

SARASINS AND FRANKS: PERCEPTIONS OF SELF AND THE OTHER IN 12TH-
15TH CENTURY LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

SARACINS AND FRANKS: Perceptions of Self and the Other in 12th-15th-Century Literature

“Sarasins and Franks” examines the ways in which European Christians and Mediterranean Muslims portrayed one another in purportedly learned works dealing with geography and ethnography, as well as in popular works of fiction and non-fiction. Using Edward Said’s concept of the Other, this dissertation explores the evolving ways in which Eastern and Western societies responded to one another, and attempts to understand the manner in which medieval Mediterranean Muslims and European Christians developed the idea of the Other in response to contact with a different culture, first in their learned communities, and then in subsequent popular works, arguing that each society developed a concept of the Other that they used seriously and imaginatively to represent one another.

Chapter One begins with an exploration of the European concept of the “*Sarasin*” from the Late Antique/Early Medieval period to the fourteenth century, with a particular focus on “scientific” texts, tracing the rise of the *Sarasin* from a peripheral figure to a cultural and religious threat to Christian Europe. Chapter Two then proceeds to a discussion of the representation of the *Sarasin* in popular Western European works of the time. The dissertation then turns to the Mediterranean Muslim construction of the “Frank,” or European Christian, beginning with a discussion of the Frank as he was imagined within

the Muslim learned community, examining the appearance and development of the Frank in the medieval Muslim consciousness from the 10th-14th centuries, as Christian Europeans moved from the margins of the Muslim world-view to a more prominent position. Finally, the dissertation addresses the Muslim experience of the Crusades, and subsequently, their experience with Western European Crusaders.

This dissertation explores the ways in which one society responds to another which is culturally and religiously different, in the learned and popular circles, using the medieval European Christian and Mediterranean Muslim worlds as examples. It argues for the need to incorporate diverse voices into discussions of identity, advocates for equal representation of the “Othered” in such discussions, and recognizes that the answers to questions of otherness are ultimately dependent upon various and multiply dialogic precepts of culture, ethnicity and religion.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Mary Neil Bennett, my grandfathers Walter Bennett and Harry Dinkins, and my great uncle Samuel Johnson. It is also dedicated to memory of those countless generations of family members whose names have been lost, who made the best of their horrific situation and sacrificed their present to lay the foundations for a better future for their descendants. Their names are not with us, but their legacy lives on.

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Although there is but one name listed as the author of this dissertation, a debt of gratitude is owed to a number of individuals for its completion. Special thanks are owed to my mother, who taught me the value of silent strength and courage through persistence. Likewise, thanks are due to my father, who taught me the meaning of pride, the value of work, and the mark of intelligence and wisdom. My brother, who gave me confidence and encouraged me to set my sights on the loftiest goals, and my sister, who has always been a voice of reason and a calm port in the storm that is graduate school, also have my undying thanks. I also owe thanks to my grandmother, who has always offered me support, encouragement, and displayed an unwavering confidence in my abilities. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express my gratitude to the Author of all works, the Beneficent, the Merciful, He to Whom all affairs return. I have always remembered Him in times of distress; it is only fitting that I acknowledge Him during these moments of my greatest academic accomplishment.

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Introduction

On Tuesday, November 27, 1095, Pope Urban II stood in front of an assembled crowd in a field just outside of the city of Clermont¹ to voice his concerns over the condition of their Christian brethren in the East. His words catalogued the horrors experienced by the Christians of the East at the hands of their Muslim rulers:

From the confines of Jerusalem and the city of Constantinople a horrible tale has gone forth and very frequently has been brought to our ears, namely, that a race from the kingdom of the Persians, an accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God, a generation forsooth which has not directed its heart and has not entrusted its spirit to God, has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire; it has led away a part of the captives into its own country, and a part it has destroyed by cruel tortures; it has either entirely destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of its own religion. They destroy the altars, after having defiled them with their own uncleanness. They circumcise the Christians, and the blood of the circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font. When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels, and dragging forth the extremity of the intestines, bind it to a stake; then with flogging they lead the victim around until the viscera having gushed forth the victim falls prostrate upon the ground. Others they bind to a post and pierce with arrows. Others they compel to extend their necks and then, attacking them with naked swords attempt to cut through the neck with a single blow. What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? To speak of it is worse than to be silent. The kingdom of the Greeks is now dismembered by them and deprived of territory so vast in extent that it cannot be traversed in a march of two months. On whom therefore is the labor of avenging these wrongs and of recovering this territory incumbent, if not upon you?²

This litany of horrors, which was followed by a call-to-arms that explained the religious imperative and outlined the religious and worldly inducements for those who undertook the task of liberating the Holy Land, set into motion what was perhaps the most spectacular phenomenon of the Medieval Period: the Crusades.

The immediate aftermath of this call-to-arms was the First Crusade, which began in 1096, and the accompanying spectacular successes which resulted in the establishment of the Crusader States of Antioch, Edessa, Tripoli and Jerusalem. However, even as the

Latin West basked in the success of this enterprise, the foundations of a Muslim resistance were being laid, a resistance which over the next two centuries would necessitate additional crusading ventures. Thus, the Muslim recovery of Edessa in 1144 led to the disastrous Second Crusade of 1148, which ended in an unsuccessful siege of Damascus. Over the next three decades, the power relationship between the Christian European Crusader States and the neighboring Muslim states would change drastically, as first Nūr al-Dīn and then Salāh al-Dīn unified the Muslim petty kingdoms of the region under a single sovereign and began the inexorable re-absorption of the Crusader States into the Muslim Eastern Mediterranean, a process which was made obvious to all in the recovery of Jerusalem by Salāh al-Dīn in 1187, which led to the Third Crusade.

The Third Crusade, which featured both the renowned English king Richard I and Salāh al-Dīn, failed to achieve its articulated goal of retaking Jerusalem; however, it was successful in turning back the Muslim advance, ultimately granting the Crusader States a century's reprieve. Moreover, it marked the last time that a Crusade would end to the advantage of the Latin West. The Fourth Crusade was misdirected from the outset, and resulted in the Sack of Constantinople, the capital of the most powerful Christian state in the Eastern Mediterranean, in 1204 at the hands of the Crusaders. Subsequent encounters, particularly the disastrous Fifth Crusade of 1249, only served to highlight the pronounced Muslim advantage, and under Baybars and the successive rulers of the Mamlūk Sultanate of Egypt, the re-conquest of the Crusader States was resumed with increased vigor. The Muslim recovery of the Levant in its entirety was accomplished with the Fall of Acre in May 28, 1291,³ and by the end of the thirteenth century the only Crusader stronghold in the region was the island of Cyprus.

The cultural, economic, military and political dimensions of the Crusading Era and their influence on the societies of Western Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean both during the two centuries of the Crusades (1096-1291) and in the centuries that followed is attested to in the literature – fiction and non-fiction – that was produced during, and more commonly in the years and centuries that followed, the end of the Crusades. On both sides, the accounts of the Crusades and of distinguished individual leaders provided historical records of the military, political, and at times cultural and social, reality in the Levant, notwithstanding the instances of partisanship and creative license on the parts of both Muslim and Christian writers. In the area of fiction, a new group of warrior-heroes entered into the popular imagination, and into works of popular fiction in Western Europe and in the Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, the Crusades provided the reading public with new enemies: Saracens and Turks for Christian Europeans and Franks for Muslims of the Eastern Mediterranean. The historical accounts of each respective group's encounter with a foreign "Other" nourished and reinforced the image of this menace as it was depicted in works of popular fiction, and the works themselves implied that their portrayal of this "Other" was based on verifiable historical fact. In this way, both popular fiction and historical works were in a constant conversation.

However, while the Crusades caused scholars and secular writers alike in both the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Europe to reassess their perceptions of their counterparts across the Mediterranean, these writers already had at their disposal information that enabled them to situate their adversaries within the greater context of the known world. While this information, much of which was directly or indirectly

attributable to classical authors, was deficient in many ways, it was sufficient to provide both the Eastern Mediterranean Muslims and European Christians with a frame of reference through which to apprehend a culturally, racially and religiously dissimilar group, and in a manner that privileged the ethno-centric worldview which was prevalent among both groups. This information, particularly from the disciplines of geography and ethnography, lay at the foundation of each respective group's worldview, and informed the ways in which they perceived and responded to difference in culture, race and religion. Significantly, these perceptions of difference would influence the ways in which the Foreign, whether Muslim or Christian, was approached and discussed in scientific works of geography and ethnography, historical accounts of the Crusades, and works of fiction, during the era of the Crusades and for the remainder of the medieval period.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the ways in which both Western European and Muslim writers portrayed their counterparts, during the period of the Crusades in purportedly learned works of history, ethnography and geography, as well as in works of fiction. Its focus will be two-fold: it will examine the construction of an image of the Other both of Muslims in the Eastern Mediterranean and of Christians in Western Europe in the literature of each side, particularly in the works produced in the centuries preceding the Crusades; and it will explore the ways in which both Muslim and Western European writers depicted the Enemy in historical accounts of the Crusades and, in the case of the Western writers, in works of popular fiction as well. For the purposes of this dissertation the focus will be on (i) Western European accounts of the Third Crusade; (ii) Muslim accounts of the Third Crusade, as well as vignettes of life in the Levant during the twelfth century; and (iii) in Western popular fiction, works produced between

the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries in which “Muslim” characters figure prominently in the texts. The objective of this endeavor is to trace the evolution of the image of the Muslim in medieval Western Europe and the Western European in the medieval Muslim world, first to understand the construct in each of the respective scholarly communities, and then to analyze the ways in which this conception both informs subsequent works of non-fiction and fiction (in the Western European context) in which either this Muslim or Christian Other plays a prominent role. As such, the historical accounts of the Crusades on both sides and the medieval romances which were enormously popular in Western Europe are most appropriate for the task at hand.

To an extent, much of the discussion of the representation of the foreign, or Other, particularly the depiction of the Muslim in Western texts, shows what Edward Said identified as the discourse about the Other in his groundbreaking work *Orientalism*.⁴ In it, Said argues that the Western construction of what is known as the Middle East is a concept that is wholly disconnected from both the historical and contemporary Middle East; it is rather an amalgamation of ideas, stereotypes and theories originating in the West that have evolved into a discourse that is both self-referential and self-perpetuating. As such, the literature of the past concerning the Middle East, both fiction and non-fiction, is informed by and, both implicitly and explicitly, reaffirms this pre-existing Western construct of the Orient, which is not reliant upon factual support as proof of its validity. Rather, it is the work of the individual writer that must conform to a Western concept of the region, a concept not only divorced from the Middle East as it actually is, but is for its audience more relevant than either the area itself or any attempt to provide a

realistic representation of it. In explaining his perception of Orientalism as a discipline in the West, Said writes:

...the essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and praxis (from which present-day Orientalism derives) can be understood, not as a sudden access of objective knowledge about the Orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redispersed, and reformed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian supernaturalism. In the form of new texts, the East was accommodated to these structures.⁵

Due to the self-affirming, self-referential nature of the Orientalist construct of the East, and in particular the Eastern Mediterranean, the language of what Said would designate as an Orientalist text does not elicit images of the East as it exists in fact, nor is this an expectation for the audience of such a text.⁶ While the type of Orientalism that Said describes is largely a product of the Western colonial expansion of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he traces the formation of the concept as far back as the conflict between the ancient Greeks and Persians,⁷ and identifies the medieval period as one in which significant contributions were made to the construct, which is, in its present form, largely informed by and indebted to the medieval European experience.⁸

In his conception and critique of Orientalism, Said is indebted to Michel Foucault for his works on cultural systems, in particular *The Archeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*, for his analysis of the relationship between knowledge and power.⁹ This is important to note, not only for the information it conveys concerning part of Said's theoretical basis for his critique of Orientalism, but also it is somewhat indicative of his historical perspective. Namely, Said is writing from the perspective of a victim of the colonial experience, and presenting an image of an East-West dialectic in which the relationship is one of aggressor and victim, in which the East is always presumed to be in a subordinate position. As such, Said's critique is invaluable to the project at hand, but is also somewhat limited by its historical perspective, which

presupposes European hegemony as a result of economic, military and political dominance. This is not consonant with the historical situation throughout much of the Middle Ages. In a manner of speaking, Said's concept of a Western construct of the Orient needs to be applied in a similar manner to the medieval Muslim world in order to trace the formation of an Eastern Mediterranean Muslim construct of Western Europe at a time in which the Muslim world occupied a position of advantage over its Western counterpart. While this dissertation is not intended to address this need in a comprehensive manner, it speaks to certain aspects of the evolution of such a construct of the Occident among Muslim writers in the centuries leading up to and including the Crusades.

Another concept that is central to the theory of an existing Orientalist discourse is that of the previously mentioned idea of the "Other." The Other is a signification that serves to not only identify difference, but more importantly, to aid in the formation of an identity of the Self through opposition to the Foreign, or Other. In his explanation of the concept of the Other as it applies to individual cultural entities, Lawrence Cahoon writes:

What appear to be cultural units – human beings, words, meanings, ideas, philosophical systems, social organizations – are maintained in their apparent unity only through an active process of exclusion, opposition, and hierarchization. Other phenomena or units must be represented as foreign or "other" through representing a hierarchical dualism in which the unit is "privileged" or favored, and the other is devalued in some way.¹⁰

The Other as a concept is a key component in discourses of race and gender, which become the subjects of social constructions, particularly in regard to their use as means by which the dominant cultural entity can control or suppress other competing cultural entities. In the context of *Orientalism*, the Orient is the Other, circumscribed through the static parameters established by Western writers as a component of its subjugation by the

West. For the purposes of this dissertation, the concept of the Other is equally applicable as a construct to the medieval Muslim world of the Eastern Mediterranean, as the process of identity formation through opposition and exclusion resonates with the way in which it formed its own identity through opposition to the “Other” culture. Moreover, despite the increased level of interaction between the indigenous Muslims and Western European Christians, particularly in and around the border territories, and later in the Levant, such interaction did not influence the way in which either Mediterranean Muslim or European Christian writers portrayed the “Other” in their works. As such, the Other as a construct was both available to and practical for them as a means of defining and confining their counterparts on the other side of the ethnic/racial and religious divide. This concept of the Other as a key feature of the discourse in both Western Europe and the Muslim world relative to the foreign entities to the East and West, respectively, is an important component of the theoretical foundation of each of the chapters of this dissertation.

The focus of the first chapter of the dissertation will be on the Western European conception of the Eastern Mediterranean Muslim Other in the centuries leading up to the onset of the Crusades, the period of the Crusades itself, and in the wake of the Crusades, and concludes with *Mandeville’s Travels*. This particular Western European conception is not that of the caricatures of Muslims and Islam found in many of the popular romances of the period (caricatures which will be the focus of the second chapter); rather, the conception in question was the product of the widely-held conceptions about world geography, conceptions which were perceived as having a firm scientific basis. Thus the chapter will explore a shared Western European worldview, and in particular ideas concerning Western Europe’s place in the larger context of the world and its relationship

to other civilizations and peoples; the “characteristics” of these racial groups, and their relationship (if any) to the peoples of Western Europe, focusing on the Muslims of the Eastern Mediterranean. The chapter will also explore the ways in which the Muslim presence was problematic for Western Europeans’ view of their own history and culture, because that presence challenged a narrative of Christian, Western expansion and primacy. Western writers had to respond to this dilemma, even before the Crusades took place.

In exploring the Western European notion of the Muslim Other, particular attention will be paid to foundational works such as the seventh-century Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*, which presented a perspective that was based in large part on Classical and Late Antique writers, and which continued to influence medieval European worldview and to inform the Western perception of other racial groups, their genealogies and “characteristics” to a considerable extent.¹¹ Western travel narratives, particularly the text *Mandeville’s Travels*, are also of interest, specifically in their representations of Muslim cultural, racial and religious difference from Western European, Christian norms and society. Finally, while religious difference will not be a primary concern of this or any of the other chapters of the dissertation, the writings of Peter of Cluny (also known as Peter the Venerable) will be examined for their emphasis on the idea of the religious aspect of Muslim Otherness, and for what this point of view contributes to the general concept of the Eastern, Muslim Other. Although it is often difficult to consider medieval conceptions of race and ethnicity in either the medieval Muslim world or Western Europe as being based in science, the first chapter attempts to gain some insight into the serious perception of the Muslim world and its peoples by Western writers that was current in

Western Europe before, during, and immediately after the Crusades, notions that lay at the heart of all Western European discourse on the Muslim in the medieval period and which continued well into the modern period.

The second chapter will explore the representation of the Eastern Mediterranean Muslim in both popular literature and in historical accounts of the Third Crusade, with an eye toward the ways Muslims are portrayed from the time of the Third Crusade to into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Third Crusade is of particular importance both within the timeframe of the Crusades themselves and for the mindset of the English. After the spectacular successes of the First Crusade, the Third Crusade stands alone as the only one in which the Western forces experienced measurable success against the Muslims. While the Crusaders were unable to achieve their stated goal, the recovery of Jerusalem, they were able to turn back the Muslim advance on the Syrian coast and to delay the eventual Muslim recovery of the Levant in its entirety for a full century. In addition, many pilgrims were able to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In contrast, the Second Crusade was a disastrous siege on Damascus, which ended in failure; the Fourth Crusade was a misdirected attack on the Byzantines which resulted in the sack of Constantinople in 1204, a period of Latin occupation, and eventually the violent expulsion of the Western forces in 1261; and the Fifth Crusade ended in the defeat and humiliation of the forces of Louis IX in Egypt. Moreover, the Third Crusade stands alone as the one in which the leaders of the respective armies were well matched, in the persons of Richard I and Salāh al-Dīn (Saladin), figures who in many ways came to epitomize the knightly ideal both during the Crusades and beyond.

The Third Crusade stands apart for its significance to the English people for two reasons. First, it marked the official entry of the English into the crusading enterprise on a large scale, an enterprise which had previously been dominated by continental powers, particularly France. The second, and perhaps most important reason, is that Richard I, the Anglo-Norman king of England, would emerge as a national hero, and one of the most renowned figures of the 12th century on either side. Thus, Richard I was one of the preeminent heroic figures for the English, a figure that could be recalled as a means of countering the French dominance of the crusading enterprise, and a person whose exploits matched those of French heroes, much in the way that Arthur answered Charlemagne as a great, founding monarch. Richard I recalled such legendary national heroes as Arthur, and through his exploits in the Levant he became the central figure of the Crusades in the collective English memory. Because it marked England's entry into the crusading enterprise and provided the scene from which Richard I emerged as a national hero, the Third Crusade stands out in importance and relevance to any study of the Crusades and their impact on the writing of history as well as of fiction, of which the people of England were consumers in the late-twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

In the course of examining the portrayal of Muslims in both the historical accounts of the Third Crusade and the popular fiction of the late twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth century, particular attention will be given to common themes in both genres, particularly in areas in which these depictions reflect concepts of the Muslim Other identified in the preceding chapter. For the discussion of the depiction of Muslims in the popular fiction of the aforementioned period, works such as the *Sowdone of Babylone*, *The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne* and *The Sege of Melany* will be

examined for the ways in which the texts exaggerate and distort the picture of the Muslim Other found in the non-fictional accounts in order to elicit a greater reaction from the audience, or as a means of relieving communal tension caused by the historical realities of the Crusades and the crusading enterprise.

