The most striking narrative quality of the illustration is that it appears to compress the events of the First Crusade and the Passion of Christ into a single moment in time, captured in paint and ink.  The events are shown to be happening simultaneously, and as the Franks move upwards towards the Passion, their axes will eventually intersect.  What is not included in this all-important narrative scene, however, are any traces of Saracen Muslims or Islamic influence.  Already Westernized in architecture, the scene further removes traces of cultures of the "East" by only depicting Crusader soldiers upon their entrance into Jerusalem.

Susanna Throop's 2015 article "Mirrored Images" makes a small note on the peculiarity of MS fr. 352's visual lack of Saracen adversaries. She writes:

The relative visual absence of Muslims sets MS fr. 352 apart from other manuscripts in the 'expanded cycle' group [...] Muslims are only depicted in four column miniatures, and when they are present, they are in the minority, dominated by a visual majority of crusaders. There are no Muslims in the city of Jerusalem when the First Crusaders storm the walls, nor are there any in the depiction of the siege of Tyre. And while one panel miniature depicts crusaders and Turks in battle outside Antioch, it is preceded by 12 column miniatures showing crusading contingents marching out of the city without an enemy in sight.[35]

Throop does not provide her own theories for this exclusion, or examine the images where Saracen Muslims are present. Instead, her argument examines the patronage of the manuscript to develop the idea that MS fr. 352 can be used as a devotional tool for 14th-century French nobility to see themselves in their crusading ancestors of the 11th and 12th century as they mull over the idea of crusading again. Pointing to the four coats of arms on folio 1r, Throop effectively argues that while the exact patronage cannot be pinpointed, this manuscript would have been made for a high-ranking family of French nobility.[36]

In deciphering the representational choices in this manuscript, including the selected scenes of Saracens, rendered architecture of Jerusalem, and the other absences within this piece, I think the question of patronage is of particular importance. If we agree with Throop that a member of French nobility was likely the initial patron, this manuscript is not just a mirror of the past. Instead, it occupies space and time within the collective memory of a French family during the 14th century and the stories of their ancestors who undertook the great crusading journey. Of real importance is the narrative text of William de Tyre and the triumphant images of Frankish success, like that on 61r,

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[35] Throop, "Mirrored Images," 189.
[36] Ibid., 190-193.

and not the Saracen adversaries.  Folio 62r is also of crucial importance, as it compresses the time and space between the biblical events of Christ's passion and the historical events of the First Crusade.  In choosing to honor their ancestors in this way, a French noble family was tying themselves not just to the historical events of 1099, but also to encounters with Christ himself in Jerusalem.

Similarly, the cityscapes did not need to be an accurate or truthful image of the architecture of Jerusalem, Antioch, and other cities.  Instead, they were shown to be French in style, with Gothic facades that would be familiar and palatable for a noble French audience.  These images of distant cities again underscore the idea of French collective claim to the past, present, and future state of these cities; they are inheritors of a Christian past, a crusading past, and all that was yet to come.  The absence of Saracen Muslims and Eastern architecture in MS fr. 352 is nuanced; the artist seeks not purely erasure, but also an uplifting of French history, and familial history, in the Holy Land to the inheritors of this storied past.

**Conclusion**

From the first pilgrims of Late Antiquity to the Frankish Crusaders of the 12th through 14th centuries, so-called "Europeans" in the Levant have seemingly always sought to claim pieces of Holy Land through possession of holiness, possession of holy sites, possession of knowledge.  Pope Urban II's infamous call to save Jerusalem is not just about religious possession, but the removal of Islamic possession.  Warfare, massacre, renovation, and erasure of Arabic and Islamic culture appear to stem from the

idea that Muslims cannot be entrusted to holy sites like the Holy Sepulcher; Muslims are Saracens, they require baptism, they are not refined, and they are not inheritors of the land in medieval Christian eyes.  Art, architecture, and writings of contemporaries alike provide evidence for this view, as Islamic architectural features are removed through renovations or ignored by pilgrims and illuminators, and racist imagery in French manuscripts grows more and more common through the 13th and 14th centuries. Contradictions and oversimplifications abound.

The analysis of MS fr. 352, however, gives pause to the previously straightforward idea that Saracen Muslims were, to European Christian Crusaders, monstrous, barbaric, and uncivilized.  From a modern viewpoint, it is easy to say these images are racially charged, carefully constructed, and objectively untrue renderings of the Islamic World and the East; that said, perhaps the fact that this constructed reality was indeed a reality to medieval audiences calls for further examination.  Manuscripts like MS fr. 352 unequivocally show that Islam was not, in and of itself, enough to condemn groups in medieval European thought; it demonstrates that even to a medieval French illuminator, there were shades of difference within conceptions of oppositional groups. While Iftikar al-Dawla on 61r is rendered through stereotyped conventions, Firuz from folio 42v occupies that blurred middle ground between friend and foe, and is illustrative of the ways in which the condition of Saracenity can be hazy and diluted.  Individuals like Firuz, who allied themselves with the Christian cause, or the captured wife and sons of Kilij Arslan, who remain unthreatening and cooperative to their captors, are illustrated as identical to Franks, with skin tone and facial features brightened.  In some ways, the

proximity to the Frankish or Christian cause brought a proximity to whiteness in MS fr. 352, with "Othering" tropes being saved for more adversarial figures in the manuscript.

Complicating these relationships during the time of the Crusades calls into question the false dichotomy often presented between Christianity and Islam. While the 14th century brought more typified, racialized imagery of "Saracens," these lines between friend and foe still remained amorphous. As Chapter 2 will further demonstrate, there can be no generalizations when discussing the great variety of relationships and perceptions of 'Other' in the medieval period.

The Literary and the Literal: Arab-Muslim Encounters with the "Other"

**Introduction**

An image drawn from the Bibliothèque nationale of France's MS Arabe 5847

provides a rendering of one of the work's protagonists, Abu Zayd, as he addresses a

group huddled inside the tent in the town of Mecca (Fig. 15).  As the author of this

literary work, Abū Muhammad al-Qāsim ibn Alī ibn Muhammad ibn Uthmān al-Harīrī

(1054-1122 CE / 446-516 AH) or al-Hariri, describes the moment:

> Then he [Abu Zayd] sighed with the sighing of one who calls to mind his home,
> and recited, while sobbing hindered his tongue:
> *Serûj is my dwelling; but how to make way to it!*
> *For enemies have encamped in it, and marred it.*
> *Now by the House to which I have journeyed to lay down my sins in it,*
> *Nought has pleased my eye since I have left the bounds of Serûj.*
> Then his eyes were drowned with tears, and his tear-founts permitted their
> flowing :— And he was unwilling to let them drop, but he could not restrain
> them.— So he cut short his sweet reciting, and was brief in his farewell and
> withdrew.[1]

This scene set in Mecca diverges from the often humorous or amusing stories found in

this collection, and instead touches on a particularly tender moment of grief and loss as

Abu Zayd discusses his occupied village in Syria.  While Abu Zayd does not reference

the "enemies" who have "encamped in" and "marred" his beloved home village by name,

through historical events during the time of the *Maqamat*'s writing and the geographic

context, it becomes clear he is referring to the forces of the First Crusade, who arrived in

the Levant around the turn of the 11th century.

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[1] *The Assemblies of Al Ḥarîri 1,* 185.

Leaving this particular folio for the moment and turning our attention to the larger spectrum of interactions from this time, it becomes clear that the medieval Muslim traveller, even a literary one, while perhaps disengaged personally from the politics of their world, occupied and travelled through landscapes that were in flux, ebbing and flowing with political, military, and cultural shifts. In other words, the individual, whether a traveller, a pilgrim, or a merchant, had agency and mobility, but remained at the hands of the elites and their political and military strategy. The journeys they undertook placed them into conversation with peoples and places who, while they may practice a different faith or belong to a different culture or ethnicity, also occupied an ever-changing world.

Of course, I would be remiss to ignore the fact that the earliest encounters between Christians and Muslims occured in Syria, shortly after the rise of the Islam in the 7th century CE. As Maher Abu-Munshar has written, "No Muslim state has ever been without non-Muslims."[2] In artistic production, nowhere is this more evident that in Ayyubid metalworks that served as Crusader memorabilia, like the colloquially-known Freer Canteen (Fig. 16), or the talented and advanced cartography of Ash-Sharīf al-Idrīsī (c. 1100-1165 CE / c. 493-561 AH), who produced a manuscript of maps for the Norman King Roger II of Sicily (Fig. 17). For the purposes of this examination, however, I am not interested in examining the "Other" from next-door, nor simply patronage by or trade with the "Other"; perceptions of difference or race remain more important for this

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[2] Maher Y. Abu-Munshar, *Islamic Jerusalem and Its Christians*, 9.

analysis.  In a period of circulation around the Mediterranean, peoples and things

inhabited interlocking and intertwining networks

This chapter will begin by examining the idea of the journey and the experience

of the pilgrim.  As medieval Muslims, typically Muslim men, ventured far from their

home villages to gain knowledge and participate in religious rites and traditions on the

*ḥajj* and other pilgrimages, they encountered individuals from all socioeconomic,

cultural, and religious backgrounds.[3]  Similarly, they crossed into and through the ever-

changing geographies of Islamic caliphates, Crusader states, and other political entities in

North Africa and West Asia.  First, we'll be evaluating contemporary written sources to

provide a historical context.  As we'll see in medieval Arabic travelogues, writers found

themselves negotiating and evaluating social, religious, and political differences in real

time.  Untangling these microhistories and individual journeys, as if slowly un-skeining a

spool of thread, allows us to connect seemingly disparate stories through common

experiences.  To be clear, this chapter will not make direct comparisons to the previous

chapter; while certain commonalities may feel obvious to the reader, comparativism is

not the goal. Dichotomizing or binarizing the Crusades leads to further misunderstanding

of historical realities, preventing a productive discussion of the complexities of

interreligious and intercultural exchange.  While it remains impossible to generalize the

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[3] The *ḥajj* refers to the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, an obligatory duty tasked to each Muslim in their lifetime and the fifth pillar of Islam; importantly, "its annual observance has had, and continues to have, a profound influence on the Muslim world," as "the pilgrimage helped to produce a mingling among the élite of the Muslim world: scholars on the way to Mecca would stay temporarily at places in the way, forming friendships with colleagues or themselves teaching in the local mosques."  The *ḥajj* refers to the specific annual duty, and is not interchangeable with other sorts pilgrimages or tomb-visits.  See A. J. Wensinck et al, "Ḥadjdj." In *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition.*

experience of a medieval Muslim traveler, perhaps common threads or parallelisms emerge if viewed on their own terms.

The stories of the medieval traveler allow contextualization, grounding the following analysis of literary illustrations in its historical context without ignoring the subjective nature of the writings. Instead, those subjectivities and personal experiences can be utilized to illuminate the subjectivities inherent in the medieval illuminator's renderings of people and places outside of one's home. This chapter will then pivot to examine the image of the Other in medieval Arabic literature, specifically in the *Maqamat* of al-Hariri and incorporating analysis from a disparate group of sources. The guiding question here, much like that of Chapter One, is: how did medieval Muslims of the so-called "East" come to know Frankish groups? The journeys embarked upon during this period, both physical and literary, placed medieval Muslim travellers in conversation with peoples of all different backgrounds, and the varied perceptions of the 'Other' serve to further underscore the ambivalence of human experience.

**Journeys to the Other**

*Travel, Writing, and Travel Writing during the Medieval Period*

From a modern perspective, the 12th and 13th centuries may seem like an odd time for a Muslim man to travel, particularly into areas of the Levant; Jerusalem had fallen to Crusaders in 1099 CE (492 AH). Tensions were growing as Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb (1137-1193 CE / c. 531-589 AH), or Salah al-Din,[4] continued to consolidate

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[4] Also known as "Saladin."

his power and rapidly expand his territory outside of Egypt, capturing Yemen and North Africa, fortifying his strongholds along the coast of the Red Sea, and beginning raids in the southern parts of the Holy Land.[5] Many cities in the region remained under Frankish control, and the Third Crusade was just decades away. With the backdrop of Salah al-Din's forces and political agenda strengthening and building pressure to a near-fever pitch in the early 1180s, however, a devout Muslim and administrator from al-Andalus by the name of Ibn Jubayr (1145-1217 CE / c. 539-614 AH) had just begun his foray into pilgrimage. Not only did Ibn Jubayr make the *ḥajj* to Mecca and beyond, he recorded his encounters and experiences in each city with great detail, describing architecture, food, peoples, rulers, geography, and regional practices. Ibn Jubayr was not alone in his curiosity or worldly travels, though he will be the primary focus of this section as he lived roughly contemporaneously with William of Tyre.

Travel writing provides a useful medium to examine the curiosities, preconceptions, and knowledge production of the medieval Arab-Muslim world. Starting from the earliest years of the classical age of Islam, Muslims scholars and politicians drove a concerted effort to exercise intellectual curiosity and explore disparate parts of the world; while the curiosity in the "Other" began with Arabic translations of Greek, Persian, and Indian texts, it quickly expanded to other regions outside of the Dar al-Islam, including Europe. Apart from the *ḥajj* and other religious pilgrimages, travel could serve a variety of aims, including financial, diplomatic, cartographic, or military reasons; not

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[5] Niall Christie, *Muslims and Crusaders*, 44-5.

the least of these, however, was travel for scholarly purposes.[6]  In that way, the journey

of Ibn Jubayr and other medieval Muslim travelers produced knowledge, and their

writings served as documentation of their observations.  As they traveled over long

periods of time in an ever-changing world, across vast geographic space, whether by land

or sea, each of these writers encountered a myriad of peoples and places, carrying with

them their own perspectives and a pen.

As Nizar Hermes wrote in his 2013 book *The [European] Other in Medieval*

*Arabic Literature*, "History teaches us that civilizations in times of power, irrespective of

the driving ideology, have always produced curious travelers,"[7] and that observation

remains pertinent in this analysis.  Motives for travel could vary widely, with some

choosing to combine their aim of fulfilling the duty of the *ḥajj* with other motivations;

pilgrimage often served as an initial and legitimate stage of a longer journey.  Journeys,

especially expansive ones like those of Ibn Jubayr,  al-Mas'udi (Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn al-

Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī al-Masʿūdī; 896-956 CE / c. 282-345 AH), and Ibn Khaldun (Abū Zayd

'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn al-Ḥaḍramī; 1332-1406 CE / c. 732-809

AH), give space for curiosity to flourish, but also provide opportunities to reimagine and

refigure ideas about one's place in the world.  Rather than functioning as merely

"armchair anthropologists," the travelogues of medieval Muslim writers read like a cross

between a personal travel journal and an ethnographic study; each new city, new town, or

new traveler met on the path of the journey is given its own evaluation.

*Ibn Jubayr's Encounters with the "Other"*

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[6] Nizar F. Hermes, *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture*, 11-16.
[7] Nizar F. Hermes, *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture*,16.

Raised in Valencia, Spain, and educated in the Qur'an from a young age,[8] Ibn Jubayr would have been closely familiar with the *Hadith*, including its counsels on travel and seeking knowledge:

> The Prophet said: "The best of charity is when a Muslim man gains knowledge, then he teaches it to his Muslim brother."[9]
>
> The Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever takes a path upon which to gain knowledge, Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for him."[10]
>
> The Messenger of Allah said: "Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim…"[11]

While these are simply a few excerpts of a much larger corpus of religious writings, Ibn Jubayr would have been intimately familiar with these concepts, encouraging Muslim men to travel and gather knowledge of the world to share with other Muslims. In fact, upon returning from his pilgrimage in 1185 CE (581 AH), gaining notoriety for his *Rihla* and devotional journey, Ibn Jubayr became an official on *hadith* in Andalusia.[12]

Ibn Jubayr's "An Account of the Events that Befell on Certain Journeys" or simply "Travels" (*Rihla)* details his two year and three month journey voyage from February 4, 1183 CE to May 3, 1185 CE, which was initiated as a ḥajj to Mecca but quickly became much more expansive. Analyzing historical works like Ibn Jubayr's *Rihla* can be difficult, as each author brings their own preconceived perspectives, narratives, and closely-held beliefs with them throughout their travels, and those pre-

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[8] Jonathan Phillips, "The Travels of Ibn Jubayr and his View of Saladin," 75. In *Cultural Encounters during the Crusades*, ed. Kurt Villads Jensen et al.
[9] Sunan of Ibn Majah, Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 243.
[10] Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2646.
[11] Sunan of Ibn Majah, Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 224.
[12] Jonathan Phillips, "The Travels of Ibn Jubayr and his View of Saladin," 76. In *Cultural Encounters during the Crusades*, ed. Kurt Villads Jensen et al.

existing biases can easily distort the historical realities.  The importance of the *Rihla,* much like al-Hariri's *Maqamat*, is that each text constituted prototypes, even if they are not the progenitors of the genre. The *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr's impact on later travel writers, such as that of ibn Battuta, and al-Hariri's *Maqamat* influence on Arabic literature and future *maqama* writers, cannot be overstated.

For the purpose of this paper, Ibn Jubayr's work will be examined as a subjective, personal memoir as most travelogues are.  The religious, cultural, and political details he chooses to include, and the way in which he describes these details, come from his personal, distinct viewpoint on the world, informed by Ibn Jubayr's own background. More than just part of a larger genre of travelogues that emerge in the medieval period from Arabic writers, his tale, which focuses heavily on moments of awe and wonder, also appears to contain influence from the Arabic genre of *'aja'ib* ("wonder-tale").[13]  Despite the similarities to other genres, Ibn Jubayr's writings read as incredibly genuine and individual, as he reflects on the places and people he encounters during his pilgrimage. His values, beliefs, interests, and personal history comes into focus through his candid comments, and while he interacts with a variety of communities over his journey such as Bedouins, Jews, a Sudanese group called the Bujat, among others, his reactions to encounters with Frankish and Christian groups are particularly illuminating.

His interactions with and recordings of Frankish and Christian groups begin in the second half of his journey, after his departure from Baghdad and Mosul, though his writings still center heavily on descriptions of mosque architecture.  Ibn Jubayr relates

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[13] Christine Chism, "Memory, Wonder, and Desire," 19.  Ongoing scholarship questions the validity of the "wonder-tale" narrative, however; see also Syrinx von Hees, "The Astonishing" (2005).

nothing but contempt for the city of Acre, beginning his writings on the city with the invocation "May God exterminate [the Christians in] it and restore it [to the Muslims],"[14] the only point in the text where he uses this phrase. He identifies the city as a central Frankish stronghold in Syria that serves as a "meeting-place of Muslim and Christian merchants from all regions," and continues: "Unbelief and unpiousness there burn fiercely, and pigs [Christians] and crosses abound. It stinks and is filthy, being full of refuse and excrement."[15]

These harsh criticisms are complicated by the fact that while in the city, the pilgrims stayed in a house rented from a Christian woman; in later entries, Ibn Jubayr would take note of Muslims and Christians staying apart as a matter of necessity. For example, while staying in Palermo, he would write:

> 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 Christians. [...] The ordinary mosques are countless, and most of them are used as schools for Koran teachers. But in general these Muslims do not mix with their brethren under infidel patronage, and enjoy no security for their goods, their women, or their children. May God, by His favour, amend their lot with His beneficence.[16]

This is not to suggest that the *Rihla* provides only negative details about Christians and Franks in the Levant. Perhaps the most hopeful moment in the *Rihla* is Ibn Jubayr's reflection on the mobility of pilgrims and Christian-Muslim encounters in the Levant during the increasingly tense and precarious situation of the late 12th century. He writes:

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[14] Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr,* 318.
[15] Ibid 318.
[16] Ibid 348-9.

It is strange how the Christians round Mount Lebanon, when they see any Muslim hermits, bring them food and treat them kindly… And if the Christians treat the opponents of their religion in this fashion, what think you of the treatment that the Muslims give each other? One of the most astonishing things that is talked of is that though the fires of discord burn between the two parties, Muslim and Christian, two armies of them may meet and dispose themselves in a battle array, and yet Muslim and Christian travellers will come and go between them without interference… In the same way the Muslims continuously journeyed from Damascus to Acre (through Frankish territory), and likewise not one of the Christian merchants was stopped or hindered (in Muslim territories)."[17]

This is not a unique moment in his *Rihla*. In Tyre, Ibn Jubayr speaks kindly of a Christian wedding he witnesses, describing the bride as "most elegantly garbed in a beautiful dress" and commenting on the beauty of the sight of the wedding party and procession. Messina provides an example of a multicultural community without threats of assimilation or conversion, as he writes

...it is filled with the worshippers of the Cross, who promenade in its upper districts and live at ease in its sheltered parts. The Muslims live beside them with their property and farms. The Christians treat these Muslims well and 'have taken to themselves as friends'...[18][19]

Muslims and Christians were living together "as friends," at least in Messina. Despite Ibn Jubayr's often acerbic condemnations of infidels and Christian followers, these moments highlight a crucial theme. Christian-Muslim interactions during this period were not a monolith, and each city brought its own challenges of interfaith mingling. While Muslims were suffering at the hands of Christian rulers in Sicily, in Mount Lebanon and Messina, there was general tolerance and even kindness. In Acre, a Christian woman provided housing to the travellers, but another Christian converted a

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[17] Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr,* 300-1.
[18] A reference to the Qu'ran 20:41.
[19] Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr,* 339.

fellow pilgrim. To a Muslim pilgrim, Christian residents of the Mediterranean were simultaneously dangerous and benign. Their stories mirror each other, in a way: faithful pawns in holy wars that have little to do with their quotidien lives, yet affect their world as it turns around them.

*Other Travelers and Other "Others"*

Other Arab geographers and travelers of the Middle Ages found themselves engaging with the "Other," documenting their encounters and codifying perceptions of alterity discovered on their journeys. Nizar Hermes's 2012 book *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture* diligently translates and captures many of these writers' negotiations of the Other. In his chapter "European Barbarity and Civilization," Hermes cites the works of al-Masʿudi, an Iraqi writer of the 10th century, noting that:

> For al-Masʿudi and others, the northern borders of the seventh clime rep- resent the end of the inhabited world and accordingly mark the outer border of human civilization. It is called *ardh al-shamal* (the land of the North) and, perhaps more suggestively, *ardh al-dhalam*—that is, the land of darkness, where, apart from *ahl al-shamal* (the people of the North), civilized humans cannot survive. [...] he asserted that the extreme cold, the abundance of snow, and especially the scarcity of sunlight affected enormously the people living in this northern quadrant. This, he explains, manifested itself in several physical and linguistic *naqaʾis* (defects) such as lack of humor, largeness of bodies, extreme skin whiteness, heaviness of tongue, coarseness of language, and lack of firmness in matters of religious beliefs. He ends the passage by concluding that the farther people settled in the extreme north of the northern quadrant—in reference to *ahl al-shamal*—the more stupid, harsh, and barbarian they become.[20]

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[20] Nizar F. Hermes, *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture*, 47.

al-Masʿudi, therefore, sees alterity as a product of a sort of climatic determinism, where

people from the North, or *ahl al-shamal*, become more and more barbarian through

distance alone.

These ideas are echoed in the writings of another 10th-century Iraqi writer by the

name of Ibn al-Faqih, who wrote in his *Kitab al-Buldan*:

> A man of discernment said: The people of Iraq have sound minds, commendable
> passions, balanced natures, and high proficiency in every art, together with well-
> proportioned limbs, well-compounded humors, and a pale brown color, which is
> the most apt and proper color. They are the ones who are done to a turn in the
> womb. They do not come out with something between blonde, buff, blanched, and
> leprous coloring, such as the infants dropped from the wombs of the women of
> the Slavs and others of similar light complexion; nor are they overdone in the
> womb until they are burned, so that the child comes out something between black,
> murky, malodorous, stinking, and crinkly haired, with uneven limbs, deficient
> minds, and depraved passions, such as the Zanj, the Ethiopians, and other blacks
> who resemble them. The Iraqis are neither half-baked dough nor burned crust but
> between the two.[21]

Much like al-Masʿudi, this passage demonstrates that Ibn al-Faqih's understanding of

racial phenotypes and qualities appear to rely on a climatic basis.  To this 10th-century

writer, peoples to the North, like the Slavs or other European groups, live in colder

climates, and therefore have fairer complexions; likewise, the hotter climate occupied by

Ethiopians, Zanjs, and other sub-Saharan peoples "burns" their skin and curls their hair.