In the discussion of the depiction of Muslims in historical accounts of the Third Crusade, the dissertation will examine the chronicles *Cronicon Richardi Divisensis De Tempore Regis Richardi Primi* (*The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes of the Time of King Richard the First*), the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* and Ambroise's classic account of Richard I's adventures in the Levant *L'estoire de la Guerre Sainte* for these works' portrayal of Muslims both individually and as a collective entity, with the object of identifying ways in which such accounts present a distorted picture, along with the genuine insights such works provide as a result of their authors' active contact with the Other under extreme conditions. In exploring such works of popular fiction and non-fiction, the chapter will seek to identify common stereotypes and patterns of thought in depicting the Muslims that are both reinforced and perpetuated by works in both genres (particularly in the case of stereotypes identified in the first chapter), as well as the points in which the genres differ in their representations, and examine possible explanations for such differences. In sum, the second chapter will be an exploration of the manner in which medieval Western European societies imagined Muslims in both serious scholarly works and works of leisure, along with the implications of these portrayals.

Chapters Three and Four, like One and Two, examine both "serious" history, geography and ethnography as well as writing for a more popular audience (in this case chronicles relating to the Crusades and travel narratives), but now from the point of view

of the Muslim world of the Eastern Mediterranean. The third chapter mirrors the first, in that it examines the conception of Western Europe and its peoples current among the scholars of the Muslim world in the centuries prior to the Crusades, the period of the Crusades, and to a lesser extent the years immediately following the fall of Acre. In the course of this analysis of the opinion of the learned community of the medieval Muslim world, it will be necessary first to ascertain the medieval Muslim worldview, and how such a worldview situated the Muslim civilizations within the context of the larger, world, something this chapter will attempt to accomplish in a general sense. Having done this, the focus will then shift to the medieval Muslim perception of Western Europe and the various ethnic groups inhabiting that region. To this end, particular attention will be given to two of the foremost geographical writers in the medieval Muslim world: al-Mas'ūdī, the preeminent authority on world geography in the pre-Crusades Muslim world; and al-Idrīsī, an important contributor in the field from the twelfth century into the Early Modern era.¹² More than any other writers of their milieu, these two scholars focused a great deal of attention on the geography and peoples of Western Europe, and perhaps more importantly, both integrated Western source material into their works, albeit to varying degrees. To round out the picture of Western Europe held by medieval Muslim academics, the work of Ibn Khaldūn will also be examined, as it serves to represent Muslim learning regarding Western Europe in the years immediately following the end of the Crusades.

The third chapter will also explore the representation of Western Europeans in medieval Muslim travel narratives. To this end, it will focus on what is perhaps the most famous travel narrative of the Crusade-era Muslim world, the *Travels of Ibn Jubayr*. This

work is invaluable for what it reveals about the medieval Muslim conception of the Christian European Other through its depictions of encounters with Europeans in both Crusader and Muslim strongholds in the Levant, Sicily, and during the course of Ibn Jubayr's travels en route. Moreover, as Ibn Jubayr was not an expert in geography, as al-Mas'ūdī or al-Idrīsī were, his account is also of great value in what it reveals concerning the stereotypes about Christian Europeans in the popular medieval Muslim imagination. This text, with its subtle references to and use of ideas and stereotypes commonly held in both the academic and popular arenas, serves as an apt bookend for the subject of the Christian European as imagined by the scholars of the medieval Muslim world, as well as a suitable transition into the topic of the representation of this Other in the Muslim historical accounts of the Crusades.

Moving from the abstract conceptions put forward in the works of medieval scholars and the perspective offered in the travel narratives, the fourth chapter explores the representation of the Western European at the hands of the writers who experienced prolonged contact with them: the Muslim chroniclers of the Crusades. Like the second chapter, the fourth chapter focuses on the Third Crusade, but the Third Crusade, and the 12th century in general, is a period in which the Western settlers and indigenous Muslim population lived in close proximity with one another and experienced some degree of interaction. Moreover, the periods in question also produced a number of important Crusader leaders, most notably Richard I, all of whom appear in the Muslim accounts.

For the purposes of this chapter, reference will be made to a variety of medieval Muslim sources. The memoirs of the 12th-century knight, statesman and writer Usāma ibn Munqidh will be examined for his recollections of his many experiences with Western

Europeans from differing backgrounds and in a variety of situations. The chronicles of the thirteenth-century historian Ibn al-‘Athīr will be consulted for his invaluable insights into the military and political machinations that lay behind each encounter from the point of view of the Muslim forces. The biography of Salāh al-Dīn, which was composed by the cleric Bahā’ al-Dīn, will also contribute significantly, since the biographer was the imam for Salāh al-Dīn’s army from 1188-1193 and, as such, was a Muslim witness to the conduct of the Third Crusade in its entirety. Additionally, the biography offers excellent insights into Salāh al-Dīn’s activities during the Crusade and presents a detailed portrait of Richard I from the Muslim perspective. Excerpts from the account of ‘Imād al-Dīn, another member of Salāh al-Dīn’s retinue, who, unlike Bahā’ al-Dīn, was present for the Muslim recovery of Jerusalem in 1187, will also appear. While it does not offer a great deal of new information compared to accounts such as those of Ibn al-‘Athīr or Bahā’ al-Dīn, its abundant use of hyperbole presents the reader with a number of clear examples of the caricaturing of Crusaders and Western European settlers at the hands of Muslim historians. In addition, a few other accounts, such as that by Abu Shama, will also be examined in order to complete the picture of the Muslim perception of the Western European in the context of war, work, play and worship via the Muslim accounts of the Third Crusade, and the 12th century in general.

Through the course of this dissertation, the evolution of a concept of the Other will be analyzed as it appeared, first as an abstraction in “scientific” works, and then in a more concrete, and more exaggerated form in the fictional and historical accounts of contact, primarily as a result of conflict, produced in both the medieval Muslim world and Western Europe. In tracking the evolution of this conception of the Other through its

formative stages in the learned community, and later in its process of maturation first as a set of stereotypes, and then as stock features to be applied in both works of fiction and non-fiction, certain common themes will emerge concerning to the ways in which groups react and relate to foreign entities, particularly in times of stress. The medieval European and Muslim reactions to cultural and religious difference, as well as the ways in which writers from both sides attempted to reconcile the historical realities of contact with a powerful, foreign entity with the pre-existing narrative of cultural and religious primacy point to parallels between the two groups in defense of a concept of Self that is threatened by external challenges. In the same manner in which Chapters One and Three and Chapters Two and Four, respectively, are mirror images one of the other, this dissertation will explore the ways in which the two entities in question, the Christian world of medieval Western Europe and the Muslim world of the medieval Eastern Mediterranean, paralleled one another in both the formation and application of the concept of the Other as a mechanism with which to make sense of a powerful, alien entity with which they were inextricably connected.

¹ Steve Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951) 107.

² The preceding excerpt is from an adaptation of the account of Robert of Rheims, a monk who may have been present at Clermont, and who also used the *Gesta francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum* ("The Deeds of the Franks and Other Jerusalemmites") as a source for his account. Edward Peters, ed., *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998) 25, 26-7.

³ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History, Second Edition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) 244.

⁴ This is not to say that all of the works that have been influenced by *Orientalism* espouse positions that are in agreement with its central thesis; *Orientalism* has elicited perhaps as many pointed critiques as plaudits. However, it has unquestionably altered the nature of the discussion of both the representation of the foreign and the dialectic between the East and West.

⁵ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978) 122.

⁶ "...we need not look for correspondence between the language used to depict the Orient and the Orient itself, not so much because the language is inaccurate but because it is not even trying to be accurate." *Orientalism*, 71.

⁷ *Ibid.* 55-8.

⁸ *Ibid.* 58-64.

⁹ Mohammed Sharafuddin, *Islam and Romantic Orientalism: Literary Encounters with the Orient* (London: I.B. Taurus Publishers, 1994) xiii-xiv.

¹⁰ Lawrence Cahoone, ed., *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1996) 16.

¹¹ The tracts concerning the genealogies are of particular importance, as the *Etymologiae* provides detailed accounts of many of the groups that would later come to comprise the medieval Muslim world.

¹² Al-Mas'ūdī and al-Idrīsī will not be the only scholars referenced in the early portions of the chapter. However, they will be given a greater degree of attention than the other scholars to whom reference is made.

Chapter 1: Medieval Perspectives on Muslims during the Crusading Era

Perhaps the two most commonly used designations for Muslims in medieval literature in Western Europe – fiction and non-fiction – are “Sarasin” and “Turk,” which are used interchangeably, and at times alongside one another to convey a sense of ethnic heterogeneity among the ranks of the enemy. However, despite the association of the words with Muslims, and Arab and Turkish Muslims in particular, their actual usage reveals a far greater range of groups to which the words can refer. This is particularly true in the case of the word “Sarasin.” The *Middle English Dictionary* defines that term as follows:

(a) A Turk; also an Arab; also, a M[u]sl[i]m; --often with ref. to the Crusades; ~**hed**, the head of a Saracen; (b) a heathen, pagan; an infidel; (c) as a type of non-Christian; ~**or jeu, jeu and (or, other) ~, païen and ~, painimes and sarasines, sarasines and (ne) jeues**, etc.; (d) the language of the Saracens; (e) one of the pagan invaders of England, esp. a Dane or Saxon; -- also coll.; (f) a member of a non-Hebrew tribe, esp. a desert nomad; --also coll.; (g) pagandom; -- ?=**Sarasin** n.(2); (h) **sarasines flesh**, mummy, a substance taken from embalmed corpses; **brouet sarasines**, a stew of some kind [cp. **Sarasin** adj.(b) & **Sarasinesse** n.(b)]; (i) in surnames; (j) **sarasines hed**, the name of an inn.¹

The very definition of the term suggests the multiplicity of meanings called forth by “Sarasin” and the nebulous space Muslims occupied in medieval European literature as non-Christians. As a designation that came to encompass not only Turks and Arabs in medieval literature, but also Danes and Saxons, the term appears to convey a sense of the distant and vaguely-defined, an image of masses of undifferentiated faces rather than individuals, identifiable only by their Otherness.

However, “Sarasin,” by the very nature of its ambiguity, becomes a term of infinite utility for medieval writers, as it provides a blank slate of sorts, a vague outline of

a figure which they can fill in as it suits them. As such, the term can be used to evoke a sense of the distant yet familiar (Danes and/or other pagan Europeans of the past) or the wholly alien (Muslims of the Eastern Mediterranean and Africa). Moreover, the term can be subject to multiple acts of conflation, as the Mediterranean Muslim can be conflated with the Persian or African Other, all under the auspices of the term Sarasin. Yet despite the inherent ambiguity of the term, writers are able to differentiate between the multiple connotations of the term to convey a specific image, and to evoke specific emotional reactions from their audiences that are dependent on the type of Sarasin to whom the writer is referring, which is identifiable within the context of the behavior of the Sarasins in question. Thus, in the romance *King Horn*, the writer elicits a heightened response from his audience by ascribing behavior reminiscent of the kind attributed to the Mediterranean/ African Muslim to the Danish/ Saxon “Sarasins” of the text through the testimony of an old knight who informs the audience that not only have the Sarasins conquered and pillaged the land (in accordance with traditional conceptions of pagan European behavior), but *they have forced the Christians to abandon their faith*.² In this instance, the idea of forced conversion recalls a charge commonly leveled against Muslims, serving as a marker of sorts for the audience, which would likely have associated such behavior with Mediterranean Muslims as opposed to pagan Danes. As such, “Sarasin” becomes a term of great utility to medieval writers by virtue of its inherent complexity, which offers infinite possibilities.

While the designation “Sarasin” offers a range of possibilities as to the group being referred to, the same cannot be said of the term “Turk,” which is far more limited in scope. The term is defined in the *Middle English Dictionary* as:

- (a) A member of the Ottoman Empire, a Turk; pl. Turks; also, Seljuk Turks [quot. ...1425 *Mandev.* (2)]; also applied indiscriminately to the Muslim inhabitants of Asia Minor; (b) with ref. to the period of the [T]hird Crusade: a Saracen, Muslim; a member of the Muslim forces; (c) ~ **boue**, a bow of Turkish manufacture, style, or provenance; *cook. teste de* ~, an elaborate dish shaped to resemble a turbaned head; (d) in surnames.³

Thus the use of “Turk” is more restricted than that of “Sarasin,” applicable loosely to Muslims as a whole, but also specifically to Muslims of Asia Minor, and Seljuk and Ottoman Turks of the Middle Ages in particular.

However, specificity and historical accuracy were not the immediate concerns of the writers of medieval popular fiction. Regardless of whether or not an audience was able to draw a clear distinction between a pagan Dane or a Muslim from the Eastern Mediterranean, the fact that both were non-Christians, and as such, enemies, was the true distinction of importance. Details of ethnicity, much like other details like those relating to religious beliefs and practices, could be and were conflated in the works in question to achieve the greatest dramatic effect. Specificity could at times be constricting, and the medieval romances which dealt with Christian – non-Christian interaction and conflict often called for a suspension of disbelief on the parts of the reader that was not consonant with ideals of historical or factual specificity. As such, a term such as “Sarasin”, that provided a greater range of possibilities, was inherently more valuable, and an obvious choice for the writers of medieval works of popular fiction.

But discussions of the use of terms like Sarasin and Turk in medieval works of popular fiction and non-fiction, while important inasmuch as such discussions lead to greater insight into the connotations that both terms carried, can also serve to obscure the role these terms played in describing the world as it was understood by the writers and readers of the time. It is important to be cognizant of the fact that despite the imaginative nature of many of the accounts in medieval popular fiction (and, at times, the historical

works), they are based in part upon a certain understanding of the world, particularly the world beyond the confines of Western Europe, which was considered both accurate “scientific” by reader and writer alike. This world-view was based in part on the works of the Early Medieval and Crusades-era thinkers, who were themselves often clerics, and in part on works and a world-view stretching back to the writers and thinkers of Antiquity.

The geographical information that constituted much of medieval Western Europeans’ understanding of the outside world during the early Middle Ages (8th-11th centuries) and into the Crusades was based upon the works of writers like Orosius and Isidore of Seville, whose works in turn drew from the works of Roman geographers such as Julius Solinus and Pliny. Many of the works of the classical geographers such as Ptolemy (although in Ptolemy’s case a few of his works survived), along with those of the great thinkers such as Aristotle and Plato, had been lost. Moreover, Greek as a language was largely unknown to Western scholars during the Early Middle Ages (and for much of the era of the Crusades as well), making both Byzantine texts and classical works on the subject of geography inaccessible to them. As such, the works which were available (i.e. the works of Pliny and Solinus, along with those of other lesser-known geographers from the final centuries of the Roman Empire), became the foundation of first Late Antique, and later medieval scholars’ understanding of world geography.

Unfortunately, these works, particularly those produced by geographers such as Solinus in the last few centuries of the Roman Empire were not of the same quality of the works of earlier geographers such as Ptolemy. Writers in the latter years of the Empire were constrained by the circumstances in which the declining and contracting state found itself. The diminution of the Roman sphere of influence brought along with it a reduction

of Roman access to and knowledge of areas of the world with which Roman citizens had previously been familiar, and without direct access to these areas of the world, the boundaries of the known world contracted for Roman geographers. This phenomenon manifested itself in the works of later Roman geographers both in the decrease in the amount and quality of information about the outside world in comparison with their predecessors, and also in a fascination with the “marvels” and Monstrous Races that were imagined to exist in the most distant regions.⁴

In addition to the limited number of classical texts at their disposal, medieval geographers also had access to the works of Late Antique scholars and theologians, which proved to be very influential as well. Among the Late Antique works, the works of Paulus Orosius and Isidore of Seville were perhaps the most influential in forming a medieval geographical world-view. Orosius and Isidore of Seville, who were both Spaniards, dealt in their different works with questions of world geography and ethnography, Orosius in his *Historiarum adversus paganos libri septem* and Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologiae sive originum libri XX*. Orosius’ *Historiarum adversus paganos libri septem* was a response to the charge that Christianity was to blame for the disintegration of the Roman Empire; it catalogs the various instances of human suffering from the Creation to his time,⁵ with a focus on what he deemed to be the great empires from the four corners of the earth: Macedonia (North), Carthage (South), Babylon (East), and Rome (West)⁶ in an attempt to demonstrate that the suffering of the citizens of Rome which accompanied the fall of the city was not as extreme as popular opinion held it to be in comparison to the suffering of others during previous calamities. The value of *Historiarum adversus paganos libri septem* to future geographers was that it provided an

image of the world which was of great utility to subsequent Christian writers in a variety of disciplines, while also establishing a precedent for providing geographical information in historical works.⁷

Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae sive originum libri XX*⁸ borrowed from Orosius' *Historiarum adversus paganos libri septem*, as well as the works of Solinus, in the parts of the work that dealt primarily with geographical information; he also drew from Solinus for some of his ethnographic information.⁹ However, it is in its ethnographic information that the *Etymologiae* stands apart from Orosius' work, providing genealogies for the myriad races of the world that extend back to Ham, Japheth and Shem.¹⁰

Among the many groups that Isidore of Seville includes in his genealogies are the Arabs, who appear on a number of separate occasions in Book IX (which focuses on languages, nations, regimes, the military, citizens, and familial relationships).¹¹ Isidore locates the Arabs, genealogically speaking, among the descendants of Ham, who according to the theologian, account for the largest number of nations in the known world:¹²

10. There were four sons of Ham, from whom sprang the following nations. Cush, from whom the Ethiopians were begotten. Mesraim (i.e. Egypt), from whom the Egyptians are said to have risen. 11. Put, from whom came the Libyans – whence the river of Mauretania is called Put still today, and the whole region around it is called Puthensis. 12. Finally Canaan, from whom descended the Africans and the Phoenicians and the ten tribes of Canaanites. 13. Again, the sons of Cush, grandsons of Ham – the grandchildren of Ham were six. The sons of Cush: Saba (i.e. Seba), Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, Seba and Cuza. 14. Saba, from whom the Sabeans were begotten and named,... These are also the Arabians.... 17. But Raamah, Seba, and Cuza gradually lost their ancient names, and the names that they now have, instead of the ancestral ones, are not known. 18. The sons of Raamah were Saba (i.e. Seba) and Dedan. This Saba is written in Hebrew with the letter shin, whereas the Saba above is written with a samekh, and from him the Sabeans were named – but now Saba is translated “Arabia.”¹³

In another passage, he explains the significance of the name assigned to the Arabs:

49. The Sabeans were named after the word..., that is, “supplicate” and “worship,” because we worship the divinity with Sabeian incense. They are also called Arabs, because they live in the mountains of Arabia called Libanus and Antilibanus, where incense is gathered.¹⁴

Thus, the reader is provided with not only the genealogical background of the Arabs, but an explanation of the origins of the name by which they are known.