As Geraldine Heng explores in her books *The Invention of Race in the European

Middle Ages* and *Empire of Magic*, stories of Crusader cannibalism entered Arabic

histories of the Crusades as early as the 12th century in the so-called Damascus Chronicle

of Ibn al-Qalanisi (Abū Yaʿlá Ḥamzah ibn Asad Ibn al-Qalānisī, 1071-1160 CE / 463-555

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[21] Ibn al-Faqih, *Kitab al-Buldan*, 902-3 CE.  As translated in Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Inquiry*.

AH ). Ibn al-Qalanisi's account provides a point of particular interest, outside of references to the consumption of human flesh by the Franks at Antioch, Acre, and others;[22] despite Ibn al-Qalanisīs frequent descriptions of Frankish Crusaders as "abominable"[23] or "accursed,"[24] the only figure in the entire chronicle deemed worthy of the interjection "may God curse him" is a Kurdish man, identified by the name Bertram the Infidel. Strikingly, in a time of ongoing armed conflict and violence with the Franks, he saves his harshest critique not for the foreign adversary, but for traitors within his own camp. Ibn al-Qalanisi devotes extensive time to describing this man's abominable acts, describing his behavior as "hostile and tyrannical," "evil," "abusive," and "ignorant of Islam and its principles."[25] In a way, this passage reveals a devaluing of the power of the Franks; if we understand hatred not be the opposite of love, but rather an intense emotion of similar emotional weight, the fact that Ibn al-Qalānisī targets Bertram the Infidel with so much enmity underscores his shock and horror that someone living and working under the same Muslim rulership in Damascus could resort to such disdain and violence against his own brethren. The violence committed by the Franks like the razing of the al-Aqsa mosque, the massacre of Jerusalem, or even the cannibalism, while condemned by Ibn al-Qalanisi, remains seemingly expected of them, as violent adversaries.

Examining these Muslim historians and travelers provides a historical basis upon which to construct the following analysis of figural imagery from medieval Arabic

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[22] Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages,* 121, 165.
[23] Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Mudhayyal Ta'rikh Dimashq*. As translated by H. A. R. Gibbs, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, 151.
[24] Ibid 345.
[25] Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Mudhayyal Ta'rikh Dimashq*. As translated by H. A. R. Gibbs, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, 228-232. Ibn al-Qalānisī's descriptions of Bertram the Infidel occupy nearly 4 pages, even after being abridged in Gibb's translation of his chronicle.

literature, guided by an interest in finding depictions of the "Other." Returning to medieval illustrated copies of al-Harīrī's *Maqamat* allows us now to see visual representations of the medieval Muslim in encounters with the other.

**Picturing the Journey in al-Hariri's *Maqamat***

Much like the travels of Ibn Jubayr and al-Mas'udi, or the histories of Ibn al-Qalanisi, the protagonists of al-Hariri's *Maqamat* undertake their own journeys across geographic space and time throughout the course of the collected stories. Using Ibn al-Faqih's analyses, as well as other Muslim historians' and travel writers' experiences as a jumping off point, we can turn to the rich corpus of visual imagery from literary works of this period, now firmly grounded in historical context and primary evidence of medieval conceptions of the "Other." Just as their travelogues document their encounters with other peoples and places far away from their homelands.

A *maqāma* is a specific genre of rhymed prose developed in 10th century Arabic literature. These short stories, typically moralistic or religious in message and situated within a variety of social settings from across the Muslim world, provided a literary challenge to early Arabic writers.[26] While he did not invent the genre, al-Harīrī remains probably the most widely known and beloved of the *maqamat* writers. Born in Basra, Iraq, al-Harīrī's life was contemporary with the Crusades, with his most famous work being published immediately prior to William of Tyre's *Historia*. He was an Arab scholar, writer, and poet, while also serving as a high government official of the Seljuk

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[26] Other *maqamat* writers include Badi' al-Zamān al-Hamadāni (969-1007 CE / c. 358-398 AH).

empire.[27] Writing 50 *maqamat* in his lifetime, his *Maqamat* collection was certainly a medieval bestseller, though continuations of his stories were written through the 20th century.[28] As mentioned above, al-Hariri's *Maqamat* follows the escapades of two protagonists, al-Harith, "a slightly naive traveling merchant," and Abu Zayd of Saruj, a "rogue," trickster, and master of disguise, as they travel around West Asia and North Africa and find themselves in a variety of dilemmas, often comedic or didactic in nature.[29]

As Mariam Rosser-Owen notes, "by the early 8th century, Islamic territories had almost encircled the Mediterranean,"[30] and the rapidly expanding boundaries of the Islamic caliphates created more venues for exchange and contact. The religion the Prophet Muhammad founded would quickly burst out of the Arabian Peninsula, extending into the farthest reaches of Europe, Africa, and Asia by the beginning of the Crusades at the turn of the 12th century. The areas surrounding Jerusalem, and other areas on the Mediterranean, quickly became hotly contested. al-Harith and Abu Zayd, much like the author, occupy this ever-changing world, even if only in a literary sense. In this analysis, reading the *Maqamat* through the lens of travel writing allows us to further unravel these intersecting networks and illuminate the individual in the broader process of history; the characters, even if literary, mirror the lives of many true travelers that journeyed to and through the Levant in the oft-called Golden Age of Islam.

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[27] *The Assemblies of Al Ḥarîri 1,* 3-4.
[28] Oleg Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 2-3.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Mariam Rosser-Owen, "Europe and the Islamic Mediterranean AD 700-1600."

Beginning their travels in Yemen, the pair find themselves in cities across Syria,

Iraq, Persia, Egypt, and beyond; each new place brings new peoples, new observations by

al-Harith, and new shenanigans and disguises from Abu Zayd, not much unlike that of the

travel writers.  While Christians, especially European Christians, do not figure

prominently in illustrated copies of al-Hariri's *Maqamat,* viewing the genre through the

lens of medieval travel writing allows an unskeining of the complexities of cultural

contact.  Through close examinations of the illustrations in three 12th-century illustrated

*Maqamat* manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale of France,[31] MS Arabe 3929, MS

Arabe 5847, and MS Arabe 6094, with attention to both text and image, the subjectivities

and specificities of the Other in these manuscripts illuminate a more nuanced

understanding of constructions of race and gender during this period.


*Depictions of Arab-Muslim Society*

After the duo's first meeting in Yemen, al-Harith stumbles across Abu Zayd for

the second time in a library in Basra - notably, al-Harith's and al-Hariri's hometown.  In

the image from MS Arabe 3929 (Fig. 18), the artist depicts Abu Zayd as the rightmost

figure, with tattered clothes, a walking stick, and a hunched posture.  His aged rendering

gives him a sympathetic appearance, not alluding to his cunning and roguish behavior.

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[31] The three manuscripts that will be examined are MS Arabe 3929, MS Arabe 5847, and MS Arabe 6094.
The provenance of the earliest manuscript, MS Arabe 3929, is the most disputed; most scholars date it to
the second quarter of the 13th century, and assign it to the ambiguous "Muslim East" rather than the
western caliphates in al-Andalus.  The date of the MS Arabe 5847 manuscript is given in a colophon as 634
AH/1237 CE, and goes on to identify the scribe and artist as al-Wasiti, working in the Baghdad school of
painting.  MS Arabe 6094 bears two inscriptions with dates on folio 68 (619 AH/1222 CE) and folio 167.
Most scholars accept it to be from the third quarter of the 13th century, created in either northern Syria or
Damascus. See Oleg Grabar, *Illustrations of the Maqamat* (1984).

Two of the four gathered men lift their eyes from their poetry books, with one gesturing towards Abu Zayd's arrival, while the other two men remain deep in debate. The artist of 3929, as is typical of their style, provides only minimal elements to set the scene: a few books on a bookshelf, and a three-quarters frame to demarcate the interior space.

MS Arabe 5847, richly illustrated and calligraphed by 13th-century Iraqi-Arab Yaḥyā ibn Maḥmūd al-Wāsiṭī, or al-Wasiti, of the Baghdad school of painting, includes three illustrations accompanying the second *maqāma*. Folio 5v (Fig. 19) captures the same library as the illustration MS Arabe 3929, but instead of a single meager bookshelf, al-Wasiti paints the scene with much more detail. The framing architecture contains beautiful red and gold detailing, while the interior contains a myriad of books and bookshelves. The six gathered men listen intently to the recitations of one man in blue, gazing down at his book. In addition to his rendering of the narrative events of Abu Zayd's performance at the library (Fig. 20), al-Wasiti has chosen to include a nearly full-page establishing image of the intellectual life of Arab-Muslim men, emphasizing intellect, scholarship, poetry, and even luxury, considering the striking architecture and large collection of books.

Other examples of social groups can be found in al-Wasiti's portrayal of the twelfth *maqāma* (Fig. 21), a scene within a tavern in the medieval trading town of 'Anah, on the Euphrates River near Damascus.[32] Oleg Grabar describes the individuals in upper

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[32] 'Anah's women were renowned for their beauty, providing further evidence of diversity within the Arab-Muslim world of the Levant. For more information on 'Anah, see S. H. Longrigg, "Ana" in *Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*.

register of the scene as a "typical Arab crowd";[33] the three men, each in a brightly-

colored turban and robe adorned with *ṭirāz* armbands, drink out of goblets while

overlooking the scene below.  Two of the men sport dark beards, and another reaches

towards the crowd below to retrieve a tray of food.  Grabar notes that much like al-

Wasiti's image of the library of Basra,

> Other drinkers, wine being filtered, and grapes being pressed illustrate the general
> theme of drinking in a tavern rather than the concrete instance of Abu Zayd being
> discovered by al-Harith.  The joyful activities of the hero are symbolized simply,
> by showing musicians and dancers.[34]

In other words, al-Wasiti demonstrates a clear interest in scene setting; rather than

focusing on the specific narrative events of the twelfth *maqāma*, his illustration of the

tavern invites the reader to glimpse inside the bustling establishment.  Folio 34v, from

MS Arabe 3929, captures the same moment, with the artist limning a gathering of seven

tavern-goers including musicians and cup-bearers (Fig. 22); however, unlike al-Wasiti,

the artist here chose to portray the actual encounter of al-Harith discovering Abu Zayd

within the intoxicating environment, full of al-Hariri's described "cup-bearers of

surpassing beauty, and lights that glittered, and myrtle and jasmine, and pipe and lute."[35]

Where the illustrations of the second *maqāma* revealed the more academic,

creative, and intellectual side of the medieval Arab-Muslim lifestyle, the images of

'Anah's tavern present an image of relaxation and leisure.  While this is not to say that

the towns of Iraq, or the Levant more broadly, existed as a monolith, certain elements of

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[33] Oleg Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 114.
[34] Ibid 48-9.
[35] From al-Hariri's *Maqamat*.  As translated by Charles F. Horne in *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*, 200.

Arab-Muslim culture, including sartorial norms, renderings of facial features,[36] and

common social and academic settings, underpin *Maqamat* illustrations across

manuscripts.  These intimate vignettes of the lives of Arab-Muslim men provide a

baseline, from which shades of difference in other scenes come into sharper focus.

*Nomads*

On his return from Mecca, al-Harith stops at a Bedouin camp where he stumbles

across the ever-tricky Abu Zayd, posing as a jurist and fielding questions on law and

legal opinion.  While the plot does not provide much material for analysis, the setting

within a Bedouin encampment lends itself to varied renderings of nomadic peoples of the

Hejaz.  In the illustration of the thirty-second *maqāma* in MS Arabe 6094, a group of six

men are huddled together, looking and listening intently to the speaker on the left, whose

image in the manuscript unfortunately has been damaged (Fig. 23).  Within the crowd of

men, however, shades of difference begin to appear.  One figure wears a *kūfīyah* scarf

around his face, indicating that he is likely a nomad.[37]  Furthermore, the artist includes

renditions of several different kinds of headgear, indicating a higher level of diversity in

this gathering.  Despite attempts to represent variations in cultural practices, however,

both the text of the *maqama* and the artist's rendition of the scene do not indicate any

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[36] In medieval Persian poetry, crescent shaped eyebrows, almond-shaped eyes, and round faces were part of the "moon-face" which was considered beautiful.  These features inclusion here could be an example of cross-cultural exchange with east Central Asian traditions.  See Ruba Kana'an, ed., *Pattern and Light: Aga Khan Museum* (2014)

[37] Oleg Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 113.

antipathy in the presence of Bedouin nomads; the gathered men sit closely, attention focused on Abu Zayd's proclamations rather than interpersonal differences.

The illustrations of Bedouins in MS Arabe 3929 further support this amicable perception of Bedouin nomads.  The illustration of the thirty-second *maqāma* again shows a crowd, albeit a smaller one, gathered around Abu Zayd (Fig. 24).  The two central figures wear *kūfīyah* scarves on their faces, but the artist in this case chooses to illustrate the two Bedouin men with large swords, likely intended to be the chieftains of the tribe.[38]  Strikingly, the older of the two nomads appears to have darker skin than that of Abu Zayd; where the skin tones of the trickster and the younger Bedouin appear more pink, the older man's skin is a more muddled, duller gray or brown.  Without examining the manuscript, it appears that the appearance of different shades was intentional, but of course, this variation could be due to pigment degradation over time. The older nomad's robes are beautifully patterned, a deep green punctuated by golden motifs.  Again, the details included by the artist of MS Arabe 3929 show shades of difference between the Arab-Muslim protagonists and Bedouin nomads; the inclusion of weapons, the specificities of headgear and other clothing like the *kūfīyah*, and the rendering of varying shades of flesh set the nomads apart.

The leftmost figure in the image generates unique points of interest; his skin tone most closely resembles that of the older Bedouin, and the figure has spiked his hair to a point on the top of his head.  He clutches at his clothes and gestures wildly, his right arm and eyes raised in some expression of emotion, and his feet are bare.  Grabar cautiously

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[38] Oleg Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 81.

identifies this figure as al-Harith dressed as a pilgrim, citing his "curious" clothing and

hairstyle.[39] Interestingly, MS Arabe 3929 also includes an image of al-Harith as a

Bedouin within the cycle of the nineteenth *maqāma* (Fig. 25). Grabar writes:

> An unusual picture is Paris 3929, folio 41, where a solitary camel rider illustrates
> a passage at the beginning of the story saying that as al-Harith went to Nisibin he
> "mounted a camel of Mahnah and fixed a lance of Samhar." What is depicted,
> then, is a metaphor indicating that he went off into the desert like a Bedouin. It is
> thus a rare instance of the literal illustration of a figure of speech.[40]

The exegetical and metaphorical dimensions of the illustration provide interesting points

for analysis, particularly in the idea of travelling "like a Bedouin." al-Harith travels

throughout the course of the *Maqamat*, with each story set in a new town. Bedouins, by

nature of their nomadic lifestyle, live a life of constant travel in a way. While the aims of

such "travel" may differ, this passage and illustration speak to a symbolic understanding

of individual movement. But why is al-Harith only travelling "like a Bedouin" in this

particular *maqāma*, and not in other journeys in al-Hariri's assemblies? Figure of speech

aside, perhaps the most obvious answer is the way in which he travels: on a camel, with a

lance. While the renderings of difference between Arab-Muslims and Bedouins remain

subtle, medieval artists took note of the cultural divergences, codifying cultural

accoutrements as a marker of difference in visual culture.

*Slaves*

Much like treatments of the Bedouins, the artists marked enslaved individuals of

al-Hariri's *Maqamat*. Crucially, the treatment of enslaved people in these illustrations

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[39] Oleg Grabar, *The Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 81.
[40] Ibid 61.

varies at the hands of different artists, but also at the servants' perceived ethnicity.

Perhaps one of the most striking illustrations of enslaved accompanies the 34th *maqāma*

set in Zabīd, Yemen,  reflecting an association between skin color, individual qualities,

and narrative role in the *Maqamat* (Fig. 26).  In the upper register of the image, crowned

by the woven roof of an outdoor stall, two turbaned men handle a scale, measuring

payment, when a third man to the left gestures to the group in the lower register of the

illustration.  Between two slave traders gesturing towards their human stock,[41] five

enslaved individuals await their fate, speaking amongst each other: three black men, one

Arab man, and another Arab youth.

al-Wasiti chooses to mark the black men through skin tone, physical features, and

clothing.  Unlike the two Arabs who don colorful, full-length garments and turbans, the

African men remain exposed, with a few scanty pieces of fabric obscuring their corporal

forms.  Similarly, they are rendered barefoot, and al-Wasiti further depicts this already

shabby clothing as tattered, in need of repairs. If we are to consider these images within

the historical context, al-Hariri likely meant these men to be of Ethiopian or Zanj

heritage, connecting to preexisting race-making discourse among Arab scholars,

travelers, and historians.[42]

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[41] One of these traders, grasping the arm of the Arab youth, appears to a Bedouin man wearing a *kūfīyah*. While the cultural implications or Bedouin associations with the slave trade remain beyond the scope of this chapter, it does seem of note for future research.

[42] While this footnote cites Bernard Lewis, he remains a polarizing figure in the field, whose scholarship been seen by many as propagating Islamophobic and Orientalist views.  Much work is still needed to readdress his scholarship, undo his impacts on politics and foreign affairs in the United States and beyond, and provide further inquiry into slavery during the medieval period.  See Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (1992), if just for the primary sources he gathers.  For discussion of Bernard Lewis and his troubled legacy, see Hamid Dabashi, "Alas, poor Bernard Lewis, a fellow of infinite jest" (2018) and Douglas Martin, "Bernard Lewis, Influential Scholar of Islam, Is Dead at 101" (2018), among others.

While the juxtaposition of Arab and African slaves in the 34th *maqāma* remains striking in its own right, other images of enslaved Arab youths evidence an ethnocentric privileging in Arab groups, even in the case of the slave trade.  As Roxburgh describes:

> *Maqāma* 10, named after Rahba, is illustrated with two paintings: a disagreement between an old man and a handsome slave boy (*ghulām*)—the old man had accused the slave of killing his son—results in their appearance before the governor (*wālī*) [...] During their meeting with the governor, who is portrayed holding a lance and seated on an elevated throne attended by a boy who hides behind him, the old man attests, in a number of verses, to the accused slave's beauty.[43]

In the al-Wasiti manuscript, this young Arab *ghulām*'s brightly colored and patterned robes adorned with gold *ṭirāz* bands, combined with the distinct style of his richly colored and embellished turban, sets him apart from the other figures in the illustration (Fig. 27). The Arabic word *ṭirāz* originally derives from a Persian word literally meaning "adornment," but came to develop their own meaning as they entered West Asia during the years of the earliest caliphates.  Religious blessings and other Islamic texts were sewn into *ṭirāz* bands, which were originally worn by the ruling classes and carried meanings of both great social status and religious meaning.[44]  Their inclusion within this image underscores the lavish nature of the servant's clothing.  A more direct comparison can be found in MS Arabe 6094's rendering of the tenth *maqāma,* as the handsome Arab *ghulām* stands across from a darker skinned servant to the right of the *wālī* (Fig. 28).  Where the *ghulām* stands adorned in rich fabrics and colors, the darker-skinned servant wears a shorter robe cropped to the knees and a distinct cap on his head; further, the artist depicts the later as physically smaller, diminutive in stature, in the midst of performing physical

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[43] David J. Roxburgh, "In Pursuit of Shadows," 186-7.
[44] Yedida Stillman, *Arab Dress*, 120-121.

acts of service as he fans the *wālī*.  Where the three other men exchange glances, the rightmost servant stands alone, unnoticed by the other figures in the image, with his eyes solely focused on attending to the *wālī*.

The woman depicted on folio 151v of MS Arabe 3929 (Fig. 29) is truly enigmatic; in this particular manuscript, as well as the other illustrated manuscripts of al-Hariri's *Maqamat* of the 13th and 14th centuries, her sumptuous attire endures without parallel.  Oleg Grabar has described her as "a sort of 13th-century Miss Near East,"[45] an apt title to encompass her mysterious identity and origin.  She appears in the text of the 18th *maqāma*, which includes a story of Abu Zayd keeping a beautiful woman in seclusion.  He later is coerced to sell her to a governor, who has her the tales of her great beauty.

Much like the sartorial finery of the *ghulām,* this "Miss Near East" wears a gorgeous wide-sleeved, brocaded gown and robe, each cascading down to her knees. *Tirāz* armbands adorn her upper sleeves.  On her head, the woman wears a polka dot *hijab*, or headscarf*,* with a pearl chin chain.  The sheer amount of precious materials in her accoutrements, whether *ṭirāz* bands, pearls, or brocade fabric, point to a woman of wealth. Combining this visual analysis of the figure with the textual descriptions of her as a true paragon of beauty and elegance, several revelations emerge.  First, as the men in the *maqāma* express great desire for her, it is understood that her rendering in this illustration would be intended to emphasize that beauty and luxury.  The trappings that adorn her body, including her colorful *hijab* with pearls, underscore her attractiveness.

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[45] Oleg Grabar, *Illustrations of the Maqamat*, 58.

Secondly, as she is bought and sold to different individuals within the story, it becomes possible to understand her social standing and class: not quite a servant or slave, as her clothing would indicate a higher status, but not quite free either, as the relationship is transactional. She may be a "kept woman"[46] of sorts, provided for financially by men like Abu Zayd and the governor, but her mysterious identity and lack of textual discussion makes it difficult to ascertain.

Comparing these various images illuminates a key difference between enslaved people of Arab and Ethiopian backgrounds; where Arab slaves, like the handsome *ghulām* of the tenth *maqāma* or the enchanting "Miss Near East" of the eighteenth *maqāma*, are more likely to be described and depicted as beautiful, mysterious, or beguiling, enslaved Ethiopians are given no such description.[47] While ethnocentrism likely plays a large role, it echoes the writings of Ibn al-Faqih, who described Ethiopians as "malodorous" and "stinking," with "depraved passions";[48] rather than just preference for Arab women or men, the illustrations in concert with early writings on racial phenotypes speak to a devaluing or disgust. More than just phenotypic features defined by climate, the purported behavioral or intellectual differences between Ethiopian slaves and Arab slaves are codified in these manuscripts, illustrated by al-Wasiti and other medieval illuminators.

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[46] A thorough discussion of types of slavery in the medieval Muslim world is much needed, but is beyond the parameters of this paper, though it should be noted that free Jewish and Muslim women were owned as female slaves, or could serve as diplomatic gifts.

[47] Examinations of the intersections of gender, ethnicity, and class may illuminate the layers of oppression and perceived difference further. These ideas of the Blackamoor and the Ethiopian continued into the early modern Mediterranean. For more discussions of slavery in the medieval Islamic world, see Craig Perry, "Historicizing Slavery in the Medieval Islamic World" (2017).

[48] Ibn al-Faqih, *Kitab al-Buldan*, 902-3 CE. As translated in Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Inquiry*.

*Absences*

Returning for a closer look at folio 38r of al-Wasiti's *Maqamat* (Fig. 1), as briefly discussed in the introduction, the concept of the "Other" takes new meaning. Put simply, Muslim illuminators and writers did not see European Christians, or Franks, as the sole forces of alterity in the medieval Levant, as demonstrated through preceding discussions of the nomadic and enslaved groups. At first glance, the illustrated copies of al-Hariri's *Maqamat* do not include depictions of the European "Other," instead representing different classes and ethnicities from across the Arab world.