The explanation provided by Isidore is surprisingly detailed, given the status of the group to whom he is referring relative to his time – existing at the intersection, yet simultaneously on the periphery, of three powerful empires (Byzantium, Ethiopia, and Persia), and almost a century away from the expansion and conquest that would transform the character of the Mediterranean littoral. However, it is even more interesting in light of a later reference to a group by a name that has been traditionally “translated” as “Arab”:

57. The Saracens are so called either because they claim to be descendants of Sarah or, as the pagans say, because they are of Syrian origin, as if the word were Syriginae. They live in a very large deserted region. They are also Ishmaelites, as the Book of Genesis teaches us, because they sprang from Ishmael. They are also named Kedar, from the son of Ishmael, and Agarines, from the name Agar (i.e. Hagar). As we have said, they are called Saracens from an alteration of their name, because they are proud to be descendants of Sarah.¹⁵

This passage complicates the explanation of the name and genealogy presented in the *Etymologiae* in prior sections of Book IX. However, it appears to accord with the general image of the Arabs prior to the advent of Islam held by Western historians of the Middle Ages, in which Arabs are an enigmatic people existing on the fringes of the collective global consciousness. In a way, it appears that the more detailed explanations offered by Isidore of Seville in the previous passages were largely disregarded by future generations of scholars in favor of an explanation such as that of the present passage, which could be interpreted in a manner not at all favorable to the group in question.

In the context of its time, the *Etymologiae* is remarkable for the objective manner in which it approaches ethnographical and genealogical questions relating to the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula, especially when compared with the works of subsequent

Western writers on the same subject. If anything, the *Etymologiae* appears to lack the type of vitriol and bias of many of the subsequent works in regard to issues of race and ethnicity, and even in dealing with potential regional biases. Instead, the work provides a systematic explication of, among other things, the various nations and races (both real and imagined) of the known world, which later scholars would then adapt and interpret to suit the circumstances of their current situation.

Nevertheless, Isidore of Seville did transmit a number of ideas from the Classical and Late Antique ages that were, at best, erroneous, ideas that would play a large role in the shaping of Western Europe's perception of the outside world. Among them, and perhaps one of the most important for its implications for the development and intensification of regional and racial biases, was his endorsement of the theory of the influence of climate upon the physical features and racial characteristics of individuals:

105. People's faces and coloring, the size of their bodies, and their various temperaments correspond to various climates. Hence we find that the Romans are serious, the Greeks easy-going, the Africans changeable, and the Gauls fierce in nature and sharp in wit, because the character of the climate makes them so.¹⁶

This theory of climatic influence would be revisited on countless occasions, and often in response to political and/or military tensions between the Latin West and the nations of the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa.¹⁷

In addition, the *Etymologiae* contain references to various types of monstrous races, among them the Troglodytes ("so called because they run with such speed that they chase down wild animals on foot") and the Anthropophagians (who "feed on human flesh and are therefore named 'maneaters'"),¹⁸ locating many of them in Ethiopia and India. Perhaps of equal interest for its influence on subsequent literature is the explanation provided in the *Etymologiae* regarding the relationship between Ethiopians and Indians:

127. Ethiopians are so called after a son of Ham named Cush, from whom they have their origin. In Hebrew, Cush means "Ethiopian." 128. This nation, which formerly emigrated from the region near the river Indus, settled next to Egypt between the Nile and the Ocean, in the South very close to the sun. There are three tribes of Ethiopians: Hesperians, Garamantes, and Indians. Hesperians are of the West, Garamantes of Tripolis, and the Indians of the East.¹⁹

While there may be a logic to the explanation Isidore offers, provided he was following the Greek definition of Ethiopian as a "burnt-face person,"²⁰ in accordance with the theory that blackness as a defining racial characteristic was attributable to overexposure to the sun, it would contribute, nevertheless to a confusion relative to distinguishing between the nations and peoples of Ethiopia and India in the West throughout the Middle Ages.

Although Western scholars did not inherit a prejudice against Arabs from the scholars of the Classical and Late Antique periods, they did inherit a regional bias against the peoples of the East and South, which they then applied to their observations of the Muslims of the Levant, North Africa, Asia Minor, and Central Asia. As peoples of either the East and/or the South, Muslims of these areas were subject to the popular regional stereotypes of being intelligent and crafty, yet timid, cruel and vengeful, and lacking in an overall hardness of spirit, all of which was attributable to the effects of excessive exposure to the sun.²¹ Pope Urban II recalls the old regional stereotype of cowardice being a characteristic of the inhabitants of the South in his call to arms at Clermont when, according to William of Malmesbury, he contended that Muslims are:

...the least valiant of men and, having no confidence in hand-to-hand combat, love fighting on the run. No Turk ever dares do battle at close quarters, and when driven from his ground he "draws his bowstring from afar" and "trusts his missile to the wandering winds"; ...If he achieves anything, therefore, I would ascribe it to fortune and not fortitude... It is in fact well known that every nation born in Eastern clime is dried up by the great heat of the sun; they may have good sense, but they have less blood in their veins, and that is why they flee from battle at close quarters: they know that they have no blood to spare.²²

In this example the South and East are conflated, and Turks are described in terms traditionally used when referring to the peoples of the distant South.

Along with the bias against groups from the South and East, Muslims of the Levant, North Africa, Asia Minor and Central Asia were also described in derogatory terms by Western writers on the grounds of their generally dark complexions, and the negative connotations such complexions carried in the eyes of Westerners stretching back to pagan antiquity. The association of the color black with bad fortune, and evil in general, pre-dated the advent of Christianity,²³ but in the hands of many Christian scholars it came to be associated with the outward manifestation of sin, appearing as an ethnic/racial feature either as a result of God's curse on Cain, or Noah's curse on Ham (who, of course, was identified as the progenitor of Africans and other groups identified as being racially "adjacent" to Africans). As a number of the nations comprising the Muslim world either bordered Sub-Saharan Africa or were a part of it and/or bordered lands that were believed to contain monstrous races, Muslims were often conflated with members of these respective groups in medieval works of both fiction and non-fiction, and in their representation in works of art.

Beyond the general biases regarding Southern and Eastern racial groups which were shared amongst medieval writers, there were several individuals who made substantial contributions to the popular understanding of world geography and ethnography of the time. Building upon the surviving works from the Classical Period, the works of Late Antique authors like Orosius and Isidore of Seville, and to a lesser extent upon Early Medieval authors, these writers helped preserve and transmit information from the past, and in some cases, predicted future developments in the areas

of geography and ethnography. In particular, their works reflected the increased amount of attention directed toward the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean, due in large part to the Crusades and their impact on economic, military and political relations between this region and Europe. Through their respective works, such writers helped to situate Western Europe and its peoples within the larger world, and the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean in relation to Western Europe, which influenced relations between the two regions during the Middle Ages and during and beyond, during the subsequent centuries of European expansion. Moreover, many of the most famous contributors to medieval geographical and ethnographical knowledge were amongst the greatest minds of the medieval period; in most cases their reputations stemmed from their contributions in other fields. While there are a number of medieval writers who made noteworthy contributions in the areas of geography and ethnography, only these select few made the type that had a lasting impact both during their time and well into the future.

One such writer was the twelfth-century scholar William of Conches. William (c.1090-late 1150s) was one of the great European scholars and writers of the twelfth century. Although in his works tended to be representative of the surviving tradition as opposed to original contributions to the fields of geography and ethnography, his role in preserving and transmitting information from Antiquity was invaluable to the study of these areas. He studied at the renowned school of Bernard of Chartres and later taught there for a time, and he was able to count such luminaries as John of Salisbury among his students. Later, when political maneuvering on the part of others led to his early retirement, the Norman theologian returned to his homeland to work under the patronage of Geoffrey Plantagenet, most likely as a tutor for his two sons.²⁴

The work which concerns us here is the *Dragmaticon Philosophiae* (“Dialogue on Natural Philosophy”), which he likely composed between 1147-9, during his years as tutor for the young Plantagenets.²⁵ The work is structured as a dialogue between the Duke of Normandy and an unnamed “philosopher.” It identifies as its objectives: (a) revising the *Philosophia*, so as to retain the accurate portions, delete the inaccurate or obsolete portions, and add certain new material; (b) renouncing his errors in areas of doctrine in *Philosophia* (i.e. to make a profession of his adherence to the orthodox views espoused by the Church, so as to satisfy those whose ire he had aroused as a result of certain ideas he had put forward in *Philosophia*); and (c) providing both his patron and pupils with answers to certain philosophical questions, as well as an understanding of specific scientific principles.²⁶ *Dragmaticon Philosophiae* is not encyclopedic in its scope; however, it does address a number of issues related to the natural sciences, including many of the most fundamental questions pertaining to the field of medieval geography.

There is a brief discussion of world geography. In this discussion, he first advances several arguments in support of the theory of a round, spherical earth, and then proceeds to a dialogue concerning the nature of the earth and its regions. Here he proposes that the earth’s true nature is characterized by coldness and dryness; the middle of the earth is the one exception, and this is a result of the fact that it directly underneath the sun, and is thus extremely hot.²⁷ The result of the two aforementioned conditions is that the earth is comprised of five climatic zones: to the extreme north and south are two frozen zones, which, along with the “torrid” zone in the middle of the earth are uninhabitable (as a result of their extreme cold and heat, respectively); on either side of the torrid zone, and between it and the frozen northern and southern regions, are two

temperate zones which are suitable for habitation.²⁸ However, although the temperate zone between the torrid zone and the frozen zone in the south (which was commonly referred to as the *Antipodes*)²⁹ is capable of sustaining human life, William of Conches does not hold the opinion that it is inhabited³⁰

As for the temperate zone which is home to the nations and peoples of the known world, William of Conches divides it into three continents: Africa, Asia and Europe. Asia is the largest of the three continents, occupying the Eastern half of the temperate zone from the frozen zone in the North to the Torrid Zone in the South, with the Don River to the North and the Nile to the South as its western borders. Africa occupies the Southwestern portion of the temperate zone; to the South it extends to the Torrid Zone (Libya and Ethiopia are identified as being the closest to the Torrid Zone), and the Mediterranean Sea and the Nile serve as its boundaries to the North and East, respectively. Europe is located in the Northwestern quadrant of the temperate zone; to the North its boundary is the frozen zone, and the Mediterranean Sea and the Don River mark its limits to the South and East, respectively.³¹

Beyond this description of the northern temperate zone, William of Conches does not go into any detail regarding the nations and peoples to be found within Africa, Asia, or Europe. With the exception of an earlier statement of the “fact” that Jerusalem is located at the center of the earth,³² the *Dragmaticon Philosophiae* is largely silent on the subject of world geography. However, in the sections in which there is some discussion of this subject, William of Conches provides a concise description of the earth – and in particular the areas of the then-known world. In the next century, scholars would do much to expand upon this foundation of information.

One of the most accomplished members of these scholars was the thirteenth-century theologian Albertus Magnus,³³ was one of the most important theologians of the High Middle Ages.³⁴ During his lifetime he served as a lector at the University of Paris, and taught in Cologne, he contributed to and oversaw the expansion of the Dominican order in Germany, established the first *studium generale* in Germany at Cologne,³⁵ and also served as a mentor to Thomas Aquinas. However, without a doubt his greatest and most enduring accomplishment as a scholar was his paraphrases of the known works of Aristotle (including those which had recently entered the Latin West via Spain), in which he included commentaries that integrated both his own opinions and those of the previous Muslim commentators such as Ibn Sīna (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes).³⁶

In the field of geography, Albertus' most important work was his *Liber de natura locorum*,³⁷ in which he examines both the theories of the classical philosophers and philosophers from the recent past (including those from the Muslim world), presenting them in tandem with his own ideas and, where he deems it necessary, correcting them in light of new evidence and/or his own contradictory opinions. In particular, *De Natura Locorum* addresses the subject of the division of the earth into different climes, the habitable and uninhabitable regions of the earth, the extent and nature of the habitable quarters of the earth, and the question of whether the Antipodes are inhabited. As Albertus Magnus was able to draw upon the most recent translation of the works of Aristotle (along with the accompanying commentaries) and add to these resources his own substantial intellectual capital, *De Natura Locorum* stands as one of the best offerings of medieval European geographical knowledge.

In *De Natura Locorum* (“The Nature of Places”), Albertus acknowledges the traditional division of the earth in its entirety into five regions, two of which are habitable, and the remaining three uninhabitable (like William of Conches).³⁸ However, in his discussion of world geography, he further divides the habitable world into seven climes.³⁹ In so doing, he acknowledges the position of the fourth clime (which was the region in which Iraq and Persia are located)⁴⁰ as being in the exact center of the habitable world relative to the other six climes.⁴¹ But despite this fact, Albertus contends that the sixth and seventh climes, in which most of Europe, and all of Western Europe, can be found, occupy the central position in the earth relative to all of the regions, habitable and uninhabitable:

There is, however, a certain doubt about these things that have been said, whether, indeed, the fourth clime is temperate among habitable places. The place of exceeding cold is not the seventh clime, but rather an uninhabitable place beyond the northern region. Similarly, the place exceeding in heat is not beneath the equator and a little to this side in the latitude of the first clime, but rather beneath the tropic, which latitude is semicircular. Therefore, it seems that the midpoint between the coldest place which is 90° in latitude, or a little less, and the hottest which is 24°, has a latitude of more than 40°. These are the sixth and seventh climes.⁴²

This is an important assertion, as the centrally-located clime was viewed as being the best of climes, conferring the greatest number of intrinsic benefits to its inhabitants, and the most conducive to the development of high civilization. Albertus Magnus seems to have these ideas in mind, and does not hesitate to compare the inhabitants of the fourth, sixth and seventh climes as part of his argument that the latter two climes are in fact the most temperate:

Of this place there seems to be evidence that men of those climes are very handsome of body, are of noble and fair stature, and they are beautiful in color, while the men of the fourth clime are small and dark. The place where men grow strongest seems to be most suited for habitation. For where men are more generally handsome and brave and noble of stature, there man thrives more readily. This is, as it appears, in the sixth and seventh climes.⁴³

In his argument for the centrality of the sixth and seventh climes, Albertus Magnus also addresses the climate of the regions in question. In his estimation, the most centrally-located, and thus temperate, region will feature a balance between the extremes of heat and cold, with cold winters and hot summers. If this is the case, then for him the fourth clime cannot be the most temperate clime:

The greatest heat of the fourth clime seems to come in the summer, and a lessening of rains. For if it were temperate simply, as the philosophers say, there would be equally excessive cold there in the winter, as there is excessive heat in the summer. But we experience the opposite, because the heat of summer is above normal in that place, and there is no excessive cold there. According to these reasons the ideal winter temperature seems to be the temperature of the sixth clime, where there is neither an excess of heat in summer nor of cold in winter.⁴⁴

In making this argument for the designation of the sixth and seventh climes as the centrally-located, and thus most temperate climes, Albertus Magnus is in fact asserting a world-view that establishes Western Europe as the standard, the locus of what should be perceived as normative relative to the rest of the world. In so doing, he is following in the footsteps of the classical and Muslim geographers of the distant and recent past, who in their times argued for the centrality of their region (the fourth clime) based in part on an ethnocentrism which favored their places of origin. In this case, his stance identifies the location of the most temperate region as being further to the North and West than was previously imagined.

While Albertus Magnus fully considers the theory of the climes, *De Natura Locorum* does not offer much information about the various racial groups of the world, particularly in regard to the peoples of the East. This is especially true of the various Muslim ethnic/racial groups of the East, and in particular Arab Muslims; as a whole, they receive scant attention. The first reference to a group traditionally associated with Islam

and Muslims occurs in a discussion of the Torrid Zone, in which he repeats a comment by Lucan regarding one of the groups inhabiting this zone:

...Lucan has written concerning the Arabs who live in the Torrid Zone, saying that the shadows on the right which they have in their own land when they turn toward the east in their own meridian (south) coming into the northern quarter, seem to go left; and therefore, he says speaking about them: "You Arabians have come into a world unknown to you."⁴⁵

The next reference comes in his discussion of the eastern quarter of the habitable world and the various famous cities to be found therein. After identifying the cities, he informs his audience that the listed names of the cities were the names which were in usage during the times of the Greek, and later Roman, conquests. "Later, however, when they were seized by the Saracens very many of them were destroyed and others of different names were built, and their names were changed."⁴⁶ Thus, while this reference does little to shed any light on the Sarasins as a group, it is an acknowledgment of the impact that the Muslim presence has had on the eastern quarter, and of the new reality that it ushered in for the area.

Albertus Magnus' final reference to the Sarasins as a group comes in his list of the "fifty-three" ancient tribes of the East. In the course of this list he identifies the Sarasins, and curiously, later identifies the Arabs as another, separate tribe. Though no information is provided apart from the list, there is an interesting addendum to the list: after identifying the tribes in question (which include the Anthropophagi), he writes "many names of all these tribes have changed either from war, or from the depopulation of the lands, or they changed them, perhaps, because of new sects and religions."⁴⁷ On some level, this statement might be a reflection of awareness on his part of the widespread change which had taken place in the eastern quarter as a result of the advent of Islam and the subsequent rise of the Muslim states.

While *De Natura Locorum* does not provide a great deal of information about the way in which Mediterranean Muslims were perceived by medieval European geographers, it is invaluable for the insight it provides concerning the Western European geographical world-view, and the ways in which Western geographers were able to appropriate the existing classical and Muslim information at their disposal and employ it, and at times refute it, in order to promote their own ethnocentric conception of the world. It is also informative in its identification of its sources, as it reveals the names and types of classical works that had survived, along with Muslim works that geographers of his time would have had at their disposal. Finally, it clearly identifies the limits of medieval geographical knowledge implicitly, when the information it provides is vague or inaccurate, and explicitly when it admits to a dearth of information on a subject or group. As such, *De Natura Locorum* provides an excellent perspective into the medieval European understanding of world geography and ethnography, and the often nebulous area occupied by Mediterranean Muslims therein. The type of information provided in *De Natura Locorum* would be dealt with in even greater detail by an English contemporary of Albertus Magnus in his own master work.