Only illustrated in al-Wasiti's manuscript, the fourteenth *maqāma,* set in Mecca, relates a distressed and impassioned speech given by Abu Zayd as he grieves over the loss of his home village Serûj in Anatolia. In this rendering, Abu Zayd stands as the right-most figure in the register, hands clasped beneath his long blue robe. His gaze, directed away from the six huddled listeners, appears wistful, echoing the text of the *maqāma* that describes him as tearful and overcome with emotion as he shares his tale.[49] The gathered men seem enthralled, gazes trained on the shrinking figure of the rogue. al-Wasiti has chosen to leave the "enemies" who have "marred" Serûj unseen in this image and throughout his manuscript, even though the identity of the "enemies" is not unknown. The Crusaders, whether Franks or other European Christians, stormed Abu Zayd's village, damaging it in some way, but they are not crucial to the telling of the story in al-Wasiti's creative opinion. Instead of the "enemy," or the barbarous "Other" to

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[49] This gesture can often symbolize respect, humility before a sufi Shaikh, or even divine truth.

the North or West, al-Wasiti's hand chooses to detail Abu Zayd's deep feeling of grief,

loss, and sadness.  The European Christian, therefore, is not central to this story; their

role may happen off-screen, but the rippling impacts of the Crusades leave scars.


**Conclusion - Recentering Jerusalem: A Negotiation of Space**

When Salah al-Din and his troops recaptured Jerusalem in October of 1187 (582-

583 AH), nearly one hundred years since its initial fall to the onslaught of Frankish

Christians of the First Crusade,  his court secretary, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani (1125-1201

CE / c. 518-598 AH), recorded the council held to decide the fate of the Church of the

Holy Sepulcher.  He writes:

> The majority of advisors declared that it [the Church] should not be demolished or
> razed, and its gates should not be locked barring the infidels from making the
> pilgrimage to it. Their target of worship is the spot of the Cross and the grave [of
> Jesus], not the building itself. Even if it were to be shattered to pieces, the
> Christians in all their diversity will keep coming to the site. When Commander of
> the Faithful ʿUmar, may God be pleased with him, conquered Jerusalem in the
> early years of Islam, he confirmed their right to the place and did not order the
> structure to be demolished.[50]

His description illuminates a two-fold understanding by Salah al-Din.  Firstly, the site

was of great importance to Christian pilgrims.  Secondly, and arguably more importantly

for this analysis, Christianity did not constitute a monolithic or discrete category in the

minds of 12th-century Ayyubid rulers.  The phrase "Christians in all their diversity"

reveals an understanding that the Christian religion was not bound to one political entity

or geographic region, and furthermore, highlights an understanding that Christianity was

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[50] ʿImad al-Din al-Isfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī fī al-fatḥ al-Qudsī*. As translated in Mourad, Suleiman
A. "Too Big to Be Owned: Reflections on Jerusalem in Islamic History," 27.

not a universal evil; the decision to not repay the cruelty displayed to Muslims by the Frankish crusaders preserved the Church for both those who had harmed the Muslims of the Levant and those who were not part of the barbarity.  would mourn the loss of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.  Whether or not the church was preserved would not halt continuous pilgrimages to the region.  In this moment, whether out of practicality or genuine clemency, Salah al-Din and his court chose mercy, a courtesy not shown by Crusaders who razed the al-Aqsa mosque and slaughtered Jerusalem's Muslim and Jewish residents less than a century earlier.

This complexity and indeterminacy echoes the writings of early Arab geographers and travellers, who found themselves constantly negotiating their position geographically, culturally, and religiously.  Encountering and defining the "Other" did not constitute a linear process, but an unfolding of layers of identity, proximity, and politics.  10th-century writers like al-Masʿudi and Ibn al-Faqih found answers to the question of alterity through climate, pointing to darker-skinned Ethiopians and Zanjs of southern regions and lighter-skinned northern groups like Slavs.  More than simply climatic determinism for phenotypic features, however, dimensions of behavior and quality remained folded into an ethnocentrism that privileged the lands of the Levant, particularly Iraq, above all.

By the 13th century, illustrated manuscripts of al-Hariri's *Maqamat* also hold this understanding.  Differences in sartorial norms, skin tone, and more mark certain groups within the *Maqamat* as "Other," varying by degree.  Where Bedouin nomads and enslaved Arabs are given markers of beauty, enslaved Ethiopians and Zanjs do not

receive the same treatment, often shown barefoot and scantily clad. The European

Christian, whether Frankish or otherwise, does not figure prominently in the illustration

cycle. Despite that fact, their last impacts remain, their barbarity alluded to through the

grieving faces of those forced to leave their homes behind. This constant negotiation of

identity underpins so much of both travel writing and Arabic literature that it would be

ludicrous to imagine that it remains disconnected from a negotiation of the self, the

process of understanding who is familiar and unfamiliar, harmful or benign.

Turning to al-Andalus, seldom discussed thus far,[51] and comparing the image of a

grieving Abu Zayd in Mecca with an image from Alfonso X of Castile's *Libro de los*

*Juegos* (Fig. 30), we get a sense of this complexity and indeterminacy. Apart from their

obvious formal similarities like a tent setting, the two images represent an interesting foil

to each other. In MS Arabe 5847, Abu Zayd weeps at the destruction of the Crusades,

but elsewhere, a Muslim and a Christian play chess together. Even a time of ongoing

political and military strife, the medieval relationship of a European Christian and a

Muslim remains undefinable; where at times there is camaraderie or mercy, other times

there is grief and pain. To generalize these experiences would be to erase the immense

complexity and nuance of relationships between Christians and Muslims of the medieval

world.

As the past two chapters have illustrated, a myriad of different peoples, including

European Christians and Muslims of the Levant, North Africa, and Anatolia, encountered

each other frequently in the Middle Ages. Despite the bloodshed and ongoing

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[51] Thorough discussions of al-Andalus remain beyond the geographic scope of this thesis, but I would be remiss if I did not recognize the pathways for future research in this region.

geopolitical conflict, European Christians and Arab-Muslims not only lived together in some places, but also undertook journeys across vast geographies.  These travels, whether for pilgrimage, trade, curiosity, or military purposes, intersected in a variety of localities and temporalities, bringing the two groups into contact in varying contexts.  Despite written and visual evidence of complex understandings of the "Other," these perceptions have gone relatively unnuanced in art historical scholarship, where these intercultural relationships have been generalized and dichotomized.

As a result, for centuries museums and other institutions have packaged and repackaged notions of difference, neutering true understanding and fabricating a view that the story of Christianity and Islam is one of constant opposition, incompatibility, and violence.  Chapter 3 will examine the state of discourse on alterity in modern museum institutions, taking a critical eye to exhibitions and permanent collections alike.  For the visitor to the museum, who undertakes a metaphorical and intellectual journey of their own through the gallery spaces, it may feel as though the visitor can leap across time and space by merely entering a new room; even if those journeys are inherently illusionistic, the pathways created by museums deserve further probing.

Imagining the Medieval: Museums in the 21st Century


*"The European representation of the Muslim, Ottoman, or Arab was always a way of controlling the redoubtable Orient, and **to a certain extent the same is true of the methods of contemporary learned Orientalists, whose subject is not so much the East itself as the East made known, and therefore less fearsome, to the Western reading public.**" - Said, 60*

**Introduction: A 21st-Century Crusade**

On September 16, 2001, George W. Bush addressed reporters from the White

House lawn mere days after the tragedy in New York City on September 11.  The press

conference quickly became infamous for Bush's gaffe in referring to the fledgling "War

on Terror," when he stated:

> We need to go back to work tomorrow and we will.  But we need to be alert to the fact that these evil-doers still exist.  We haven't seen this kind of barbarism in a long period of time.  No one could have conceivably imagined suicide bombers burrowing into our society and then emerging all in the same day to fly their aircraft - fly U.S. aircraft into buildings full of innocent people - and show no remorse.  This is a new kind of  -- a new kind of evil.  And we understand.  And the American people are beginning to understand.  This crusade, this war on terrorism is going to take a while.[1]

By the following morning, journalists had begun to run stories criticizing the use of the

words "barbarism" and "Crusade" to refer to the United States's approach to this new

war.  Commenting to the Seattle Post-Intelligencer for an article published September

17th, Joshua Salaam of the Council on American-Islamic Relations stated "A lot of

people think that America is out to get Islam, anyway.  We've got to be careful about the

words we use."[2]  This sentiment reverberated across the United States, with most

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[1] George Bush's "Remarks by the President Upon Arrival, South Lawn."  September 16, 2001.
[2] Sally Buzbee, "Bush's use of the word 'Crusade' a red flag."  Published September 17, 2001.

journalists condemning the phrase to avoid the risk of "play[ing] into the hands of Osama bin Laden."[3]

Thus the Middle Ages re-entered the popular imagination, with many journalists attempting to unravel the historical and political implications of this strange sort of historical nostalgia. Considering that Said places the encounters of the Middle Ages as the impetus for Orientalist thought, perhaps it is unsurprising that the stereotypes levied at "Saracens" by medieval artists and writers alike, as seen in Chapter 1, reemerged in the realm of US foreign policy. While many journalists attempted historiographical overviews of the Crusades to disavow the statements of the president, not all responses to Bush's "Crusade" indiscretion were negative; the *National Review*'s first issue in December of 2001 sported cover art of the president as a Crusader, mounting a horse and donning the red cross that in the modern imagination had become so inextricable from the events of the so-called "Holy War" centuries before (Fig. 31). At first glance, one might argue that the cover art is intended to be satirical, or mocking, of Bush's statement from the White House lawn. When paired with the callous, even violent, rhetoric in the cover story "Crusading They Went" and its accompanying cartoon of the president spearing the head of a turbaned figure (Fig. 32), it becomes clear that the writers and editors of the right-wing *National Review* find a kinship with the Crusaders.[4]

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[3] Sally Buzbee, "Bush's use of the word 'Crusade' a red flag." Published September 17, 2001.

[4] This edition was not the first to include incendiary writing or calls for violence. Ann Coulter's column, published by the *National Review* only days after the 9/11 attack, read: "This is no time to be precious about locating the exact individuals directly involved in this particular terrorist attack. We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity. We weren't punctilious about locating and punishing only Hitler and his top officers. We carpet-bombed German cities; we killed civilians. That's war. And this is war." The *National Review* subsequently fired Coulter from her contributing editor position.

John Derbyshire's "Crusading They Went" provides an ahistorical analysis of the

Crusades, opening with the writings of historical fiction of Alfred Duggan, an early 20th-

century English novelist, and beginning to discuss some of the atrocities committed in

1099 CE by Crusaders who breached the walls of Jerusalem.  Derbyshire contends that

there are "redeeming" qualities to the "sorry episodes" of violence, writing:

> Above and beyond this, if we are to take sides on the Crusades after all these centuries, we should acknowledge that, for all their many crimes, the Crusaders were our spiritual kin.  I do not mean only in religion, though that of course is not a negligible connection: I mean in their understanding of society, and of the individual's place in it. [...] If we look behind the cruelty, treachery, and folly, and try to divine what the Crusaders actually said and thought, we see, dimly but unmistakably, the early flickering light of the modern West.[5]

Placing Derbyshire's personal, white supremacist views aside,[6] this article remains laden

with coded euphemisms and Orientalist tropes.  The frequent references to the West as

being not only civilized, but a civilizing force itself, echoes the exact phraseology and

eurocentricity that Said decried in his 1979 book.  Derbyshire goes as far to rejoice the

medieval West's capacity for the "ideals of liberty, justice, and individual worth,"[7] as the

"Sarcens had… no society, no polity"[8] - an absolutely baseless and ahistorical claim, as

previous chapters of this thesis have demonstrated.  For writers and artists at the *National*

*Review*, the "Crusade" statement from the president and his imagined costuming was not

simply a metaphor.

While certainly the *National Review* serves as a particularly egregious example,

the menace of Orientalism as defined by Said and other scholars, having never truly

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[5] John Derbyshire, "Crusading They Went," 36.
[6] Elspeth Reeve, "Racism for Dollars."  Published in The Atlantic, October 30, 2013.
[7] John Derbyshire, "Crusading They Went," 36.
[8] Ibid 37.

waned, reared its ugly head once more in popular media and discourse of the 2000s.

Muslim- and Arab-Americans became targets in the immediate domestic backlash,[9]

facing violence or discrimination.  Museums and other cultural institutions were not

exempt from the ongoing dialogue; as Yuka Kadoi writes:

> In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks and during the rise of radical Islamic terrorism in the early 2000s, however, a number of cultural institutions worldwide, particularly those with the adjective 'Islamic' in their names, became engaged, willingly or unwillingly, in a growing sociological and historical debate about the function and meaning of the display of Islamic art.  The argument became increasingly common among cultural critics, sociologists, and politicians alike that both public and private museums should be designed to offer opportunities for wide public engagement with Islamic artifacts for a better understanding of Muslim cultural heritage.[10]

Museums including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art,

the Louvre, the British Museum, and the Pergamon Museum, among others, began to

rethink their collections.[11]  Some changes constituted a renaming of the spaces, while

other institutions opted for more sweeping reforms in practice, public programming, and

display.[12]

Despite this increased attention to the role of the museum in creating culturally

responsive exhibitions, many modern museums struggle to disconnect themselves from

their colonial past, seemingly continuing to repackage notions of difference that stretch

back to the Middle Ages.  Building upon the previous two chapters, which demonstrated

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[9] See Debra Oswald, "Understanding Anti-Arab Sentiment,"; James J. Zogby, "Submission to The United States Commission on Civil Rights: Hate-Based Incidents September 11 – October 10, 200l."
[10] Yuka Kadoi, "Installing Islamic Art," 230.
[11] Nancy Demerdash-Fatemi, "Objects, Storytelling, Memory and Living Histories," 17-8.  In *Curating Islamic Art Worldwide*, ed. Jenny Norton-Wright.
[12] Vera Byer has discussed whether or not the renaming of gallery spaces or departments constitutes a substantive change, or whether it shrouds the history of the discipline from critique.  See Vera Byer, "Preliminary Thoughts on an Entangled Presentation of "Islamic Art,"" 95-8 in *Islamic Art and the Museum*, ed. Benoit Junod et al.

that medieval perceptions of the 'Other' existed as multivalent, nuanced relationships, this chapter seeks to tie the historiographical misconceptions of Islam and Christianity as antithetical to modern cultural institution's strategies of collection and display of Islamic art, problematizing two major trends within the field. The modern museum's place as a public institution provides an excellent forum to promote culturally-sensitive understanding through effective curatorial pedagogy, but without turning inward and critically unpacking the role and function of the modern museum, the solutions presented will only treat the symptoms of a broader historiographical process.

**The Modern Museum: Metaphors, Histories, and Visions**

*The Museum as a Metaphorical Journey*

While it remains no mystery that the objects that line museum spaces in the so-called "West" often travelled long distances to arrive in the care of the museum collection, I want to extend this metaphor of travel or the museum as a journey a bit further. The museum visitor may officially begin their trip to the institution on arrival, but their own paths to the museum may constitute walking only a few city blocks, or include an international flight. Regardless of their manner of travel to the institution, upon approach to a major museum like the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the British Museum, the Pergamon Museum, or another similar institution, the visitor will be greeted by monumental architecture, often with the pure white columns characteristic of their Neoclassical facades. Entering the Philadelphia Museum of Art through the main entrance requires the visitor to climb

seventy-two stairs made famous by the *Rocky* films, before approaching the upper

courtyard and fountain immediately before the collonaded entryway. Even museums like

the Getty, whose architecture diverges from the ubiquitous Neoclassical facades, still opts

for the pure white color through their use of travertine, quarried in large quantities in Italy

before being sent to Los Angeles.[13] The typified appearance of many of these museum

institutions, apart from speaking to their historical origins, bring embedded notions of

power, authority, timelessness, and knowledge, even if unconsciously.

After entering the museum, perhaps for free or a small fee, the visitor now has

access to the permanent collections on display within the gallery spaces. As they move

through the different rooms or halls, it is as if the visitor is moving through historical

time and space. For example, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a visitor traversing

through the first-floor gallery of the arts of ancient Greece and Rome can simply pass

through a threshold and find themselves surrounded by arts from Africa, Oceania, and the

Americas in a singular room. In other words, the movement of the visitor through the

gallery space, including their gaze upon the objects from room to room, could serve as a

metaphorical, intellectual journey to ancient Greece or Rome, Oceania, or Africa, without

ever having to leave New York City.

Of course, this journey is merely an illusion. Divorced from their archaeological

or cultural contexts, the objects themselves represent a carefully constructed assembly

produced by the curatorial and exhibitions team. The objects' journeys to their present

position in the museum institution, a journey often begun through looting or colonization,

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[13] The cost of such a project, as one might imagine, would be astronomical. See Eric Doehne, "Travertine Stone at the Getty Center."

remain obscured. The placards and wall text may appear as neutral descriptors of objects, just as the selection of objects may seem arbitrary. The reality, however, is that each gallery represents a carefully contrived, edited, and formulated narrative by museum staff; this voyage remains superficial, with the visitor not travelling "Africa" or "Oceania" or "Rome," but the institution's attempted reconstruction of a far-removed geography or temporality.

*Islamic Art in the Museum*

Historically, museums have struggled to disengage their space from Orientalist practices, replicating 19th-century ideas of alterity and continuity; instead of demonstrating the diversity of cultural and religious identities within the Islamic world or providing effective cultural education, the *Wunderkammer* framework of early modern collecting continues with the fetishization of these "exotic" materials.[14] As explained in the critical 2012 book *Islamic Art and the Museum*:

> Notions and ideas of "art and beauty" in museums, too, generally do not derive from the cultural background of the objects on display, but rather from the framework of European academic and museum traditions that were embedded in a particular narrative of historical progress that located the birth of civilisation in the East but its end and future in Europe. These traditions are reflected in the meta-structure of collections and displays, based on provenance of archaeological sites or related to themes of production, dynasty or material properties.[15]

In this way, the perspectives and often baseless opinions of Franks of the Middle Ages continued to echo and reverberate, ignoring the intertwined stories, connected histories, and subjectivities of identity and culture in favor of more hostile narratives. The

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[14] The British Museum actually describes the function of the modern museum as an extension of the *Wunderkammer*. See "Cabinet of Curiosities." The British Library.

[15] Benoit Junod, Georges Khalil, Stefan Weber, Gerhard Wolf, "Islamic Art and the Museum," 13. In *Islamic Art and the Museum*, ed. Benoit Junod et al.

codification of polarity and antipathy between Crusaders and Saracens by the 13th and

14th centuries, illustrated by the images of chapter one, proved salient throughout the

centuries, and by the advent of the Age of Exploration, these constructs were bound to

material interests.[16] Even the term "Islamic art," utilized frequently by museums to

categorize works, generalizes and essentializes objects, placing them within the context

of religion first with no nod to the specific geographic, temporal, and political landscapes

from which they emerged. The oft-called Islamic world spans centuries and continents,

and the term does not account for the present global nature of Muslim identity. Islamic

art remains inherently a construction, with any given museum department spanning from

the 7th century to the 20th century, with provenance from North and West Africa to West

Asia, Central Asia, Anatolia, Southeast Asia, to Spain under caliphate control, often

giving little credence to how "Islamic" the works truly are.[17]

That said, in recent years, a "plurality of visions"[18] has emerged for installing and

displaying arts of the Islamic world, attempting to accommodate the increased interest

and provide meaning for museum visitors of all backgrounds. In the words of Yuka

Kadoi, these conversations and reevaluations of museum practice "provide a space for

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[16] The tie between imperialist interests in the Muslim world of North Africa and West Asia and the art world is perhaps most strongly rendered in widely collected and exhibited Orientalist paintings of the 19th century. See Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient" (1989). For further evidence of the longevity of constructions of Christian-Muslim antipathy and incompatibility, see also Eman El-Shenawi, "Anti-Islam Course" for reporting on the US military course that taught "they [Muslims] hate everything you stand for and will never coexist with you."

[17] See Kirsten Scheid, "The Study of Islamic Art at a Crossroads, and Humanity as a Whole," 92-3. In *Islamic Art and the Museum*, ed. Benoit Junod et al.

[18] Benoit Junod, Georges Khalil, Stefan Weber, Gerhard Wolf, "Islamic Art and the Museum," 16. In *Islamic Art and the Museum*, ed. Benoit Junod et al.

forward-looking, positive dialogue, rather than a lamentation for the events of the past."[19]

The fine line persists, however, between further obscuring of the museum's colonial past

and looking towards a more culturally empathetic future, especially in an age of

continued exacerbations of religious and racial tensions through rising Islamophobia both

in the United States and abroad, and two main strategies have prevailed in museum

spaces.

The first, and more classic, approach consists of emphasizing visual beauty for the

sake of beauty alone; of course, this approach has fallen out of favor through its

connection to fetisization of aesthetics common in early modern collecting, where the

museum functions as a *Wunderkammer* of earthly delights with little contextualizing

historical material.  Exemplifying Orientalist practices in its predilection for luxury

goods, and lack of meaningful understanding of cultural heritage, artistic production,

patronage, or style, museums that engage with aesthetics alone demonstrate to the visitor

that the arts of the Islamic world, much like the lands from which they originate, are

mysterious, unknowable, or categorizable only by medium or dynasty.  This approach

can be seen in the 1910 exhibition *Masterpieces of Muhammedan Art* in Berlin, which

tried to use surface-level aesthetics, with an emphasis on ornament, to elevate Islamic art

to the status of "masterpiece."[20]

The Art Institute of Chicago comes to mind as an unfortunate example of an

institution still replicating this traditional *Wunderkammer* format.  My visit to their

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[19] Yuka Kadoi, "Installing Islamic Art," 233.
[20] Eva Troelenberg, "Islamic Art and the Invention of the "Masterpiece,"" 183-5.  In *Islamic Art and the Museum*, ed. Benoit Junod et al.

Islamic art galleries in October of 2019 fell well short of expectations for a museum of

such caliber.  Echoing many of my own thoughts several years prior, Elliot Reichart

wrote of the gallery in 2016:

> These galleries, in the basement floor of the museum and accessible only by a pair
> of out-of-the-way staircases, are notoriously difficult to find. Down there, a single
> room exhibits a meager array of decorative tiles, wood carvings, ceramics, metals,
> ivories and illuminated manuscripts. The didactics around the galleries are
> puzzling and evince a Wikipedia-level knowledge of Islam and the Islamic world.
> Faith is presented as monolithic and inflexible, revolving around strict observance
> of prayer, ritual and belief. There is apparently no present to Islam, only its
> storied past. A label headlined "Islamic Art" repeats the fiction that Islam
> eschews figuration, despite the several Persian and Mughal figurative illustrations
> in the room. The introductory wall text refers to multiple galleries, presumably
> including the two rooms that are currently empty and closed off, and mentions
> graphic illustrations that are apparently missing from the walls. Despite itself, the
> Islamic galleries tell an accurate story of how this art has been and will likely
> continue to be regarded at the Art Institute.[21]

Reichart hits precisely why poorly curated collections like this cause harm; it places the

term "Islamic" as a universalizing marker of style, time, geography, and identity.  The

style is always non-figural and beyond description, the time distantly historical, the

geography imprecise, and the identity of "Muslim" all-encompassing.[22]  Perpetuating

those narratives renders Islam and Islamic culture as static and monolithic, instead of "a

constantly changing network of social experience and knowledge"[23] that continues to the

present moment.  The galleries appear to have remained stagnant since 2016, as

Reichart's descriptions closely mirror my own observations, and are marked by a

complete disengagement from present and past politics.

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[21] Elliot Reichart, "Eye Exam" (2016).
[22] Elias Muhanna has written about how even in the Middle Ages, "Muslim" served as only one facet of an individual's identity, using the case of Ibn Battuta's layered self-fashioning.  See Elias Muhanna, "Reinventing Islam."
[23] Stefan Weber, "Pulling the Past into the Present," 244.