Roger Bacon (c.1214-1292) was a lifelong scholar and a member of the Franciscan Order from 1257 until his death;⁴⁸ he was also an indefatigable advocate for reform in the educational system, at times at great personal cost to himself.⁴⁹ He was also the author of a number of important works, including *De multiplicatione specierum*, *De speculis comburentibus*, the *Compendium Studii Philosophiae* and *Compendium Studii Theologiae*; but his most well-known work was the *Opus Majus*.⁵⁰ As impressive as it is as a work, the *Opus Majus* was but a proposal for a reformation of the way in which

natural philosophy was taught,⁵¹ including a greater emphasis on seven areas of inquiry;⁵² one of these areas of scientific inquiry, astronomy, included within its confines the subject of geography.⁵³

Although the *Opus Majus* treats geography at some length, what Bacon says is largely derivative, and is not informed by personal observation, and has received relatively less attention than other parts of the work. However, while his reliance on outside sources may not make the geographical portions of the *Opus Majus* as appealing to the modern scholar, its use of numerous texts – Classical, Late Antique and Muslim – makes it invaluable as a collection of medieval geographical and ethnographical knowledge. In the course of his discussion of world geography, Bacon cites Æthicus Ister's *Cosmographia*, Aristotle's *De Caelo* and *Meteorologica*, and Jerome's *De situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, along with the works of Sallust, Seneca, Pliny, Ptolemy, Orosius, Isidore of Seville, al-Farghāni, Ibn Sīna (Avicenna), the Bible and Apocrypha.⁵⁴

In his treatment of issues relating to geography, the *Opus Majus* is reminiscent of the work of one of his contemporaries, Albertus Magnus's *De Natura Locorum*. However, Bacon's work provides more ethnographic information, and does not adhere so closely to the ideas of geographical determinism, as does *De Natura Locorum*.⁵⁵ In certain ways, particularly in its instructions relating to the designing of a systematic map, the geographical portion of the *Opus Majus* anticipates the developments of the fifteenth century, when the quality of European cartography would improve by leaps and bounds as a result of the translation of Ptolemy's *Geography*.⁵⁶ As such, Bacon's *Opus Majus*

proved to be an invaluable work in the subjects of medieval geography and ethnography, while also pointing to future developments in these fields.

In his discussion of world geography, Bacon divides the earth into first the habitable and uninhabitable; he then identifies the three habitable continents (Africa, Asia and Europe), and then posits the existence of seven climatic zones in the three continents.⁵⁷ For Bacon, location was one of the main determinants of a people's defining characteristics:

And we see that all things vary according to different localities of the world not only in nature, but also men in their customs; since the Ethiopians have one set of customs, the Spaniards another, the Romans still another, and the Greeks yet another.⁵⁸

To this end, a portion of the *Opus Majus* is devoted to a detailed description of the inhabitable regions of the world, the natural features (mountains, rivers, etc.) for which they are known, and the groups for whom they are home. Moreover, in the case of the places that are mentioned in the Bible, he never fails to remind his audience of their significance in Scripture. In discussing the natural features of a given area, Bacon frequently addresses peculiarities which have elicited the attention of previous authors, such as questions relating to the source of certain famous rivers (e.g. the Tigris and Euphrates), and in the case of the Nile, the reason for its annual inundation of the Egyptian countryside.⁵⁹ And for each of the three habitable continents, he cites the available sources – Scriptural/Exegetical, Classical and Muslim – in the course of his discussion of them, and rarely excuses himself on the ground of a lack of information.

In writing about the land of the Sarasins, Bacon offers what appears to be a very specific account of the area in question. He writes:

All this part of Aethiopia around Meroë, Syene, and Heliopolis toward the east is included under Arabia; and not only this section, but whatever there is around the tongue, that is, the extremity of the Red Sea and beyond its shore eastward from the point of its tongue to its Persian Gulf. It extends from the Red Sea as far as Pelusium in Egypt to the west, and

spreads to the north through the whole of the desert in which the children of Israel wandered as far as the land of the Philistines above our sea bounded by Egypt, and extending eastward until the region of the Amalechites is reached, which lies to the east of the land of Philistia, and as far as the land of Edom, of Idumea, lying to the east of Amalech and reaching as far as the land of Moab. Then it turns more to the north through the land of Sehon, king of Esebon, and of Og, king of Bashan, as far as Mount Galaad and Lebanon, and turns still more to the north as far as Cilicia and Syria Commagene, and as far as the Euphrates.⁶⁰

In another passage, Bacon identifies the city of Baghdad (“Baldac” in the *Opus Major*) as the place in which the “caliph lord of the sect of Saracens” has established the capital of the empire.⁶¹

The same type of detail can be found in his discussion of the lineage of the inhabitants of the area he loosely identifies as “Arabia.” In one example, he draws his account from the findings of Jerome and Pliny:

In this region, then, and likewise in Pharan, dwelt the children of Kentura and Agar, descendants of Abraham, of whom mention is made in Genesis, chapter XXV. And first from the Euphrates begins the Nabathaeen country, so named from the first son of Ishmael, who was called Nabaioth, as Jerome states on Genesis, chapter XXV, and Pliny agrees with the statement in his first book, except that he calls one part of the Nabathaeans Nomads, who wander about the Euphrates near the Chaldeans. After these toward the desert of Pharan is the region of Cedar, which is named from the second of Ishmael’s sons, who was called Cedar. Although other regions belonging to children of Ishmael are named as far as Sur, for he dwelt from Evila as far as Sur, as the Scripture states, yet all these regions are called Cedar, as Jerome maintains in his fifth book commenting on that Burden upon Arabia in Isaiah, chapter XXI. He says, “Here he is speaking for Kedar, which is the country of the Ishmaelites, who are called Agareni and Saracens by a wrong name.” In the seventh book, commenting on Isaiah, chapter IX, he says in regard to these regions of Cedar and Nabathaena that Cedar is the country of the Saracens, who in Scripture are called Ishmaelites, and Nabaioth is one of the sons of Ishmael, from whose names the desert is called, which lacks crops, but is filled with cattle.⁶²

In this instance, Bacon situates the inhabitants within a context that is familiar to and relevant for his audience, that of the greater Biblical narrative. As the descendants of Ishmael and Abraham, the Saracens take on a greater significance than they might as the current inhabitants of a significant portion of the Middle East.

But for Bacon, the singular characteristic of the Saracens is their religious status as non-Christians. While there are relatively few references to the Saracens as a group in terms of ethnographical information, there are numerous references to Saracens as a

religious group, and still other references to Islam as a distinct religion. One of the first references to the Sarasins within the context of religion in the *Opus Majus* occurs in Bacon's explanation of the need for the Church to have knowledge of various foreign languages. At one point in the discussion, he lists the most well known of the "schismatic" groups, and then elucidates on the way in such divisions are exacerbated and perpetuated by issues of language:

Then the Greeks and Rutheni and many more schismatics like-wise grow hardened in error because the truth is not preached to them in their tongue; and the Saracens likewise and the Pagans and Tartars, and the other unbelievers throughout the whole world.⁶³

In another instance, Bacon identifies what he considers to be the six major sects from the beginning of time to the present: "Jews, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Agarenians or Saracens, who descended from Agar and Ishmael, the Church of Christ, and the sect of Anti-Christ."⁶⁴

In perhaps the most interesting moment of his discussions of religion in the entirety of the *Opus Majus*, Bacon examines the influence exerted by the heavenly bodies over the various religions of the world:

They [the mathematicians and authorities] say, then, that Jupiter and Venus are benevolent and fortunate planets, Saturn and Mars malevolent and unfortunate ones. Mercury, they say, is in a middle position, because he is good with the good, and evil with the evil, since he is of a changeable nature. Of the benevolent and fortunate planets they say that Jupiter is the better and that greater good fortune is owed to him, and the less to Venus... Venus has significance regarding the fortunes of this life, as far as pertains to games, pleasures, joy and the like, and Jupiter has respect to the blessings of the other life, which are greater.⁶⁵

Having established the characteristics of the planets, Bacon then describes the pattern in which the planets are arranged in the heavens, identifying the planet that is of the greatest importance in matters of religion:

Moreover, they divide the whole heavens into twelve parts, called houses, which are separated by the meridian circle and the horizon, and by four other circles intersecting one another at their points of meeting... The first house they assign to Saturn, the second to Jupiter, and so on according to the order of the planets, so that the eighth again is assigned to Saturn, and the ninth to Jupiter. All have agreed in considering the ninth house as that

belonging to religion and faith... They say, then, that the planets are in conjunction and embrace one another in turn, and this happens when they are in the same sign and especially when they are in the same degree and in the sixteenth minute of that degree or below it. Therefore the philosophers maintain that Jupiter, from his conjunction with other planets, has signification regarding the division of religions and faith. Since there are six planets with which he can be united and in conjunction, they therefore assert that there must be six principal sects in the world.⁶⁶

From this point, he now examines the religions that are signified through the conjunction between Jupiter and the various planets. Included in his analysis is the religion of the Sarasins:

If he is in conjunction with Venus, his reference is said to be the law of the Saracens, which is wholly voluptuous and lascivious. Although Mahomet reduced this law to writing, yet through long ages it was regarded by its votaries as the rule of life. Whence the book *De vitae sua mutatione*, attributed to Ovid the poet, speaking of the lascivious sect, which the book stated was the law of the people in the poet's time, says

“In which anything pleasing is considered lawful,
Although a written law regarding it is not yet found.”

This law more than six hundred years later Mahomet reduced to writing in a book called Alcoran.⁶⁷

Thus, Bacon reasserts a common charge leveled against Islam by medieval Christian theologians, that it was a religion that emphasized the pleasures of this life, but he does so in the context of a discussion of the influence and movements of the planets.

However, Bacon is of the opinion that the religion of the Sarasins will enjoy but a fixed period of time before its eventual demise, and claims to find evidence for this assertion in the works of previous scholars:

Concerning the destruction of the law of Mahomet they speak clearly and with certainty. For according to what Albumazar says in the eighth chapter of the second book, the law of Mahomet cannot last more than 693 years... It is now the six hundred and sixty-fifth year of the Arabs from the time of Mahomet, and therefore it will quickly be destroyed by the grace of God, which must be a great consolation to Christians... Already the greater part of the Saracens have been destroyed by the Tartars, as well as the capital of their kingdom, which was Baldac [Baghdad], and their caliph, who was like a pope over them. These things happened twelve years ago.⁶⁸

Perhaps with the imminent demise of the Sarasin religion in mind, Bacon is prompted to render a final verdict on the religion. In so doing, he does not display the same level of

hostility so often found in the writings of many of his contemporaries on the same subject:

Although all things do not suffice to show fully the secrets of that sect, yet they give convincing evidence on the question of whether this is a sect, and also in regard to its quality in general, so that in our admiration of the wisdom granted to them we can easily excuse their ignorance in falling short of full certification of Christian rite, since they had not been instructed in it. We should praise them because they agree with us and confirm our profession.⁶⁹

In his analysis of the religion of the Sarasins, Bacon goes into greater detail than he does in either his discussion of the lands they inhabit or of their genealogy. As a group, they are but one of many found within the known world, and they do not have the historical pedigree of some of the others. However, as a religious community, they account for one of the six major historical religious movements, and are relevant both in the present context, and in the immediate and distant future. In the end, for Roger Bacon the Sarasins as an ethnic/racial group are most relevant because of, and are thus defined by, their religion.

Roger Bacon's focus on the religion of the Sarasins as their defining characteristic reflects a common tendency among medieval Europeans, theologians in particular, one found in both fiction and non-fiction. The cultural, ethnic, and racial complexities inherent in the construct of "Arab" identity, the penetration of aspects of Arab culture into Muslim states (particularly in the initial stages of Islamization), and the heterogeneous nature of the Muslim world make, and have made, ethnographic studies difficult even for scholars familiar with the Eastern Mediterranean, to say nothing of Western scholars of the Middle Ages who were largely unfamiliar with it, and also hostile to their inhabitants. The Western attempt to categorize Muslims, and Arab Muslims in particular, often resulted in the conflation of race and religion (traces of which are still evident in the modern discourse). The fact that there were not, for Western

scholars, easily discernible boundaries between the different ethnic and racial groups that comprised the Medieval Muslim world, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, often complicated the issue in a way that made the Muslim world ethnographically incomprehensible. As such, the common denominator for Western scholars and writers became Islam.

If the religion of the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa was what linked them in the eyes of Western writers, then it was also what made them utterly alien, even monstrous, as well. The adoption of Islam alienated these peoples from the Latin West, and particularly painful for some Western scholars was the fact that places which had once constituted the heart of the Christian world and were even in some cases the very birthplace of Christianity, were now populated by adherents of another faith. In the span of a few centuries the birthplaces of Augustine of Hippo, Athanasius and John of Damascus had become foreign to the Latin West, and in place of these familiar figures now stood a people who were culturally and religiously distant.

The loss of the Holy Land to Islam in and of itself was problematic for Western scholars. In his *Summa totius haeresis Saracenorum*, the famous abbot Peter of Cluny attempts to explain the spread of Islam as a product of the fortunate intersection of history and opportunism:

Forthwith, while the Roman Empire was declining, nay nearly ceasing, with the permission of Him through who kings rule [Prov. 8:16; Eccles. 24:9] there arose to power the dominion of the Arabs or Saracens, who were infested with this plague. And occupying by force of arms little by little the greater parts of Asia, with all Africa and a part of Spain, just as it transferred its rule upon its subjects, so also did it transfer its error.⁷⁰

In a similar manner, the archbishop William of Tyre describes the spread of Islam in his *History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, although he attributes a greater role to the use of violence, striking a familiar chord with other Western accounts of this subject:

This first-born son of Satan falsely declared that he was a prophet sent from God and thereby led astray the lands of the East, especially Arabia. The poisonous seed which he sowed so permeated the provinces that his successors employed sword and violence, instead of preaching and exhortation, to compel the people, however reluctant, to embrace the erroneous tenets of the prophet.⁷¹

Such accounts serve to explain the apparent success of another religion in displacing Christianity from its ancestral homeland, while simultaneously focusing attention on the malevolence of the Saracens, who, through violence and deceit, were able to lead so many into what was perceived to be error.

For these scholars, the effects of the Islamization of the Eastern Mediterranean and its inhabitants, as well as its effects on other areas and peoples, were clear. It had transformed these formerly Christian peoples, remade them into something misshapen and monstrous. As such, Saracens, when referred to as a nation or race by medieval commentators, were often depicted as monstrous, savage, and/or demonic. In the fourth book of his treatise *Against the Pagans*, Alain de Lille characterizes the religion and its adherents in the following terms:

Muhammed's monstrous life, more monstrous sect and most monstrous end is manifestly found in his deeds. He, inspired by the evil spirit, founded an abominable sect, one suitable for fleshly indulgences, not disagreeable to the pleasures of the flesh; and therefore these carnal men, allured by his sect, and humiliated by the errors of various precepts, have died and continue to die miserably; the people call them with the usual appellation Saracens or pagans.⁷²

In a similar vein, Fulcher of Chartres recounts Pope Urban II's warning during his call to Crusade of the resulting shame that would accompany the Christian soldiers "if a race so despicable, degenerate, and enslaved by demons should thus overcome a people endowed with faith in Almighty God and resplendent in the name of Christ."⁷³

The challenge posed by the Muslims, although perhaps vaguely reminiscent of those presented by the pagan Germanic tribes of the Late Antique Period, was unique due to the alternative, complex religious outlook that they carried with them, a threat whose

capacity to effect change within the Christian world had been demonstrated by the conquest and ultimate conversion of the lands of the Near East. The eventual response to both Islam and the Muslims would be marked by both intentional and unintentional misinterpretation and distortion of facts on the part of Western scholars, who often confused and conflated race, culture and religion. In the process of describing Saracens, Western scholars often did not appear to differentiate between Saracens and the Saracen religion in such a way as to clearly identify what constituted Saracen-ness. As such, one is left with a perplexing question: is one *born* a Saracen (i.e. as the offspring of Saracen parents) or does one *become* Saracen (i.e. through the affectation of Saracen customs and/or conversion to the Saracen religion)? Because of the complex nature of the Muslim societies upon which the concept of Saracen-ness was loosely based, the answer to this question was never clearly articulated, but rather religion, the one constant among the Saracens regardless of race, language, or location, was adopted as *the* defining characteristic for all Saracens. And as this foundational characteristic was understood by Western scholars to be aberrant and monstrous, so the adherents, who were defined solely on the basis of their faith, became monstrous in the eyes of their Western counterparts.

In addition to the medieval works on geography and the theological responses to Islam and Muslims, another important source of information regarding the various peoples of the world was the medieval travel narrative. Unlike the medieval romances, which often required a suspension of belief on the part of their audiences, the information regarding the inhabitants of the various nations that comprised each travel narrative was important, as it was this information that drove the narrative. As the success of the travel narrative was in part dependant on the credence given the facts contained therein by the

audience at large, many of the more egregious instances of dramatic license found in the romances are not present in the travel narratives, and issues of culture, religion, and social practices are approached in an appreciably more sophisticated manner. There are, of course, innumerable factual errors and instances of dramatic license on the parts of the writers, but such instances are limited to a far greater extent than what is found in the medieval romances, and it is not entirely improbable that what is recognized as fiction today in some of the travel narratives may have been accepted as fact. Even though such travel itineraries often included large sections of material that was clearly fanciful, such material was generally based on or taken verbatim from previous works of a similar vein, and was, as such, acceptable to a medieval audience.

Of the numerous works that comprise the genre of medieval travel literature, perhaps the most famous “English” account is *Mandeville’s Travels*. With an itinerary that included the Levant, India (including the realm of Prester John), Ethiopia, and the kingdom of the Mongol Khan, the *Mandeville* writer purports to describe the ethnography, topography, and relevant history of many of the areas of interest in what was the known world outside of Europe. Throughout the account, the *Mandeville* writer’s focus in recounting his purported experiences is to engage his audience; he only discusses aspects of his travels that would be common to any visitor from abroad, and the reader is never afforded any insight into the ways in which the author may have been personally affected by his experiences.⁷⁴ At various points within the text, the author even engages in a discussion of issues related to geography, asserting the sphericity and circumnavigability of the earth, as well as his opinion that it is inhabitable in all places. He also contends that the antipodes exist, are inhabited and are reachable. He also

discusses the climates of the various areas he has visited, and the effect that the climate of each land has on the activities and customs of its indigenous population.⁷⁵ Moreover, the writer's inclusion of the fantastic, in particular as it relates to monstrous races and exoticised cultural practices, which are often placed alongside information that is more or less accurate, further adds to the overall value of the work in accurately representing the understanding of his time relative to the world beyond the borders of Western Europe, a fact that is further reinforced by the work's popularity in medieval Europe.⁷⁶

However, using *Mandeville's Travels* as a resource for the prevailing Western European attitudes towards the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly as regards ethnography is problematical. The most pressing issue is that of the text's date of composition. This study focuses chiefly on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the *Travels* were composed more than a century later than the end of the Third Crusade.⁷⁷ With such a lapse in time, one cannot simply assume that *Mandeville's Travels* represents Western Europeans' understanding of and attitudes towards the Eastern Mediterranean.

But there is no reason to think that the Western European ideas about ethnography underwent significant change until the advent of the Age of Discovery, when empirical evidence would put to rest many of the theories of the past. The launching of Crusades subsequent to the Third Crusade was, if anything, testament to the fact that many of the ideas with the greatest intellectual currency during the period of the Third Crusade were still en vogue in Western Europe, and were in all probability reinforced and intensified by the events of the following century, particularly the Fall of Acre. And so it seems that *Mandeville's Travels* is representative of a Western ethnographic ideal which had been informed by the scholarship of both the distant and recent past, and by the reaction to the

events of the recent past. All of this would have yielded a view of the outside world, and the Eastern Mediterranean in particular, very much in accord with that of the era of the Third Crusade.

Such concerns set aside, the text itself is an excellent example of the medieval travel narrative. The greater focus of *Mandeville's Travels* is on the realm of the Great Khan of China, the various places of interest for Christians in the Near East, and India and the kingdom of Prester John. However, Saracens do make periodic appearances throughout the text, and a chapter is dedicated to their beliefs and customs. The *Mandeville* writer first focuses his attention on Saracens in the chapter in which he provides an account of the "Tower of Babylon" in Cairo and of the names of the previous sultans. Prior to the account in question, the author presents the reader with his own credentials as one familiar with the Saracen world, and the sultan of Cairo in particular:

I oughthe right wel to knowen it for I dueled with him as souldyours in his werres a gret while ayen the Bedouynes. And he wolde haue maryed me fulle highly to a gret princes daughter yif I wolde han forsaken my lawe and my beleue, but I thanke God I had no wille to don it for no thing that he behighte me.⁷⁸

Having established his position as an authority, the *Mandeville* writer moves on, enumerating the five kingdoms over which the sultan holds sway: Egypt, Jerusalem, Syria, Aleppo, and Arabia.⁷⁹ The author also includes an account of the previous sultans and their political fortunes, a description of the current sultan and the power – political, and military – that he wields, and an account of the "Tower of Babylon" (which he distinguishes from the Biblical Tower of Babel)⁸⁰ in the chapter, before rounding it out with a description of Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, and the area that is modern-day Iraq. However, in this chapter, the focus of the account is on the environment of a city of international repute and the surrounding areas. The description of the "soudan"

foreshadows coming descriptions of the Great Khan, Prester John, and even the Emperor of Persia, particularly in the attention paid to the lands in the sultan's possession, the scope of his military and political power and manifestations of this power, and the history of his predecessors. As such, Sarasins are very much in the background in this chapter, with elements of Sarasin culture factoring into the account inasmuch as they affect the overall environment of the areas in question. While the *Mandeville* writer does provide a great deal of information in the chapter in question (including an interesting and accurate description of the Arabian Peninsula),⁸¹ Sarasins and their culture are clearly not front-and-center at this point in the account.

If Sarasins appear as parts of the background within the context of *Mandeville* writer's account in the earlier chapters of the work, it is due mainly to his focus on an aspect of the journey that would have been of far greater importance to his audience: the relevance of the areas to the accounts in the Old and New Testaments, and specific landmarks of interest along the way. As the main focus of this section of the account is the journey to Jerusalem and the areas of Syria and Palestine, his attention is on a narrative that played out centuries prior to the Arab expansion and the subsequent emergence of an Arab culture in the Levant and North Africa. This stage of the account carries strong religious overtones, and because the current inhabitants of the area in question cannot participate in the discourse as coreligionists, their presence in the narrative must be minimized.

For the *Mandeville* writer, like Bacon and other medieval theologians, the defining characteristic of the Sarasins is their religion, for while there are numerous references to Sarasins throughout his description of Jerusalem and the surrounding lands,

the only instances of a detailed discussion regarding Sarasins and Sarasin culture involve matters of religious belief and practice. In this there is but one exception, although it is somewhat familiar in its nature. In Chapter XXIV, the *Mandeville* writer provides a genealogical survey of the Tartars in which Sarasins among others, are also named:

Yee shulle vndirstonde that alle the world was destroyed be Noes Flood saf only Noe and his wif and his children. Noe had iii. sones, Sem, Cham, and Iapheth. This Cam was he that saugh his fadres preuy members naked whan he slepte and scorned hem and schewed hem with his finger to his bretheren in scornynge wise, and therefore he was cursed of God; and Iapheth turned his face away and couered hem. Theise iii. bretheren had cesoun in alle the lond. And this Cham for his crueltee toke the gretter and the beste partie toward the est, that is clept Asye. And Sem toke Affryk. And Iapheth toke Europe...

And of the generacoun of Sem ben comen the Sarrazines. And of the generacoun of Iapheth is comen the peple of Israel and [vs] though that wee duellen in Europe... Natheless the soothe is this: that the Tartarynes and thei that duellen in the gret Asye, thei camen of Cham. But the emperour of Chatay clepeth him not Cham bu[t] Can, and I schalle telle you how.⁸²

This passage is singular in the fact that it diverges from the general narrative in which Africans (as well as Arabs) are linked to Ham, and thus God's curse. Here, it is the people of Asia, and in particular the Tartars, who are identified as the progeny of Ham, and as such, the inheritors of divine displeasure, while the Saracens are linked to the relatively benign Shem. However, even in this the *Mandeville* writer does not stray too far from the general narrative in its entirety; while Arabs are not linked to Ham, they are linked to Africans through descent from Shem. While the reason for this dramatic shift in the *Mandeville* writer's narrative, wherein the people of Asia are identified as the descendants of Ham, is not wholly apparent, it is possible that it is a tacit reflection of the developments of the thirteenth century, in which the Mongols burst upon the world's stage in dramatic fashion, establishing themselves as perhaps the preeminent threat to Western Europe, and recalling to mind the prophesied calamities that were to accompany the end of the world. In this instance, the author may have followed in the footsteps of the scholars in looking to the Bible for an explanation for the Mongols. But rather than

looking for the answer in prophecies of catastrophes to come, he turned to the Book of Genesis, seeking an explanation in accounts of the past.

However, notwithstanding the genealogical digression regarding the Tartars, the main focus of the author relative to Sarasins is on matters of their religious beliefs and practices. Within this context there are several general themes: Sarasin beliefs proper, Sarasin beliefs relative to the figure of Jesus (and of the amenability of these beliefs to Christianity), and a “biography” of the Prophet. Of the Sarasins’ beliefs, the *Mandeville* writer offers a pithy summation in describing the contents of the *Alkaron*:⁸³

...in the whiche boke among other thinges is written, as I haue often tyme seen and radd, that the gode schulle gon to Paradys and the euele to Helle. And that beleeuen alle Sarazines.⁸⁴

The *Mandeville* writer, in discussing Sarasin beliefs, also enumerates the bounties of paradise in accordance with Sarasin teachings, describing paradise as a veritable garden of delight in which can be found fruits regardless of season, rivers of milk, honey, sweet water and wine, houses made of precious stones and precious metals, and maidens who will remain thus in perpetuity.⁸⁵ The author also makes a distinction between belief and practice in the area of marriage that, while incorrect in its characterization of the law in question,⁸⁶ is singular in distinguishing between popular practice and doctrine:

Also Machomet commanded in his Alkaron that euery man scholde haue ii. wyfes or iii. or ii.iii., but now thei taken vnto ix. and of lemmannes als manye as he may susteyne.⁸⁷

This distinction on the part of the author is all the more remarkable, inasmuch that without this distinction the Sarasins’ faith itself might be perceived in an even less favorable light in the context of their behavior.

In the main, the *Mandeville* writer’s approach in expounding upon the beliefs of the Sarasins can be described as objective (relative to the writings of many of his

contemporaries and predecessors in the West), and at times even sympathetic. Here, for example, is his version of the type of explanation a Sarasin might provide of his religion:

And yif ony man aske hem what is here beleue, thei answeren thus and in this forme: 'Wee beleuen God formyour of Heuene and of erthe and of alle othere thinges that He made, and withouten Him is no thing made. And we beleuen of th[e D]ay of Doom, and that euery man schalle haue his meryte after he hath disserued. And we beleue it for soth alle that God hath seyde be the mouthes of his prophetes.'⁸⁸

In this explanation via an anonymous Sarasin, he approximates the religion of the Eastern Mediterranean Muslims in a far more accurate manner than many of his contemporaries.

In describing the religion of the Sarasins, the author also devotes a considerable amount of time to a figure with whom his audience would have been more familiar, Jesus, emphasizing the ways in which the Saracen religion is in fact amenable to Christianity. Thus, the *Mandeville* writer informs his audience that Saracens believe in the Virgin birth,⁸⁹ and in the miracles commonly associated with Jesus,⁹⁰ along with an additional miracle, that of Jesus speaking to Mary when but an infant.⁹¹ The reader also learns of the Sarasin belief in Mary's suffering during childbirth,⁹² as well as a legend pertaining to her alleged fears that the angel Gabriel was really a local necromancer in disguise, and the story behind this particular individual.⁹³ Moreover, according to the *Mandeville* writer, Sarasins hold Jesus in higher regard than the other prophets:

And amonges alle prophetes Ihesu was the most excellent and the most worthi next God, and that He made the gospels, in the whiche is gode doctryne and helesfulle, fulle of claritee and sothfastness and trewe preching to hem that beleue in God...⁹⁴

And thei seyn also that Abraham was frend to God; and Moyses was familer spekere with God; and Ihesu Crist was the word and the spirit of God; and that Machomete was messenger of God. And thei seyn that of these iiij. Ihesu was the most worthi and the most excellent and the most gret...⁹⁵

Furthermore, the author assures his audience that Sarasins still display the utmost respect for the Bible:

And whan thei mowe holden the boke of the gospels of oure lord writen, and namely *Missus est angelus Gabriel*, that gospelle thei seyn, tho that ben lettred, often tymes in

here orisouns, and thei kissen it and worschipen it with gret deuocoun.⁹⁶

As such, Sarasins are here portrayed as being, if not entirely Christian, at least near to Christians in many respects.

However, the differences in doctrine regarding the role of Jesus remain, and in this matter the *Mandeville* writer is not silent, providing a summation of the Sarasin position on the controversy:

For He was neuere crucifyed, as thei seyn, but that God made Him to stye vp to Him withouten deth and withouten anoye. But He Transfigured His lykness into Iudas Scarioth, and him crucifyeden the Iewes and wenden that it had ben Ihesu Crist, but Ihesu steygh to Heuene alle quyk... And thei seyn yit that, and He had been crucifyed, that God had don ayen His rightwisness for to suffer Ihesu Crist that was innocent to ben put vpon the cros withouten gylt. And in this article thei seyn that wee faylen and that the gret rightwisness of God ne myghte not suffer so gret a wrong.⁹⁷

Having explained the Sarasin position regarding the crucifixion, the author then presents a Christian corrective:

And in this fayleth here feyth. For thei knouelechen wel that the werkes of Ihesu Crist ben gode and His wordes and His dedes and His doctryne be His gospelles weren trewe and His miracles also trewe; and the blessedde virgine Marie is good and holy mayden before and after the birthe of Ihesu Crist; and alle tho that beleuen perfiteley in God schul ben saued.⁹⁸

The *Mandeville* writer adopts a similar approach in explaining the Sarasin position in rejecting the Christian concept of the Trinity, but here he attributes it to silence on the concept within the *Alkaron* and a general lack of understanding on the part of the Sarasins.⁹⁹ In the end, the *Mandeville* writer's judgment on the Sarasins' faith is thus:

...thei han many gode articles of oure feyth, alle be it that thei have no parfite lawe and feyth as Cristene men han... for thei han the gospelles and the prophecyes and the Byble written in here langage; wherfore thei conen meche of Holy Writ but thei vnderstonde it not but after the letter.¹⁰⁰

However, he assures his audience that in general the Sarasins are, because of their proximity to Christians in articles of faith, "lightly conuerted, and namely tho that vnderstanden the scriptures and the prophecyes."¹⁰¹

The overall objectivity of the *Mandeville* writer (relative to other Western writers) even extends to his “biography” of the Prophet. While in the main the “biography” is fictitious (and includes accounts of the Prophet as an astronomer and governor of Khurasan, being afflicted with epilepsy, and an account connecting the prohibition of alcohol to the murder of a hermit by his companions while he was in a drunken stupor),¹⁰² the account is nonetheless devoid of much of the vitriol that often accompanies Western “biographies”, and even relates the legend of a miracle said to have taken place during the Prophet’s youth.¹⁰³ Moreover, within the “biography”, the *Mandeville* writer includes some interesting genealogical information regarding the different groups of Sarasins:

This Machomete regned in Arabye the year... vi [c.] and x. and was of the generacoun of Ysmael, that was Abrahames sone that he gat vpon Agar his chamberere. And therfore ther ben Sarazines that ben clept Ismaelytenes, and some Agaryenes of Agar, and the othere properly ben clept Sarrazines of Sarra; and summe ben clept Moabytes, and summe Amonytes, for the ii. Sones of Loth, Moab and Amon, that he begat on his doughtres that weren afterward grete erthely princes.¹⁰⁴

It is interesting to note that within the context of this “biography”, the *Mandeville* writer refrains from passing judgment, perhaps trusting the contents of the account to speak in his stead.

However, the *Mandeville* writer does not refrain from passing judgment on his coreligionists, albeit in a circuitous manner. This admonition comes in the form of an outburst on the part of the “soudan” during the course of a private conversation with the *Mandeville* writer. The sultan inquires after the manner in which Christian sovereigns govern their countries, and when his guest responds that they govern justly, the sultan corrects him, laying the sins of his fellow Christians before him:

For yee Cristene men ne recche right noght how vntrewely ye seruen God. Yee scholde yeuen ensample to the lewed peple for to do wel, and yee yeuen ensample to don euylle... And also the Cristene men enforcen hem in alle maneres that thei mowen for to fighten and

for to desceyuen that on that other... Thei scholden ben simple, meke, and fulle of almesdede as Ihesu was, in whom thei trowe; but thei ben alle the contrarie and euere enclyned to the euylle and to don euylle... And non of hem holdeth feyth to another, but thei defoulen here lawe that Ihesu Crist betook hem to kepe for here saluacoun.¹⁰⁵

Moreover, the *Mandeville* writer, through the words of the sultan, attributes Christian military reverses to the pervasive immorality throughout the Christian world:

And thus for here synnes han thei lost alle this lond that wee holden. For for hire synnes God hath taken hem into our hondes, nought only be strengthe of oureself but for here synnes. For wee knowen wel in verry soth that whan yee seruen God, God wil helpe you, and whan He is with you, no man may ben ayenst you.¹⁰⁶

The fact that he, as a Christian, is receiving this admonition from a Sarasin, who is, as such, ostensibly in error, is not lost on the *Mandeville* writer,¹⁰⁷ who leaves his audience to ponder both the moral and military implications of the sultan's words.

But despite the relative objectivity on the part of the *Mandeville* writer in his description of Sarasins and their religion, his religious perspective is apparent throughout, whether articulated directly or indirectly through a Sarasin proxy. Thus despite the present strength of the Sarasins, the author assures the audience that Sarasins know by their own prophecies that “the lawe of Machomete schalle faylen as the lawe of the Iewes dide, and that the lawe of Cristene peple schalle laste to the Day of Doom.”¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the very same “soudan” who berates Christians for their immorality promises the author and the audience, on the strength of Sarasin prophecies, “that Cristene men schulle wynnen ayen this lond out of oure hondes whan thei seruen God more deuoutly.”¹⁰⁹ As such, the criticism of the *Mandeville* writer, both directly and indirectly, is intended to motivate an audience of European Christians to emulate the Sarasins in their adherence to their faith through their actions.

For the Sarazines ben gode and feythfulle, and thei kepen entirely the commandment of the holy book Alkaron that God sente hem be His messenger Machomet, to the whiche, as thei seyn, seynt Gabrielle the aungel often tyme tolde the wille of God.¹¹⁰

Nevertheless, this use of Sarasins as a type of virtuous pagan has its limits, which the *Mandeville* writer appears to identify in discussing the subject of Christian conversion to the Sarasin religion. For him, there can be only three explanations for such instances of conversion: poverty, ignorance or evil.¹¹¹ Thus, in explaining the beliefs and customs of the Sarasins, the *Mandeville* writer remains cognizant of the inherent danger of expounding upon the tenets of a religion that is perceived as being in competition with Christianity, and perhaps to an even greater extent because of the fact that he is portraying the religion in question in a relatively objective manner.

In the end, whether in serious scholarly or theological tracts, or in works composed with a larger, secular audience in mind such as travel narratives, it was religion that emerged as the defining characteristic of the Arabs in general (and to a lesser degree, Muslims of other races as well), filling the gaps left by ethnographic and historical accounts, while also providing a framework within which such aspects of Arab identity (or Sarasin-ness) could be approached and discussed. But perhaps even more importantly, religion provided an amorphous context in which specificity was not required, which was of great utility for writers approaching a group about which accurate specific information was in short supply. The cover of religion allowed writers to approach Arabs not as Arabs but as Muslims, or, in the context of Medieval Western Europe, Saracens not as a racial group, but as followers of the Saracen religion. As such, the parameters of Sarasin-ness were flexible to the extreme, as even pagan Europeans could be Sarasins in some of the works of popular fiction (to the extent that the Sarasin religion could be defined as idolatrous). Moreover, the Sarasin racial/religious construct, with its ill-defined boundaries, never clearly distinguished between the concepts of race and religion, so that

racial Other and religious Other was conflated, and either and/or both ideas could be evoked at the discretion of the writer. And as the religion of the Sarasin was identified as monstrous by Western scholars, so was the Sarasin adherent, for whom religion was the singular defining characteristic. This idea would prove to be as useful to the writers of travel narratives such as *Mandeville's Travels* as it was to theologians such as Peter of Cluny and scholars such as Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus.

¹ “Sarasin(e).” *Middle English Dictionary*. Ed. Robert E. Lewis. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1986. 86.

² *King Horn, Floriz and Blauncheflur, The Assumption of our Lady*. Early English Text Society. Ed. George H. McKnight. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1901. ll. 1413-16.

³ “Turk.” *Middle English Dictionary*. Ed. Robert E. Lewis. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993. 1159.

⁴ Ibid. 13.

⁵ A.H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 39.

⁶ Ibid. 51.

⁷ Ibid. 98-9.

⁸ *Etymologiae sive originum libri XX* will henceforward be referred to by the abbreviated title *Etymologiae*.

⁹ *Geography in the Middle Ages*, 28.