Other museums have sought a new method to connect their audiences to Islamic

materials, especially in countries where Muslims constitute a minority, opting for

practices that seek to build more cultural bridges and find connected histories.  Stefan

Weber, Director of the Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon in Berlin, discusses at

length the Pergamon's attempts to make historical materials relevant and meaningful for

contemporary audiences; he argues that cultural identity remains a crucial factor in

developing impactful exhibitions and permanent gallery displays.  As Weber writes, ideas

of the 'Other' serve a crucial function in forming cultural identity:

> In both individual development and collective self-definition, 'Self' is closely
> linked to experience and to some degree even to the construction of 'Other'. [...]
> Identifying the right type of content to promote ideas about open cultural views
> and interlinked cultural landscapes is not difficult.  The 'Other' is no longer
> foreign to a person who expe- riences the 'Other' as a constitutive element of his
> or her own cultural identity – a rewarding task for any educational programme.[24]

In other words, if the museum intends to take the role of cultural educator, the institution

must address the concept of identity for its visitors, placing the 'Other' and the 'Self' in

dialogue with each other.  Centering his arguments on the German public, Weber argues

that presenting commonalities and interconnectedness between both the historic and

present Middle East and Europe provides visitors with personal connections that allow

them to see more of the 'Self' in others of varying cultural heritage.  The Pergamon's

shift in focus to transregional connections and "religious and ethnic pluralism of the

Middle East" under Weber's leadership proved successful, with partnerships with the

Institute of Islamic Theology of the University of Osnabrück, a marked increase in

attendance by museum visitors, and the acclaim of the program *Muktaka: Museum as*

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[24] Stefan Weber, "Pulling the Past into the Present," 241-8.

*Meeting Point - Refugees as Guides in Berlin Museums,* welcoming refugees from Syria and Iraq to serve as tour guides of the collections.[25]

Crossing the metaphorical pond, conversations on how to best build more relational exhibitions continue. Nancy Demerdash-Fatemi's article "Objects, Storytelling, Memory and Living History" centers on the idea of the curator's duty to foster "cultural empathy," through their pivotal role in creating public meeting spaces for humanistic discourse. Demerdash-Fatemi cites Elif Gokcigdem, author of *Fostering Empathy through Museums*, and her arguments on cultural empathy as growing out of a sense of affinity or similarity; in other words, museum educators and curators should "realise the potential of experiential learning"[26] in fostering feelings of collectivity, solidarity, or even kinship by driving a more personal encounter with objects, curatorial themes, or persons of different backgrounds. Demerdash-Fatemi also highlights the work of curator Amy Landau in her 2015-2016 exhibition *Pearls on a String: Artists, Patrons, and Poets at the Great Islamic Courts*, who sought to build personal, humanistic connection through a biographical approach so "viewers might forge alliances with these non-fictional characters, even unwittingly."[27] The success and acclaim of these shows speaks to the impact of interpersonal relationships on museum visitors at large.

*The Problem of Comparison*

In the views of Weber, Landau, and Gokcigdem alike, the goal appears to be a promotion of cross-cultural understanding. This comparative approach, however,

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[25] Stefan Weber, "Pulling the Past into the Present," 244, 252-8.
[26] Nancy Demerdash-Fatemi, "Objects, Storytelling, Memory and Living Histories," 20. In *Curating Islamic Art Worldwide*, ed. Jenny Norton-Wright.
[27] Ibid 21-2.

wherein curators attempt to present Islamic materials to Western audiences by connecting

them to Western cultural traditions, remains fraught.  Of course, this assumes that the

majority of the audience will be experiencing the collection as 'Other,' potentially

isolating Muslim communities.  As much as this method may be useful in making

unfamiliar materials more digestible for a Christian visitor, a comparative approach

makes little effort to subvert eurocentrism or Christian hegemony in Europe.  Oleg

Grabar problematized this sort of perspective in the late 1980s, writing:

> It is no longer enough to say that mosques are comparable to cathedrals or that
> there is a Chinese or Japanese mannerism. What is required of the historian is to
> discover the national or ethnic culturally discrete meanings of a certain kind of
> visual language, rather than to integrate those meanings within an allegedly
> universal system because such a system is often seen as being culturally
> restricted, if not, in fact, a tool of cultural imperialism. The history of art required
> by new countries in old worlds is not one that relates them to the west but one that
> proclaims their differences.[28]

I question the efficacy of "empathy" as a meter for success in this respect;[29] instead of

putting the onus on museum institutions, and their role in broader systems and ongoing

historical processes, it assumes that the individual museum-goer, on their metaphorical

intellectual journey to places and peoples far removed from their present locality, can

unravel the complexities of the past through a more sympathetic viewpoint.  Iraqi

refugees or German citizens of Iraqi descent may find spaces to expand their identity and

"reappropriate cultural artefacts" in Berlin, but the *Muktaka* program fails to address how

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[28] See Oleg Grabar, "On the Universality of the History of Art" (1982).

[29] This perspective is informed by the horrors of the Christchurch mosque shooting in New Zealand; the shooter, who I will not name here, travelled extensively to predominantly Muslim countries in the years leading up to the atrocity.  He was exposed to different perspectives, people, cultures, languages, and yes, art, and still committed a heinous act.  While we should not generalize based on the acts of one individual, the violence enacted by the shooter cannot be chalked up to a lack of exposure.  It is for this reason that I worry that focusing on empathy through commonality addresses merely a symptom, and not a cause, of increasing polarization and violence.

priceless pieces of that cultural heritage, like the Ishtar Gate, found a home in Germany,

or why the program can only offer "symbolic ownership" of these works.[30]  Furthermore,

following Gokcigdem's description of "empathy," wherein individuals empathy is

reserved for those that they perceive as like them, these methodologies seek to place

Islam within a framework of comparison, again privileging Western audiences; as Said

would say, this strategy makes "the East known, and therefore less fearsome,"[31] without

addressing the root cause of Orientalist beliefs.

Potentially a more successful strategy is facing medieval Frankish ignorance head

on.  The Getty Museum's medieval and Renaissance curators, Kristen Collins and Bryan

Keene, curated the 2017 exhibtion *Outcasts: Prejudice and Persecution in the Medieval*

*World*, which sought to uncover and discuss the "Other" in medieval manuscripts of the

Getty's collection.  Driven by the call "to tell the truth about art,"[32] the exhibition

covered a variety of marginalized identities, including works displaying anti-semitism

and Islamophobia, ableism and classism, misogyny, homophobia, and racism, to

demonstrate that "the vivid images and pervasive subtexts in illuminated mansucripts can

serve as stark reminders of the power of rhetoric and the danger of prejudice."[33]  Reviews

of the exhibition extolled the small selection of manuscripts and detailed contextualizing

texts allowed visitors to effectively engage with complex concepts of power, oppression,

and identity.  Patricia Blessing writes that a "less successful" feature of the exhibition

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[30] Stefan Weber, "Pulling the Past into the Present," 256.
[31] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 60.
[32] Kristen Collins and Bryan C. Keene, "Dialogue" (2017).
[33] This quote comes from the wall text of the exhibition, which can be found online in the exhibition resources section.

was the inclusion of two 17th-century manuscripts from Peru and Safavid Iran "that [were] presented as a nod to areas and periods beyond medieval Europe."[34]  While it is important to note that the "Medieval World" includes geographies outside of mainland Europe, the imbalance of contextualization causes the includion of the two non-European works to fall flat.

**Conclusion: Looking Forward**

As museums begin the long awaited process of restructuring and reforming their spaces, continuing critical discourse and including global perspectives allows institutions to further hone a modern practice that captures the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of the world we live in.  Edward Said wrote the following in the introduction of *Orientalism*:

> Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.[35]

If we were to envision the "corporate institution" in this instance as the modern museum, a given institution's collections and displays of Islamic art reveal how that institution "deals with" the Orient.  Historically, the museum functioned as an arm of Orientalism, categorizing, describing, and serving as a gatekeeper for knowledge of the "exotic" lands to the East.  As the purported neutral arbiter of knowledge, a visitor to a museum moves through gallery space that seemingly transcends contexts of geography and time; the

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[34] Patricia Blessing, review, "Outcasts" (2018).
[35] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 2-3.

illusion of objectivity pervades the institution, making it difficult to unravel fact from historiographical fictions.  Trends in the museum sphere lean towards either a continuation of times past, elevating aesthetics over all, or seeking spaces that emphasize fostering cultural empathy, a noble and important goal.

The current state of our world has tasked museum professionals and scholars with the duty of sifting through hundreds of years of misinformation and Islamophobic propaganda to serve their visitors in creating accurate, effective, and culturally sensitive displays.  It is a monumental task, but not insurmountable.  Much like the writers and travellers of the Middle Ages, scholars today search for new meanings, new connections, and new ways of seeing the past.  Unlike our medieval counterparts, however, we have the privilege of accessing a vast, rich historical record that shares successes and failures, share moments of humanity and moments of sorrow, and can illuminate a path forward if approached critically.  Many scholars and museum professionals have already begun the incredibly important undertaking, laying the groundwork for future endeavors in the field.  As new conversations continue, and new ideas are implemented and evaluated, perhaps better collections and exhibitions are on the horizon.

The ideas of Middle Ages, as well as modern perceptions of the period, continue to echo and reverberate in the present day. Kathleen Davis's 2000 article "Time Behind the Veil" describes a Diane Sawyer special on 20/20 from the autumn of 1996, where Sawyer travels to Afghanistan. Embedded in the  descriptions of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan are allusions to a medieval past, where Sawyer describes the journey into Afghanistan as "an hour and a half back into the mountains" and "several hundred years in time"; as Davis writes, "medievalists will be unsurprised by this commonplace, apparently perfunctory association of the Middle Ages with anything labelled inhumane."[1]

The reality, of course, remains more complicated. Frankish Crusaders simultaneously sought to codify notions of alterity for "Saracens," often to serve political or religious aims, while also applying those stereotypes sparingly. Figures like Firuz, or the captive family of Kilij Arslan from Chapter 1, serve as examples of places where the Saracenity of individuals can become diluted through their willingness to cave to Crusader demands. The medieval Frank's viewpoints were very targeted, selective, but over the long extent of history, Orientalist ideas have become more and more generalized. When political figures, commentators, or institutions today allude to the past, they typically mean the reformed, disconnected version of that past, propagated in the early modern period through the 19th century. For the modern museum, the product

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[1] Kathleen Davis, "Time Behind the Veil," 106.

of early modern collecting and post-Enlightenment colonialism, objects that embody

these historical nuances often remain hidden, shrouded, or improperly contextualized.

The writings of early Arabic travellers and literary figures, like Ibn Jubayr and al-

Hariri of Chapter 2, also point to a more multivalent relationship. Encounters with the

"Other" could be tragic, full of grief and loss, like Abu Zayd's mourning of the loss of his

hometown. Other relationships could be more positive, mutually respectful and

beneficial. In a period of forming and reforming of identity, these travellers - whether

literary and imagined, or real - took tv o the road for a wide variety of reasons and had

multiplicitous experiences.

Reading stories of our collective, troubled pasts can be difficult; this thesis has

spent much time unravelling the more racist, Islamophobic dimensions of the Crusades of

the 11th through 14th centuries and present-day "Crusades" of foreign policy and

warfare. It is for that reason, however, that this work is important. The Middle Ages

offers moments of beauty, and of humanity, for those who look: images of Christian and

Muslim cameraderie playing chess in Al-Andalus, groundbreaking cartography from al-

Idrisi for Robert of Sicily, pilgrimages and other travels that intersect across the

Mediterranean world. For the modern medievalist or museum curator, there is so much

to gain by the difficult work of unravelling the past, laying out the shames and the

triumphs alike. Bringing new audiences and creating more impactful experiences for the

museum-goer - bringing visibility, inclusion, transparency - serves to challenge Christian

hegemony and eurocentrism that hides behind the Neoclassical facades. It provides the

opportunity to form new relationships, to debate new ideas or methods, and to appreciate cultural and religious diversity.