¹⁰ It is worth mentioning that Isidore of Seville includes the “monstrous races” in his ethnographic survey of the world, and in fact these races are the subjects of a lengthy exposition on his part. Both of the passages regarding the monstrous races and the genealogical information pertaining to the other races of the world were very influential on later medieval scholars’ treatment of the same groups.

¹¹ Stephen A. Barney, ed., *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 191.

¹² By his estimation, thirty-one of the seventy-two known nations of the world are the descendants of Ham, twenty-seven of Shem, and fifteen of Japheth. Ibid. 192.

¹³ “Filii Cham quattor, ex quibus orate sunt gentes haec: Chus, a quo Aethiopes progeniti, Mesaim, a quo Aegyptii perhibentur exorti. Phut, a quo Libyi. Vnde et Mauretaniae fluvius usque in praesens Phut dicitur, omnisque circa eum region Phuthensis. Chanaam, a quo Afri et Phoenices et Chananeorum decem gentes. Item ex nepotibus Cham filii Chus, nepotes Cham sex. Filii Chus: Saba et Havila, Sabatha, Rhegma, Seba, Cuza. Saba, a quo progeniti et appellati Sabei... Hi sunt Arabes... Rhegma vero et Seba et Cuza paulatim antique vocabula perdiderunt, et quae nunca a veteribus habeant ignorantur. Filii Rhegma, Saba et Dadan. Hic Saba per Sin litteram scribitur in Hebraeo; ille autem superior Saba per Samech, a quo appellatos Sabaeos: interpretatur autem nunc Saba Arabia.” Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi. *Etymologiarum Sive Originum Libri XX*. Ed. W.M. Lindsay. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911. Bk. IX, Sec. II. pp. 10-19. See also Stephen A. Barney, trans., *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 193.

¹⁴ “Saba, ei dicti... quod est supplicare et venerari, quia divinitatem per ipsorum tura veneramus. ipsi sunt et Arabes, quia in montibus Arabiae sunt, qui vocantur Libanus et Antilibanus, ubi turi colliguntur.” *Etymologiarum*, Bk. IX, Sec. II. pp. 49-50. See also *Etymologies*, 194.

¹⁵ “Saraceni dicti, vel quia ex Sarra genitos se praedicent, vel sicut gentiles aiunt, quod ex orgine Syrorum sint, quasi Syriginae. Hi peramplam habitant solitudinem. Ipsi sunt et Ismaelitae, ut liber Geneseos docet, quod sint ex Ismaele. Ipsi Cedar a filio Ismaelis. Ipsi Agareni ab Agar;

qui ut diximus, perverso nomine Saraceni vocantur, quia ex Sarra se genitos gloriantur.” *Etymologiarum*, Bk. IX, Sec. II. pp. 57-8. See also *Etymologies*, 195.

¹⁶ “Secundum diversitatem enim caeli et facies hominum et colores et corporum quantitates et animorum diversitates existent. Inde Romanes graves, Graecos leves, Afros versipelles, Gallos natura feroces atque aciores ingenio pervidemus, quod natura climatum facit.” *Etymologiarum*, Bk. IX, Sec. II. pp. 105-6. See also *Etymologies*, 198.

¹⁷ Just such an example can be found in Pope Urban II’s famous call to Crusade in Clermont (1095); which is cited later in this chapter.

¹⁸ Ibid. 199. A further discussion of the monstrous races (in particular the Cynocephali) of the *Etymologiae* and of the possible implications of their being located in Africa and India relative to Western perceptions occurs in a later section of this chapter. However, the main thrust of the discussion will involve the Cynocephali and their connection to Western depictions of Muslims.

¹⁹ “Aethiopes dicti a filio Cham, qui vocatus est Chus, ex quo originem trahunt. Chus enim Hebraica lingua Aethiopes interpretatur. Hi quondam ab Indo flumine consurgentes, iuxta Aegyptum inter Nilum et Oceanum, in meridie sub ipsa solis vicinitate insiderunt, quorum tres sunt populi: Hesperii, Garamantes et Indi. Hesperii sunt occidentis, Garamantes Tripolis, Indi orientis.” *Etymologiarum*, Bk. IX, Sec. II. pp. 127-9. See also *Etymologies*, 199.

²⁰ The Greek word for “burnt-faced person” is “Aethiops,” from which Ethiopian is derived. Snowden, Jr., Frank M. “Greeks and Ethiopians” in *Greeks and Barbarians: Essays on the Interactions between Greeks and Non-Greeks in Antiquity and the Consequences for Eurocentrism*. John E. Coleman and Clark A. Walz, eds. Bethesda, Md.: CDL, 1997. 103

²¹ Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, & Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003) 36.

²² “Numquam enim Turchus pede concerto martem audit, sed pulsus loco longe tendit neruos et permitit uulnera uentis, et quoniam habet tela mortifero suco ebria, in homine quem percutit non uirtus sed uirus mortem facit. Quicquid igitur, fortunae, non fortitudini attribuerim, quod pugnat fuga et veneno. Constat profecto quod omnis nation quae in Eoa plaga nascitur, nimio solis ardore siccata, amplius quidem sapit, sed minus habet sanguinis; ideoque uicinam pugnam fugiunt, quia parum sanguinis se habere norunt.” William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum anglorum* 4.347.8, R.A.B. Mynors, ed. and trans. *William of Malmesbury, Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings, vol. 1* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) 600-603.

²³ *Saracens, Demons, & Jews*, 83-4.

²⁴ William of Conches, *A Dialogue on Natural Philosophy (Dragmaticon Philosophiae)*, trans. Italo Ronca and Matthew Curr (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997) xv-xvi.

²⁵ Ibid. xvii.

²⁶ Ibid. xxiii.

²⁷ Ibid. 120-128.

²⁸ Ibid. 124.

²⁹ The Antipodes were so named because they were believed to occupy a position that was the exact opposite of the northern temperate zone in which the habitable areas of the known world were located.

³⁰ Ibid. 125-6.

³¹ Ibid. 127-8.

³² Ibid. 110.

³³ Albertus Magnus (Albert “the Great”) was also known as Albert of Cologne, Albert the German, Albert von Bollstadt and Albert the Teuton.

Sr. Jean Paul Tilman, *An Appraisal of the Geographical Works of Albertus Magnus and His Contributions to Geographical Thought* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1971) 14.

³⁴ There has been a great deal of speculation as to the exact date of Albertus’ birth, with some proposing a date as early as 1193, and others favoring a date as late as 1206/7. However, it is maintained by most scholars that the most likely date of birth for Albertus Magnus is circa 1200, and the general opinion is that his life spanned the years circa 1200-1280. James A. Weisheipl, O.P., “The Life and Works of St. Albert the Great,” *Albertus Magnus and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays, 1980*, Ed. James A. Weisheipl, O.P. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980) 15-16.

³⁵ Ibid. 28.

³⁶ Ibid. 14.

³⁷ *Liber de natura locorum* will henceforward be referred to by the abbreviated title *De Natura Locorum*.

³⁸ *An Appraisal of the Geographical Works of Albertus Magnus and His Contributions to Geographical Thought*, 50.

³⁹ Ibid. 76.

⁴⁰ See the discussion on the status of the fourth clime in the works of Muslim geographers (esp. Ibn Khaldūn) in Chapter 3.

⁴¹ *An Appraisal of the Geographical Works of Albertus Magnus*, 76.

⁴² “Est aute dubitation de his qua(?) dicta sunt. vtrum videlicet locus quarti climatis veresit s teperator inter loca habitabilia, quoniam exceeds in frigidissimo non est clima septimu, sed potius locus inhabitabilis sub polo aglonari. Similiter aute exceeds in calidissimo non est locus sub egnocial, & citra par in latitudine primi climatis, sed potius sub tropico qua(?) latitude est secudi climatis, mediu ergo per equidistatiam acceptam inter frigidissimu, quod est latitudinis nonaginta graduu vel paru minus, & inter calidissimu quod est. 24. graduu, vider esse op est latitudinus amplius [?] 40.graduu & hoc est sextu & and septimu clima.” Albertus Magnus, *Liber de natura Locorum*. 1515. [Bayerische StaatsBibliothek](http://mdz10.bib-bvb.de/~db/bsb00006358), Digitalisierung [VD16-1]. <<http://mdz10.bib-bvb.de/~db/bsb00006358>> 9/06/08. 46. See also, *An Appraisal of the Geographical Works of Albertus Magnus*, 77.

⁴³ “...cuius indicium videt quod hoies il loru climatu pulcherrimi sunt in corpore, procure stature, & uenusti coloris, cu hominess quarti climatis sint parui, & susci coloris, vbi eni coplexio hois maxime coualescit illud videre magis cognuere hoi ad habitandu, coualescit aut maxime ubi generalius pulchriores & fortiores & procerioris stature sunt hoies, & hoc est in septimo & in sexto climate sicut apparet...” *De natura*, 46. See also, *Appraisal*, 77.

⁴⁴ “...ad hoc videt esse quarti climatis calor maximus in æstate, & diminution pluui arum. Si enim esset temperatu simpliciter, vt inquit philosophi, tatus deberet in eo esse excessus frigoris in

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- hyeme, qua tus est excessus caloris in eo in æstate, & opposite huiusmodi experimur ad sensum, quia excedit in ipso calor estates, & no excedit in ipso frigus hyemis, & secundum has ratios temperatum in medio videt esse clima sextu, in quo nec sentitur excessus caloris in æstate, neq frigoris in hyeme...” *De natura*, 47. See also, *Appraisal*, 77-8.
- ⁴⁵ “...etia Lucanus de Arabibus, qui in torrida habitant, scribat dicens, quod vmbras quas habebat dextras, in terra sua, quando se conuertebat ad orietem, in meridie suo, venientes in quarta aquilonare, videbant ire sinistras, &ideo dicit loques ad eos. Ignotu vobis Arabes venistis in orbe.” *De natura*, 36. See also *Appraisal*, 63.
- ⁴⁶ “...postea aute quado a Sarracenis occupate sunt, plurimæ ear fracte sunt, & aliæ ædificatæ alior nominu, & quobusdam(?) etia earu noia sunt mutata.” *De natura*, 74. See also, *Appraisal*, 117.
- ⁴⁷ “Haru autem gentium noia multa mutate sunt, aut ex bellis aut depopulationibus terrar, aut forte propter nouas sectas, & religiones nomina mutauerut.” *De natura*, 74-5. See also, *Appraisal*, 117-8.
- ⁴⁸ David C. Lindberg, *Roger Bacon’s Philosophy of Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) xx-xxi.
- ⁴⁹ During the 1260s Bacon was transferred from Oxford to Paris, apparently against his will, so that his activities could be more closely monitored by his superiors. It was during this time, and as a result of his correspondence with Guy de Foulques (who later became Pope Clement IV) that he composed the *Opus Majus*. Brian Clegg, *The First Scientist: A Life of Roger Bacon* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2003) 95-99.
- ⁵⁰ John Henry Bridges, *The Life & Work of Roger Bacon* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1914) 12.
- ⁵¹ *The First Scientist*, 99.
- ⁵² The seven sciences included perspective (optics), astronomy (which also included geography and astrology), what he called the “science of weights”, alchemy, medicine and experimental science. Ibid. 99-100.
- ⁵³ Ibid. 100.
- ⁵⁴ David Woodward and Herbert M. Howe, “Roger Bacon on Geography and Cartography,” *Roger Bacon and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays*, Ed. Jeremiah Hackett (New York: Brill, 1997) 200-1.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid. 211
- ⁵⁶ Ibid. 217.
- ⁵⁷ Roger Bacon, *The Opus Major of Roger Bacon, Vol. I*, Trans. Robert Belle Burke (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1962) 203.
- ⁵⁸ “Et nos videmus, quod omnia variantur secundum loca mundi diversa non solum in naturalibus, sed homines in moribus; quoniam alios mores habent Æthiopes, alios Hispani, alios Romani, & alios [Graeci].” Roger Bacon, *Fratri Rogeri Bacon, ordinis minorum, opus majus ad Clementem quartum, pontificem romanum. Ex MS. Codice Dubliniensi, cum aliis quibusdam collato, nunc primum editit*, Londini, 1733. 46. See also Robert Belle Burke, trans., *The Opus Major of Roger Bacon, Vol. I* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1962) 159.
- ⁵⁹ *Opus Major*, 339-43.

⁶⁰ “Tota igitur haec pars Æthiopiæ citra Meroen & Syenem & Heliopolim versus orientem sub Arabia continetur, & non solum hoc, sed quicquid est circa linguam, i.e. extremitatem maris Rubri & super littus ejus versus orientem a cuspide linguæ usque ad finem ejus Persicum: & extendit se a mare Rubro usque ad Pelusium Ægypti ad occidentem, & dilatat se ad septentrionem per totum desertum, in quo vagati sunt filii Israelis usque ad terram Philistinorum super mare nostrum conterminam Ægypto, & extensam ad orientem donec occurrat Amalechitarum region, quæ est ad orientem terræ Philistiim, & usque ad terram Edom, seu Idumæam, quæ ad orientem Amalech & usque ad terram Moab. Deinde flectit se magis versus septentrionem per terram Seon Regis Esebon, & Og Regis Basan usque ad montem Galaad & Libanum, & adhuc magis flectit se ad Septentrionem orientalem usque ad Ciliciam & Syriam Comagenam, & usque ad Euphratem.” *Fratri Rogeri*, 204-5. See also *Opus Major*, 343-4.

⁶¹ “Et est Baldac civitas regia, in qua Caliph Dominus Saracenitæ sectæ sedem sua dignitatis constituit.” *Fratri Rogeri*, 209. See also *Opus Major*, 351.

⁶² “In hac igitur regione pergrandi similiter & in Pharan habitaverunt filii Kethuræ & Agar, quos generavit Abraham, de quibus sit mention XXV capitulo Genesis. Et primo ab Euphrate incipit regio Nabathena a filio primo Ismaelis, qui vocatur Nabaiioth, sicut dicit Hieronymus, super Gen. xxv capitulo, & nunc dicto concordat Plinius I libro, nisi quod unam partem Nabathenorum vocat Nomades, qui vagantur circa Euphraten prope Chaldæos; post hos, versus desertum Pharan, est Cedar region, quæ ab altero filiorum Ismael nominator, qui Cedar vocatus est. Et quamvis aliæ regiones filiorum Ismael nominentur usque Sur, nam habitavit ab Evila usque Sur, sicut dicit scriptura, tamen omnes vocantur Cedar, sicut vult Hieronymus 5 libro super illud Isaia XXI. onus in Arabia, dicens, hic loquitur pro Cedar, quæ est region Ismaelitarum, qui dicuntur Agareni & Saraceni nomine perverso & 7 libro super capitulum Isaia LX. dicit de his regionibus Cedar & Nabathena, quod Cedar est region Saracenorum, qui in scriptura vocantur Ismaelitæ, & Nabioth est unus filiorum Ismael, quorum nominibus solitudo appellatur; quæ frugum inops, pecorum plena est.” *Fratri Rogeri*, 207-8. See also *Opus Major*, 348-9.

⁶³ “Deinde Graeci et Rutheni et multi alii schismatici similiter in errore perdurant quia non praedicatur eis veritas in eorum lingua, et Saraceni similiter et Pagani, ac Tartari, et caeteri infidels pertotum mundum.” *The “Opus Majus” of Roger Bacon*, Ed. John Henry Bridges (London: Williams & Norgate, 1900) 121. See also *Opus Major*, 111.

⁶⁴ “...& sunt secta Hebræorum, & Chaldæorum, & Ægyptiorum, & Agarenarum seu Saracenorum, qui fuerunt de Agar & Ismaele, secta Christi, ac secta Antichristi.” *Fratri Rogeri*, 160. See also *Opus Major*, 276.

⁶⁵ “Dicunt igitur Jovem & Venerem esse planetas benivolos & fortunatos, Saturnum & Martem malivolos & infortunatos; Mercurium dicunt medio modo se habere, quia cum bonis est bonus, cum malis malus, quia convertibilis naturæ est. De benivolis vero fortunatis dicunt Jovem meliorem esse, & majorem fortunam ei deberi, minoremque Veneri...dicunt Venerem significare super fortunas hujus vitæ, quantum ad ludos & gaudia atque lætitiā & hujusmodi, & Jupiter respectum habet ad bona alterius vitæ, quæ majora sunt.” *Fratri Rogeri*, 160. See also *Opus Major*, 276-7.

⁶⁶ “Prætera distinguunt totum cælum in XII partes, quæ vocantur domus, quæ distinguuntur per meridianum circulum & horizontem, & alios quatuor circulos intersecantes se in eorum sectionibus...Primam igitur domum dant Saturno, secundam Jovi, & ulterius secundum ordinem planetarum, ita quod VIII iterum datur Saturno, & nona Jovi. Consideraveruntque omnes concorditer quod domus nona est domus religionis & fidei...Dicunt igitur planetas conjungi &

complecti sibi invicem, & hoc est quando fuerunt in eodem signo & præcipue quando in eodem gradu & in XVI minuto illius gradus & infra. Volunt ergo philosophi Jovem ex sua conjunctione cum aliis planetis significare super sectam religionum & fidei. Et quia sunt VI planetæ, quibus complecti & conjungi potest, ideo affuerunt VI fore debere in mundo sectas principales.” *Fratris Rogeri*, 160-1. See also *Opus Major*, 277-8.

⁶⁷ “Si Veneri, significare dicitur super legem Saracenorum, quæ est tota voluptuosa & venereal, quam licit in scriptis Mahometus redegit, ipsa tamen per longa tempora in usu vitæ habebatur a suis cultoribus; unde in libro qui ascribitur Ovidio de vitæ suæ mutatione, cum loqueretur de secta venereal, quam hominibus fui temporis legem dixit esse, dixit in metro suo,

‘In qua, si libeat, quodcunque licere putatur,

Scripta licet super hoc nondum lex inveniatur;’

Quam postea per sexcentos annos & amplius scripsit Mahometus in libro, qui dicitur Alcoran.”

Fratris Rogeri, 161-2. See also *Opus Major*, 278-9.

⁶⁸ “Et de destructione legis Mahometi pulchre & certitudinaliter loquuntur. Nam secundum quod Albumasar dicit VIII capitulo secundi libri, non potest lex Mahometi durare ultra sexcentos Nonaginta tres annos...Et nunc est annos Arabum sexcentimus sexagesimus quintus a tempore Mahometi, & ideo cito destruetur per gratiam Dei, quod debet esse magnum solatium Christianis...Et jam major pars Saracenorum destructa est per Tartaros, & caput regni quod fuit Baldac, & Caliph qui fuit sicut papa eorum. Jam hæc facta sunt XII annis clapsis.” *Fratris Rogeri*, 167. See also *Opus Major*, 287. Bacon’s citation of the destruction of Baghdad and the murder of the caliph is a reference to the Mongol destruction of the city, which took place in 1258.