Each of the three chapters of this thesis opened with an image of the "Other," where the "Other" is absent visually: the Fall of Jerusalem sans enemy soldiers, Abu Zayd's impassioned speech about the "foes" who occupied his town, and George Bush as Crusader.  The "Other" exists in each of these scenes, but remains invisible to the viewer. Each subject also is far from home, whether on a pilgrimage or a warpath.  In some instances, this artistic choice to exclude the "Other" can serve a narrative purpose, while in others it can obscure and muddy the meaning, appealing to historical memory or charged ideologies of a given event.  Teasing out meanings, uncovering what lies hidden in visual culture, and bringing real and imagined scenes of alterity, barbarism, and benevolence into the light of scholarly scrutiny provides avenues for future scholarship that challenges the canon, moving towards an ever more accurate and evolving field.

Figure 1: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Francais 352.
Detail, Folio 62r.

Figure 2. Ampulla with Scenes of the Crucifixion and the Women at the Tomb.
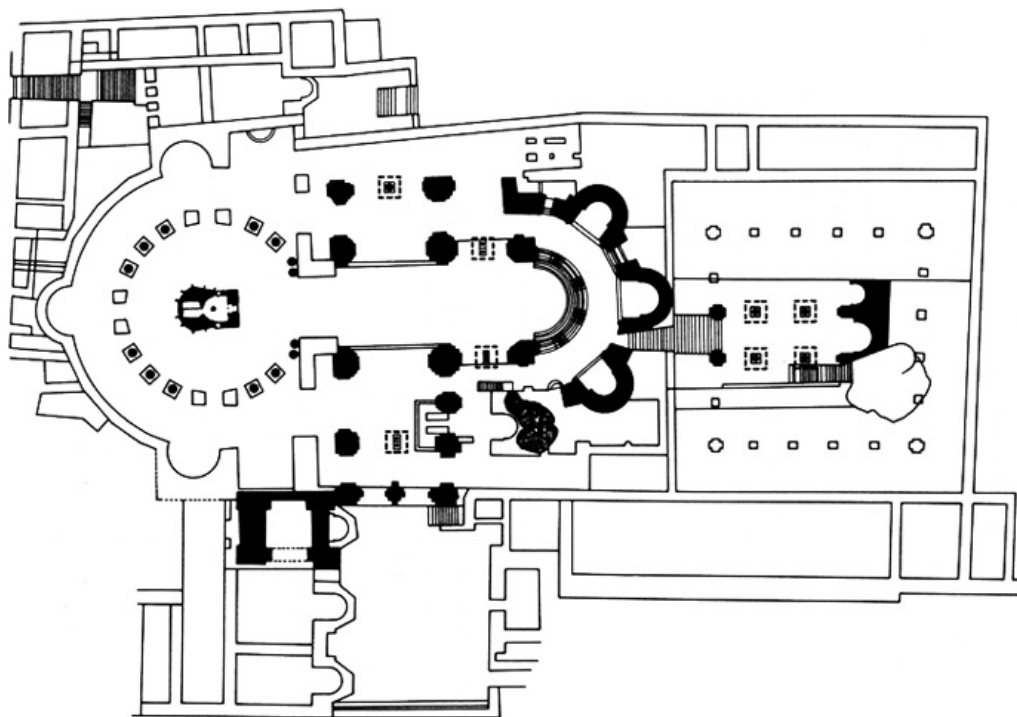Jerusalem, 6th-early 7th century. Lead metalwork. 4.6 cm in diameter.

Figure 3: Jerusalem, plan of Holy Sepulchre, after 12<sup>th</sup>-century expansions.



Figure 4: Jerusalem, historiated lintel from the south transept of the Holy Sepulchre, 12th century.

Figure 5: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 22495. Detail, Folio 19r.



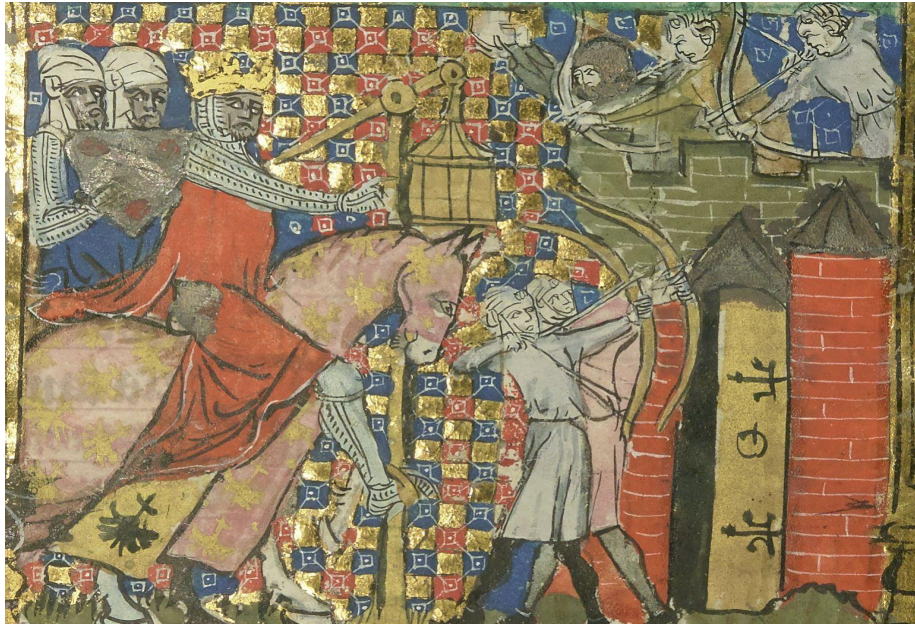Figure 6: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 22495. Detail 1, Folio 9r.

Figure 7: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 22495. Detail 2, Folio 9r.



Figure 8: London, British Library, Royal MS 16 G VI. Detail, Folio 155r.

Figure 9: London, British Library, Royal MS 16 G VI. Detail, Folio 442r.

Figure 10: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 352. Detail, Folio 28r.

Figure 11: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 352. Detail, Folio 42v.

Figure 12: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 352. Detail, Folio 49v.

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Figure 13: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 352. Detail, Folio 61r.
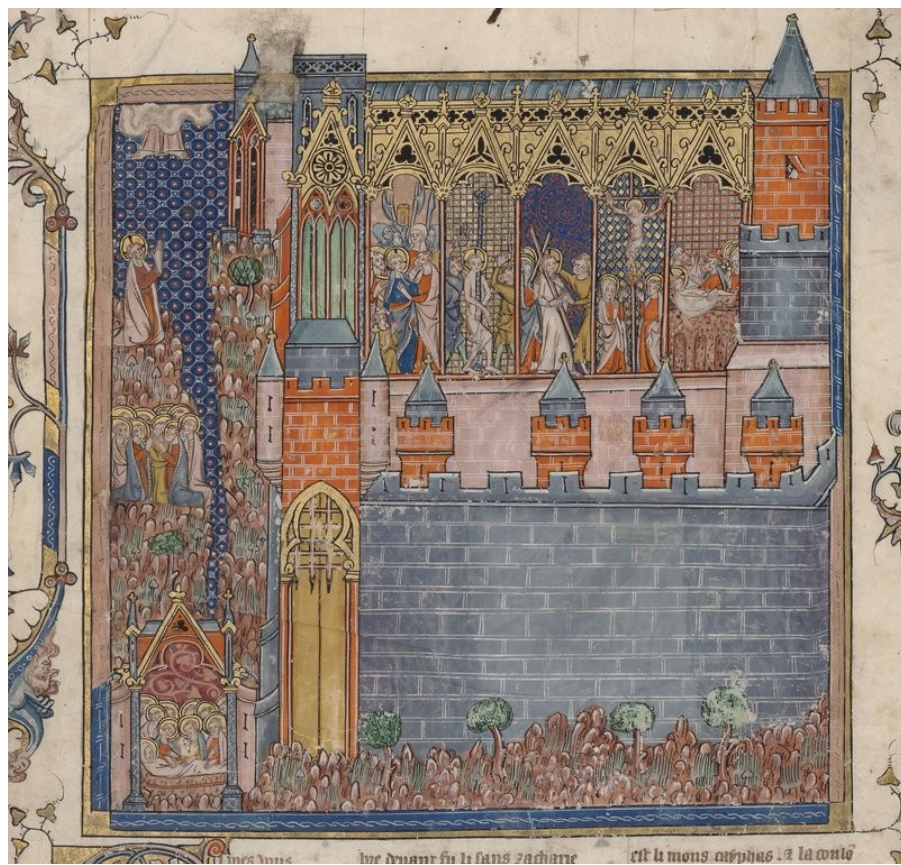
Figure 14: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 352. Detail, Folio 1r.

Figure 15: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 5847.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 38r, depicting the fourteenth *maqāma.*

Figure 16: Canteen. Ayyubid period, Mosul school.  Mid-13th century.  Brass, silver inlay.

Figure 17: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 2221.  Folio 31v-32r.

Figure 18: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 3929.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 2v, depicting the second *maqāma.*

Figure 19: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 5847. al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 5v, depicting the second *maqāma.*

Figure 20: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 5847.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 6v, depicting the second *maqāma.*

Figure 21: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 5847.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 33r, depicting the twelfth *maqāma.*

Figure 22: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 3929.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 34v, depicting the twelfth *maqāma*.



Figure 23: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 6094.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 106v, depicting the thirty-second *maqāma*.

Figure 24: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 6094.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 85r, depicting the thirty-second *maqāma*.



Figure 25: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 3929.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 41r, depicting the nineteenth *maqāma*.

Figure 26: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 5847.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 105r, depicting the thirty-fourth *maqāma*.

Figure 27: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 5847.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 26r, depicting the tenth *maqāma*.

Figure 28: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 6094.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat.* Folio 31r, depicting the tenth *maqāma*.

Figure 29: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Arabe 3929.
al-Hariri's *Maqamat*. Folio 151r, depicting the eighteenth *maqāma*.

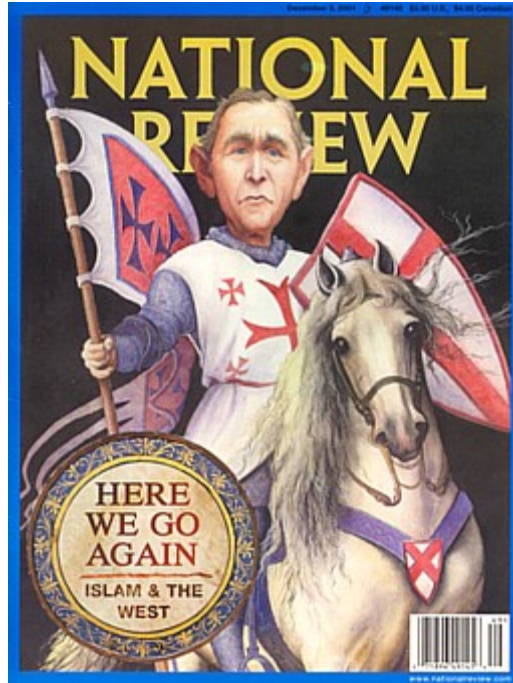Figure 30: *Libros de juegos d'Alphonse X le sage*, fol. 64r.

Figure 31: Cover of the *National Review*, 12/3/2001, Vol. 53 Issue 23.



Figure 32: *National Review*, 12/3/2001, Vol. 53 Issue 23. Page 35. Illustration by Roman Genn.

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**Biography**

Originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Catherine Cullen completed her MA in Art History through Tulane University's accelerated 4+1 Master's program in the spring of 2021, where she wrote her thesis, *Barbarism, Benevolence, and Alterity: Illuminating Christian-Muslim Relationships in the Medieval Levant and the Modern Museum.* Catherine previously received her BA in Art History and BA in Anthropology in May 2020, also from Tulane University.  In addition to a burgeoning interest in arts of the Islamic worlds, Catherine's research demonstrates an interest in the medieval Mediterranean, particularly issues of religion, race, pilgrimage, and travel writing.  Her other interests include Orientalism, museum practices of collection and display, and artistic encounters from across the globe.