⁶⁹ “Sed quicquid dicunt in hac parte, hoc ad regulam fidei reducendum est, ut a catholica veritate non discordet. Et licet omnia & ad plenum non sufficient ostendere secreta istius sectæ, tamen an sit hæc sectæ, & quails sit in universali pulchre attestantur, ut fatis admirantes sapientiam eis datam facile excusemus eorum ignorantiam, quia defecerunt a plena certificatione ritus Christiani, cum in eo non fuerant instructi. Et laudare debemus, quod nobiscum concordant & confirmant nostrum professionem.” *Fratris Rogeri*, 168-9. See also *Opus Major*, 289.

⁷⁰ “Nam statim Romano languescente immo pene deficiente imperio, permittente eo “per quem reges regnant,” [Prov. 8:15] Arabum uel Sarracenorum hac peste infectorum surrexit principatus, atque ui armata maximas Asiae partes cum tota Africa ac parte Hispaniae paulatim occupans, in subiectos sicut imperium sic et errorum transfudit.” Peter the Venerable. *Summa Totius Haeriesis Saracenorum*. A 2vd in James’s Kritzeck’s *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, 208. See also James Kritzeck, trans., *Peter the Venerable and Islam*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964) 140.

⁷¹ “...Mahumet primogeniti Sathane, qui se prophetam a domino missum mentiendo Orientalium regiones et maxima Arabum seduxerat, ita invaluerat doctrina pestilens et disseminatus langor ita universas occupaverat provincias, ut eius successors non iam exhortationibus vel predicatione, sed gladiis et violentia in suum errorem populus descendere compellerent invitos.” *Guillaume de Tyr: Chronique*. Ed. R.B.C. Huygens. Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis LXIII. Turnholti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, MCMLXXXVI. 1,1. 105. See also Emily Atwater Babcock and A.C. Krey, trans., William of Tyre.. *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea, Vol. 1* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943) 60.

⁷² “Cuius Machometi monstruosa vita, monstruosior secta, monstruosissimus finis in gestis manifeste reperitur; qui, maligno spiritu inspiratus, sectam abhominabilem inuenit, carnalibus voluptatibus consonam, a carnalium voluptatibus non dissonam; et ideo multi carnales, eius secta illecti, et per errorum varia precipitia deiecti, miserabiliter perierunt et pereunt; quos

communi vocabulo vulgus Saracenos vel paganos nuncupat.” Alan of Lille, *Liber quartus contra paganos, Opinio paganorum qui dicunt Christum conceptum fuisse de flatu Dei* in Michael Uebel, “Unthinking the Monster: Twelfth-Century Responses to Saracen Alterity,” *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, Ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 274.

⁷³ Cf. Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia 3* (Trans. Ryan, 66) in *Saracens, Demons, & Jews*, 169.

⁷⁴ C. David Benson, “Public Writing: Mandeville’s Travels and The Book of Margery Kempe,” *Public Piers Plowman* (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004) 116.

⁷⁵ ⁷⁵ Rosemary Tzanaki, *Mandeville’s Medieval Audiences* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003) 91-3.

⁷⁶ Over 250 manuscripts of the text have survived to the present day.
M.C. Seymour, ed., *Mandeville’s Travels* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967) xiii.

⁷⁷ M.C. Semour fixes the date of composition at 1357; consensus appears to place the composition of the work in the 1350s or early 1360s.

M.C. Seymour, *Mandeville’s Travels*, xiii.
Rosemary Tzanaki, *Mandeville’s Medieval Audiences*, 1.

⁷⁸ M.C. Seymour, *Mandeville’s Travels*, 24.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 25.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 28.

⁸¹ “And wyteth wel that the rewme of Arabye is a fulle gret contree. But therein is ouermoche desert, and no man may dwelle there in that desert for defaute of water. For that lond is alle grauelly and fulle of sond, and it is drye and nothing fructuous because that it hath no moisture, and therefore is there so moche desert. And yif it hadde ryueres and welles and the lond also were as it is in other parties, it scholde ben als fulle of peple and als fulle enhabyted with folk as in other places, for there is fulle gret multitude of peple where as the lond is enhabyted.

Arabye dureth fro the endes of the reme of Caldee vnto the laste ende of Affryk and marcheth to the lond of Ydumee toward the ende of Botron.” Ibid. 29.

⁸² Ibid. 160-1.

⁸³ The Qur’ān; his familiarity with the Arabic word *mushaf* (*Meshaf* in the text), which refers to a copy of the Qur’ān is impressive, as is his knowledge of the word *haram* (*Harme* in the text), as indicative of an attribute of the Qur’ān as holy, or sacred. Ibid, 96. Also, cf. Hans Wehr’s *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 201, 589-90, for definitions of *mushaf* and *haram*, respectively.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 96.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 96.

⁸⁶ While polygamy is allowed, men are not, as he suggests, commanded to be polygamous. Ibid. 99.

⁸⁷ Ibid. 99.

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- ⁸⁸ Ibid. 99.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid. 99.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid. 97.
- ⁹¹ Ibid. 97.
- ⁹² Ibid. 97.
- ⁹³ Ibid. 97.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid. 97. This passage is a summation of the *Alkaron's* teachings relating to Jesus and his teachings.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid. 99-100.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid. 98.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid. 98.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid. 98.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid. 99.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 100.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid. 100.
- ¹⁰² Ibid. 102-3.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid. 102.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 102-3.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 100-1.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 101.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 101-2.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 98-9.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 101.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid. 102.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid. 103.

Chapter 2: “Sarasins”: Muslim Subjects in Medieval Fiction and Historical Accounts

While the perception of the Eastern Mediterranean Other amongst medieval scholars was informed by the surviving Classical and Late Antique works in conjunction with the works of medieval scholars and theologians, the concept in the popular imagination of medieval Western Europe was a reflection of both what was perceived as normative in Western European society and what was identified as abnormal and a potential threat to the social fabric. In this construction of an Eastern Mediterranean Other, writers were able to locate the origins of potentially threatening ideas and phenomena in an alien society and thus effect a fundamental separation from these perceived threats by rendering them essentially alien at the most fundamental level. Moreover, the identification of such perceived threats as having foreign origins carries with it the implication that as such concerns were imported into a society, they can be exported from it. The situating of the origins of disturbing phenomena in an alien context also serves a psychological function of sorts for both the writer and the audience; since the concerns are not products of the writer’s and audience’s society, the implication is that these concerns can be excised without having to make the types of fundamental changes that would be necessary if the problems were a product of their society. More importantly, the identification of potentially threatening phenomena as foreign enables both the writer and audience to avoid potentially disturbing questions about the nature of their society.¹ Because the problem has been foisted upon them from abroad, its sources

will be found abroad, and as such, there is no need to search for sources in any other contexts, particularly that of the home society.

At the same time the Eastern Mediterranean Other also serves to reinforce certain socio-economic and political systems, along with a particular worldview. In constructing the Eastern Mediterranean Other, writers had a range of choices as to how they would portray such characters, from the familiar to the grotesque.² However, regardless of where characters may be located on the scale of physical Otherness,³ the writers' depictions of the societies of these sometimes grotesque characters do not differ fundamentally from those of the Medieval Western European societies within which these works were produced. Eastern Mediterranean societies are depicted as political, religious and social systems like those of Western Europe, thus indicating that the European system is normative, and more importantly, natural. That characters who have been clearly identified as the Other in ways that necessitate war with, and often destruction, at the hands of, their European counterparts, nevertheless adhere to systems of governance and economic and social order that are indistinguishable from those of the Europeans is an implicit acknowledgement that these systems are normative, the systems of choice throughout the world, regardless of the cultural or religious context.

The most obvious way to mark a character as Other is through physical description which makes that character different, even grotesque. This was as true for the Saracens⁴ of medieval European literature as it was for any of the other foreign groups that found their way onto the pages of medieval texts. However, the Saracens of medieval European popular culture occupied a special place in the realm of the Other, as they represented a group, the Muslims of the Eastern Mediterranean, that was not only in close

proximity to Europe geographically, but was connected to the various European civilizations through both trade and conflict (in particular, the Crusades), and in many ways appeared, at least from the European perspective, to be competing with the Latin West in all ways on the world stage. As such, the portrayal of Saracens could be, depending on the context, very nuanced, and depictions of this Other ran the gamut from the grotesque to the familiar.

On the distant, most removed end of the spectrum exists the completely different, or foreign, Saracen, not merely Saracen by means of religion and/or culture, but “Saracen” in form and physical features as well, in whom the audience would fail to find anything familiar. Such characters are often portrayed as demonic, and indeed, language connecting them directly to demonic elements is often found in their physical descriptions. In many instances, the characters’ physical appearance reinforces their separation from the protagonist and his group (of which the writer is a part), and more importantly, from righteousness. This is brought home most forcefully in instances in which such characters convert, particularly in instances in which the conversion is accompanied by a physical transformation from a monster into a European.⁵ Thus one finds in the *King of Tars* that upon his baptism the Sowdan of Damas changes from black to white;⁶ in converting he has not only joined ranks with the writer and audience religiously, he has literally become one of them.⁷ However, in instances in which it is understood that such characters cannot or will not be converted, the writer does not express regret over the fact that they cannot be brought into the fold. In such instances their physical appearance serves to highlight the gulf between the world of the writer and his audience and the alien Other. Moreover, such depictions serve to strip the Other of its

humanity, and in so doing, to remove it from areas of familiarity in which the audience might relate to it. The Other becomes the enemy, a strange body upon which the protagonist(s), and by extension the writer and his audience, can focus their rage through acts of violence, of which a grotesque description serves as the first volley.⁸

Somewhere between the most distant end of the spectrum and its opposite lies the area of the Familiar Sarasin. Sarasins who occupy this space behave in a manner familiar to the audience and participate in the same cultural and social mores as do their Christian counterparts, while remaining Sarasin throughout the course of the text. Interestingly, in such cases, the physical appearance of these Sarasins is not a subject for discussion, and the implication is often that they are not greatly dissimilar in appearance from their Christian counterparts. Like the character of Clarell in *The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne*, who repays a kindness shown him by the Christian Sir Ogier⁹ by sparing his life when his party is ambushed by Sarasins, such Sarasins reinforce the idea that Western European social and moral attitudes are universal: the Familiar Sarasin acts as a European might.

However, because the Familiar Sarasin, notwithstanding his participation in Western European cultural, moral and social ideals, remains *Sarasin*, he must meet the fate of all unconverted Saracens; his existence constitutes a threat in and of itself. While the Familiar Sarasin is a respectable, and in some ways, admirable, figure, there is no room in the text for two valid religions and their accompanying worldviews. Familiar Sarasins must either move closer to the world of the writer and his audience by converting and aligning permanently with them, or suffer the fate of the Foreign Sarasin.

The case of Sir Otuell in *The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne* exemplifies the Sarasin who seems most like his Christian counterpart in the literary world of medieval Europe: the Sarasin who, in the course of a tale, will convert to Christianity. Such Sarasins are usually identified early in their respective tales, and bonds of familiarity are established early on between such characters and the audience. In the case of Sarasin knights, they are noted for their prowess and valor in combat. In the case of Sir Otuel, no less an authority than King Charles the Great expresses a desire to have him in his service as a Christian knight. When the character in question is a Sarasin princess, the writer establishes bonds of familiarity by describing her as a European beauty, so as to render her a virtual European princess. The path to conversion often differs for Sarasin knights and princesses: the path for knights often leads through a duel in which they are overcome, lose faith in their gods, and convert; princesses usually convert out of love for a Christian knight. Nevertheless, the conversion results in such a complete break with their Sarasin past that such characters often adopt the same worldview of their new-found brethren completely, now regarding their Sarasin friends and family as alien. While such characters are often viewed as the *Sarasin* converts to Christianity by the other Sarasin and Christian characters, it is clear that they are on the side of the Christians, and are deserving of the support of the audience.

While there are numerous examples of the Foreign, Familiar and Converted Sarasin to be found in the English versions of the *chansons de geste*, this chapter will focus in particular on two works for their presentation of these three types of Sarasin characters: *The Sowdone of Babylone* and *The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne*.¹⁰ *The Sowdone of Babylone*, which appeared in English circa 1400, appears to

have been based on an early rendition of the *Fierabras* story from the 12th century; *Sir Otuell* appeared in an English translation circa 1390, and was based on the 13th century French *Otinell*;¹¹ these two works do not stand apart from the likes of *The Sege of Melayne*, *Charles the Grete* or *Sir Ferumbras*; indeed, the Sarasin emperor in *Sir Otuell* and *The Sege of Melayne* is the same figure, Garcy, and the hero of *Sir Ferumbras* is the son of Laban, the “Sowdone” of *The Sowdone of Babylone*. However, both *The Sowdone of Babylone* and *Sir Otuell* are unique in their focus on their Sarasin characters, Ferumbras, Floripas and Laban in *The Sowdone of Babylone*, and Clarell, Otuell, and to a lesser extent Garcy in *Sir Otuell*. The two works seem to present what had become well-developed examples of Foreign, Familiar and Converted Sarasins in medieval works of fiction. In each, the Foreign Sarasin (Laban), the Familiar Sarasin (Clarell) and the Converted Sarasin (Floripas and Otuell) are so presented and developed as to indicate the true role, value and meaning of each of these character types to the genre as a whole. Therefore, *The Sowdone of Babylone* and *Sir Otuell* will be the primary sources for this discussion of the Foreign, Familiar and Converted Sarasin in medieval European popular fiction.

The discussion of the Sarasin as depicted in historical works is based upon the accounts of the Third Crusade (or the Crusade of Richard I) by Richard of Devizes, Richard de Templo, and Ambroise. Richard of Devizes’ account, while comparatively brief, is of inestimable value for the way in which it connects events in the Levant with political concerns in England, providing some insight into both “fronts” of the Crusade for Richard I.¹² Richard de Templo’s *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* provides a different perspective into the Third Crusade, in that it addresses the political

conflicts in the Levant between King Richard I and his allies on the one hand, and his rivals within the Crusader contingent, even though it does this from the point of view of a Poitevin partisan, detailing many of the factors that went into some of the most important decisions of the Third Crusade, such as the decisions not to lay siege to Jerusalem and the negotiations with the local Muslim leaders.

Ambroise, the author of *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte* and also a Poitevin loyalist, delivers a rendition of the Third Crusade that appears to be directed at a larger audience, portraying Richard I as the consummate hero and his enemies, particularly amongst the Crusaders, as figures who fall far short of the heroic ideal. One of the distinguishing characteristics of this work is that Ambroise is able to give an eye-witness account of the Third Crusade that is exhaustive in its details of both the encounters with Muslim encounters and, perhaps more importantly, of the conditions of the majority of the people who were associated with the Third Crusade. He is not able to go into detail regarding the decisions made by the leaders of the Third Crusade; rather he assumes the best of intentions on the part of the English king. Ambroise's account is also invaluable in that it combines elements found in later works of popular fiction with historical accounts. As such, the Muslim figures within the text are at times characterized in a manner that anticipates the way in which Sarasin characters will be portrayed in the later English fiction.

Each of the three historical accounts in question provide insight into an aspect of the Third Crusade which is not addressed in the other two accounts, whether it be the political circumstances in England, the factors in the great decisions of the Third Crusade, or the conditions of the ordinary people involved in the Third Crusade.

Furthermore, as the three are partisan accounts of the activities of Richard I, directed toward an Anglo-Norman audience, they provide the type of biased perspective found in both the French accounts (by partisans of King Phillip Augustus), and more importantly, the Muslim accounts (concerning the most famous Muslim leaders during the Third Crusade).

However, the focus of this chapter as it relates to these three accounts will be on the portrayal of the three Sarasin “types” – Foreign, Familiar, and Converted – in accounts of the Third Crusades. In particular, the chapter will seek to identify common themes in the portrayal of Sarasins as a group, and in the portrayal of the three types of Sarasins between the three accounts. In addition, the chapter will compare the depictions of the Foreign, Familiar, and Converted Sarasins in the works of fiction with those found in the historical accounts.

There are numerous examples of the Foreign Sarasin in the popular fiction of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, one of the most striking being Astragoth, the Sarasin giant in the army of the Soudan in the *Sowdone of Babylone*, who is described as being a giant from Ethiopia.¹³ It is immediately clear, from the author’s description, that he is wholly alien in appearance from his Christian adversaries, and in truth, from humanity in general:

With bores hede, blakke and donne
For as a bore an hede hadde...
He was a king of grete strength;
There was none suche in Europe
So stronge and longe in length. (347-8, 353-5)

The writer’s next step in his description is to connect Astragoth’s appearance to the demonic: “I trowe, he were a develes sone, / Of Belsabubbis lyne” (356-7). Astragoth is situated outside the boundaries of humanity by the author, and as such, he becomes a

thoroughly foreign body upon which the writer and his audience can project their hostility. Thus, after a portcullis falls upon him, before he dies, he is described as “...cryande at the ground/ Like a deuelle of Helle” (435-6); moreover, “Gladde were al the Romaynes, / That he was take in the trappe” (439-40). Astragoth is a dehumanized figure throughout his short appearance in the *Sowdone*, and as such, his death does not elicit compassion from the Christian warriors, the author, or the audience, since one cannot relate to the monstrous on a human level.

The Foreign Sarasin does make rare appearances in historical writing about the Third Crusade. However, in such cases the idea of the alien is more often evoked by reference to the culture or religion of the Other than his actual physical appearance. As the matter of the chronicles is a more or less factual account of the Crusades, there is no place for the types of figures one finds in many of the romances. In the rare instances in which the Foreign Sarasin is presented other than in contexts of religious or cultural difference, the precipitating factor is often the introduction or appearance of a group that is markedly different from the more recognizable “Sarasins/Turks.” Hence, one finds this description of two groups of warriors that accompanied the Turkish regulars in the

Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi:

After these ran a devilish race, very black in colour, who for this reason have a rather appropriate name: because they are black [*nigri*] they are called ‘Negroes’. Also there were the Saracens who travel about in the desert, popularly called ‘Bedouins’: savage and darker than soot, the most redoubtable infantrymen, carrying bows and quivers and round shields. They are a very energetic and agile race.¹⁴

Here, the Foreign Sarasin is not a literary device evoked to elicit a desired response from the audience, but rather appears uninvited and, in a sense, is more like the wonders described in travel literature than like the demonic figures and Sarasin giants encountered in the romances of Charlemagne and Arthur.

While a Foreign Sarasin is often identifiable by his appearance, in certain instances this character is set apart through his behavior.¹⁵ In such instances, the Sarasin characters are portrayed as removing themselves from resemblance to their Christian counterparts through their behavior, which is at odds with acceptable Christian behavior and comportment. Frequently, such a character appears in popular romances in the form of the raving Sarasin king, over whom the Christian characters will triumph completely and come to dominate entirely.

Perhaps the raging Sarasin king *par excellence* is Laban, the “Soudan” of the *Sowdone of Babylone*. In his behavior, Laban exemplifies all of the characteristics associated with this figure or type. First, and most obvious, he is prone to uncontrollable fits of rage, which generally accompany news of a setback at the hands of his Christian adversaries. Thus, when the twelve peers raid his camp, killing three hundred of his men in the process, he flies into a rage, directing much of his anger at his gods:

O ye goddess, ye faile at nede,
That I have honoured so longe,
I shall you bren, so mote I spede,
In a fayre fyre ful stronge; ...
Ye shalle be brente this day ere eve,
That foule mote you befalle! (2,431-4; 2,437-8)

In another instance, after failing to recapture his castle, in a fit a passion, he knocks an idol of Mahound to the ground so that it falls on its face, and is then compelled by the priests to kneel and ask for forgiveness (2,407-10; 2,511-26). And in yet another instance, on learning of the rescue of Sir Guy, he again threatens to burn his gods, only to be reconciled to them by his priests, who convince him to offer one thousand besants in homage to the gods (2,761-90).

In each instance in which Laban flies into a rage, he calls the audience's attention to two realities: his impotence in the face of his Christian adversaries; and the impotence of his deities, and hence his religion, in the face of Christianity. For, despite his best laid plans, his superior numbers, and his natural advantage fighting within the confines of his kingdom, his forces are unable to prevail against the forces of King Charles in combat, be it a pitched battle, a raid, or a chance encounter. And with each subsequent defeat, his rage appears to increase in proportion to the setback, thus diminishing him in the eyes of the audience, until at story's end he has been reduced from the seemingly invincible destroyer of Rome to a comic foil to King Charles. Thus, Laban's rage serves to limit and greatly reduce him throughout the course of the *Sowdone of Babylone*, particularly as it is contrasted with the calm demeanor of King Charles and the twelve peers as they go about the business of defeating him.

The impotence of Laban is almost always linked directly to the failure of his gods, and often by Laban himself, as he does not fail to implicate them in his defeats. Thus, in each of the aforementioned examples, news of a defeat is immediately followed by invectives against his gods in which he derides them for failing to reward his loyalty and liberality toward them with success. Indeed, Laban seems to share the perspective of the writer, in that he views each loss as an indication of the value of his belief system and of his gods. And as his rage increases in proportion to the magnitude of his defeats, his expression of his discontent toward his gods also becomes more forceful, only to be followed by an increasingly outlandish act of obeisance, at the instigation of others, on his part. Thus, his initial threat to burn his gods is followed by a reconciliation, while his physical attack on Mahound is followed by him kneeling to the fallen idol, and his final

threat to burn the gods (at which point he has actually set the fire in which they are to burn) is followed by him offering one thousand besants as a peace offering. Just as he is diminished as a character by each outburst in the *Sowdone of Babylone*, so are his gods and his religion diminished by his subsequent actions. While the forces of King Charles ultimately expose his impotence, it is he who exposes the weakness of his deities by revealing their inability to help him, or even to punish him when he defies them. Thus, his reconciliation with them through the intervention of his priests is fitting, as they are ultimately compatible in their mutual inability to effect change.

This pattern of defeat and impotent rage is brought to an end, fittingly enough, by Laban's final defeat and subsequent execution at the hands of King Charles and his forces. As Laban surveys his present situation, bereft of his kingdom, his power, and his children, who have both converted and by their subsequent actions betrayed him, he is powerless to act in a meaningful way, and thus, refusing baptism, seeks recourse through his only available option, cursing Christians in general, and his children in particular:

Ye and thou, hore serpentine,
And that fals cursed Ferumbras,
Mahounde gyfe hem both evel ending,
And almighty Sathanas!
By you came all my sorowe,
And al my tresure for-lorne.
Honged be ye both er tomorowe!
In cursed tyme were ye born. (3,171-8)

It is here that the true value of the raving Sarasin king to a romance is most evident. That value is to debunk the idea of Sarasin might loosely based upon historical encounters with Muslims in the Levant and North Africa. While Laban's forces serve as bodies upon which the Christian characters can inflict damage on a massive scale, Laban demonstrates his inability to help them and himself, and as each threat and each boast goes unfulfilled, the Sarasin menace, and by extension the Muslim menace, is diminished. Thus it is Laban

and the other raging Sarasin kings of the romances that complete the mission of their Christian enemies, for while King Charles, the twelve peers and their literary equivalents show that the Sarasins can be defeated, Laban and his literary equivalents show that Sarasins are not even to be taken seriously.

While there are numerous examples of the Foreign Sarasin in popular medieval literature and historical texts, examples of the Familiar Sarasin – the Sarasin in whom medieval Europeans could recognize socio-cultural and moral similarities, yet who remains Sarasin throughout – are far more prevalent in Crusade-era historical works than in popular works of fiction. The most probable reason for the paucity of Familiar Sarasins in medieval works of fiction is the fact that by its very nature the Familiar Sarasin is ill-suited to such works. The Foreign Sarasin is useful in that he or she supplies both the writer and audience with the requisite threat to Christendom, the enemy to be vanquished; he or she exists so that Christians and Christianity can be exalted through their defeat. In a similar manner, the soon-to-be-converted Sarasin, through both a display of admirable qualities and eventual conversion, offers the hope that the best from among the enemy can be converted, and that the superiority of Christianity can be successfully asserted through reasoned discourse.

Of the few examples of the Familiar Sarasin that are to be found, the Sarasin king, Clarell, in *Sir Otuell*, serves as an apt representative. Clarell first appears within the context of a skirmish that takes place between three members of King Charles' renowned twelve peers (Ogier, Oliver and Roland) and Clarell with three other Sarasin kings. In the ensuing melee, Clarell's companions are killed, but he pleads for his, and thus is spared.¹⁶ Yet the defeated Sarasin king is described as follows: "...when his visage was alle bare/

A fayrere knyghte saw Day neuer are” (853-4). Thus, soon after his introduction in the text, he is distinguished from his Sarasin companions and compared favorably to all knights, Sarasin *and* Christian.

Beyond appearances, Clarell also proves to be a man of his word as well; soon after he is captured, Ogier, Oliver and Roland are ambushed, and Ogier advises that they release their prisoner, as he will be a burden to them, because they are bound not to harm him, but yet must engage the other Sarasins now before them (865-70). As a knight, Clarell recognizes the act as a sign of nobility on the part of the Christian knight, in particular given the situation at hand: “this was a worde of gentill blode/ to speke thus for thi foo” (872-3). But beyond verbally acknowledging Ogier’s act, Clarell demonstrates that he too lives by a similar code through his subsequent actions; having been released by the three peers, he absents himself from the coming battle, despite the fact that, as a Sarasin, he would benefit from an enormous numerical advantage against the same knights who had but recently killed his companions and captured him (874-6). And when Ogier is captured during the course of the ensuing battle, Clarell returns the favor that was extended to him, intervening to save the Christian knight (944-8). Moreover, when another Sarasin challenges Ogier’s right, as a Christian, to a Sarasin’s protection, Clarell asserts the right of his prisoner in both word and deed, reaffirming Ogier’s status as a prisoner, and killing the upstart Sarasin (949-54). In extending his protection to the captured Ogier, Clarell also demonstrates his willingness to act in defense of his captive, even in opposition to his coreligionists.

The similarities between the Sarasin king Clarell and his Christian adversaries are also evoked in the depiction of Clarell’s paramour and her interactions with Ogier.

Having sent the captured Ogier to his lady's pavilion, the reader now catches a first glimpse of his lover, Alphayne, who, interestingly enough, is described as "white als fame," (967), a phrase that is generally used to describe Christian princesses. In her treatment of Ogier, Alphayne acts much like King Charles' daughter Belesant's does with the Sarasin Otuell prior to his duel with Roland.¹⁷ Both Belesant and Alphayne are aware of their duties relative to the knight who was been placed in their care, and both appear to be comfortable within their respective guest's presence, displaying a willingness to discuss all topics, whether it is Belesant's maidens advising Otuell to beware of Roland's sword (427-32), or Alphayne marveling at the ability of three knights to be the cause of discomfort to so many Sarasins, including her lover, and attending to Ogier's wounds (982-4; 991-6). Not only does the Sarasin Clarell resemble the Christian peers of King Charles in appearance and comportment on the field of battle, the similarities even extend to his lover and her behavior as well.

However, despite the similarities between Clarell and his Christian counterparts, in the end he remains a Sarasin, and as such, the enemy. In an ironic turn of events, Clarell is exposed as being unforgivably Sarasin in his interactions with the Sarasin convert Ottuell, with whom he later engages in a duel in which each combatant champions his religion. Clarell dies at Otuell's hands, revealing his fatal flaw as a Familiar Sarasin: despite his proximity to his Christian adversaries, he is both unwilling and unable to take the final step and *become* Christian. As such, he is, in the end, an artifact from the Sarasin convert's past, an embodiment of the last stage in the individual process of evolution from Sarasin to Christian. Thus it is perhaps fitting that he meets his

end at the hands of his more advanced relative on the evolutionary chart, the Sarasin convert.

In Clarell, the text presents both the positive and negative aspects of the Familiar Sarasin as they relate to the narrative of Christian triumph that lies at the heart of medieval popular literature involving Christian-Sarasin conflict. The Familiar Sarasin is at the same time comforting in the fact that his behavior and values point toward the existence of universally-held concepts of normative behavior and values and yet problematic in his insistence on remaining Sarasin and thus implicitly legitimizing a religious and cultural perspective that is decidedly and defiantly non-Christian. As such, the Familiar Sarasin poses more of a threat than the Foreign Sarasin, for while the Foreign Sarasin is an unequivocal monster, the Familiar Sarasin is an enemy with a plausible argument, a Sarasin with an alternative theology that appears to result in a moral and social system not unlike that found in Christian society. Thus, the only feasible end for the Familiar Sarasin is the fate of the Foreign Sarasin. The Familiar Sarasin may meet his end in a less extreme or humiliating manner than the Foreign Sarasin, but it is necessary that his voice be silenced, as it raises questions that cannot be answered within the context of the traditional medieval narrative.

The Familiar Sarasin offers neither of these positive outcomes to the writer or audience. He or she is a figure who is admirable for noble qualities and in whom the audience may recognize some of the qualities of Christian heroes. As such, the Familiar Sarasin inhabits an uncomfortable space in medieval popular fiction: not a wholly foreign, evil character upon which the writer and audience can project anger and not a figure from whose ultimate defeat and demise they can derive satisfaction. Yet, for all of

the similarities between the behavior and customs of the Familiar Sarasin and his or her Christian adversaries, the Familiar Sarasin will never take the next step and join the ranks of the Sarasin converts. Rather, the Familiar Sarasin remains familiar yet Sarasin, a proximate Other who, by his very existence, raises uncomfortable questions about both the true nature of the Other and the true distance culturally, morally and socially between the Christian and the Other. Moreover, by virtue of his existence, the Familiar Sarasin presents the unsettling possibility that qualities like chivalry and honor can exist outside of a Christian context, and need not be informed by Christianity. And it is perhaps for these reasons that the Familiar Sarasin, because of his implicit rejection of Christianity, is rarely found within the context of medieval popular fiction. Of those few examples that are to be found, even fewer escape fates similar to those of their Foreign Sarasin companions.

In the case of the historical works, the depiction of actual historical figures that are recognizable as Familiar Sarasins occurs frequently. This can be attributed to the fact that in recording events and figures for posterity, the writers were obliged to provide accurate details on the Muslims against whom they were contending for control of the Levant,¹⁸ and perhaps also to a certain curiosity on the part of their audience relating to the enemy against whom they were engaged in such a fierce and protracted struggle. Thus, the audience may have had an interest in the history, character, and actions of famous Muslim leaders such as Salāh al-Dīn (or Saladin, as he is more commonly known in the West), much in the way in which they had an interest in the lives of famous figures from antiquity. Moreover, a real working knowledge of Muslim forces and their leaders would also imply, by extension, a greater breadth of knowledge on the part of the writer,

as it would prove definitively that he was familiar not only with the European forces with whom he was aligned, but also with the inner workings of the enemy forces, something that could not have come without difficulty to the writer or without contacts on both sides of the struggle in the Levant.

While glimpses of the Familiar Sarasin can be found in passages in which writers display a grudging admiration for their opponents,¹⁹ the Familiar Sarasin *par excellence* of the Third Crusade was Salāh al-Dīn. In him both the writer and audience had the most appropriate example of the Familiar Sarasin – a figure of excellent standing amongst his soldiers and community at large, without peer in military and political strength in the Muslim world (at least, to the best knowledge of many of the European chroniclers of the Third Crusade), who, moreover, was both an unparalleled military strategist and a man of principle. These qualities made Salāh al-Dīn the ideal Familiar Sarasin, as he was truly a figure that a European audience could respect, and to a limited extent, admire, and a suitable opponent for the European champion *par excellence*, King Richard I of England. And indeed, the fact that Salāh al-Dīn and Richard I were well-matched as opponents does not appear to have been lost on the two of them, as the various chronicles and other historical works pertaining to the Third Crusade all contain detailed references to the communication that took place between them through various intermediaries (including Salāh al-Dīn's brother, Sayf al-Dīn, in matters of the utmost importance), along with the frequent expressions of mutual respect that came from the two leaders.

Perhaps the first indication of Salāh al-Dīn's status as a historical representative of the Familiar Sarasin is the various writers' estimation of him as an enemy. In the *Itinerarium*, Salāh al-Dīn's empire is described as stretching from North Africa to India

(p. 28), and in writing of the army amassed by Salāh al-Dīn for the purpose of attacking the territories comprising the Latin kingdom in the Levant, states:

His army contained such a number of people, such dissimilar races with such diverse religious observances that if we were to describe them as fully as the law of history demands the length of the description would defeat our intention of brevity. However, although it was an innumerable multitude its size can be estimated to some extent if we name only the commanders. (p. 30)

While it is not uncommon to find medieval writers exaggerating the standing of a Sarasin opponent so as to magnify the perceived threat (indeed, this is the most common course of action among the writers of the medieval romances), the treatment of Salāh al-Dīn at the hands of the writers is markedly different from that of the Sarasin villains such as Laban and Garcy in the works of popular fiction.. Thus, in the *Itinerarium*, one finds a section on the origin of Salāh al-Dīn, which is followed by a fairly extensive account of his conquest of Jerusalem and the other major cities of the Levant (with the exception of Tyre). The *Itinerarium* offers this explanation of his name:

He was from the nation of *Mirmuaenus*. His parents were not descended from the nobility, but neither were they common people of obscure birth. His father's given name was Job [Ayyūb], and his was Joseph [Yūsuf]. Giving Hebrew names of circumcision when their sons are circumcised is a rite which thrives among many of the Gentiles and follows Muslim tradition.

The princes take their names from the title of the law of Muhammad, so that their names may remind them to be studious defenders of that law. Now, in the Gentile language the law is called the *Hadin*. From this he was called *Salahadin*, which translates as 'reformer of the law', or 'peacemaker'. And just as our princes are called emperors or kings, so among them those who are preeminent are named *Soldans*, as if to mean 'sole dominion'. (pp. 26-7)

Here, in explaining the origins of both his family name and the name by which he would be commonly known, the text sets Salāh al-Dīn apart from the nameless masses of Muslim soldiers against whom the Europeans are contending, offering an implicit recognition of his true stature in this prolonged struggle as both the leader of the Muslim forces and the military and political equal of his Christian adversaries.

Yet, these types of descriptions of Salāh al-Dīn's political power aside, it is perhaps both the accounts of acts of magnanimity or justice on his part and of the demonstrations of mutual respect between King Richard and himself that not only situate Salāh al-Dīn squarely within the realm of the Familiar Sarasin, but make him the prototypical Familiar Sarasin, and an example to which writers of both historical works and works of popular fiction can refer when portraying Sarasins in a favorable light.

In examining the portrayal of the character of Salāh al-Dīn in these historical sources, it must first be acknowledged that while the writers' assessment of Salāh al-Dīn may be generally positive in the main (especially in relation to other Muslim leaders), it is by no means overwhelmingly positive, and there are a number of instances in which the writers find fault with his actions. Salāh al-Dīn is universally regarded by the writers as being at fault for his role in the events leading up to the massacre of the Muslim hostages after the Crusader conquest of Acre, and is the object of particular scorn as he is seen as having dealt in bad faith with the Crusaders in failing to deliver on the promise to return the cross of the Crucifixion and for allowing his loyal soldiers to be slaughtered after they had served him in a manner that even the Crusaders had found admirable. Indeed, both the *Itinerarium* and *Estoire* that Salāh al-Dīn was also the object of the ire of many of his own soldiers as a result of his failure to provide for their companions' safe return after the loss of Acre. Similarly, Salah al-Din is also reproached for negotiating in bad faith with Richard through his brother, Sayf al-Dīn.²⁰ Moreover, at times within some of the various sources, it is implied that Salāh al-Dīn is less than heroic in some of his retreats from King Richard and his advancing forces, particularly in his haste to move his camp after the defeat at Jaffa.²¹

However, despite these and other instances in which the character of Salāh al-Dīn is called into question, the overall tone of the writers when dealing with Salāh al-Dīn can be described as positive. Salāh al-Dīn is generally acknowledged to be a wise leader by both writers and opponents alike; indeed, it is a healthy respect for Salāh al-Dīn the military strategist that prompts King Richard and his forces to abandon their march on Jerusalem, at a time when, it turns out, the city was most vulnerable. This instance points toward the extent to which Richard and Salāh al-Dīn were aware of one another's capacity to lead, which is also reflected by a type of almost friendly competition that appears to be present at certain points in the narratives.²² This type of competition reflects a level of mutual admiration, and its existence is implied in both the *Itinerarium* and the *Estoire*. And indeed, there is at least one occasion in which both texts reveal the ways in which members of the Crusader camps were affected by the appearance of an excessive level of amicability between the two leaders.²³

While the prospect of a cordial relationship developing between Richard and Salāh al-Dīn is one that some of Richard's peers appear to find disturbing, the interconnectedness of the two leaders is a constant theme in many of the accounts. In a sense, the action of the Third Crusade serves as a setting for a confrontation in which Richard can prove himself against an opponent of great renown. Long before their arrival at Acre, Salāh al-Dīn and his forces are conjured up by King Richard to spur his men to action against the inhabitants of Messina, at whose hands they have been received inhospitably. In *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes of the Time of King Richard the First* Richard of Devizes quotes the king as saying:

O my soldiers, the strength and crown of my realm! You who have endured a thousand perils with me, you who by your bravery have conquered so many kings and cities for me, do you not see that the cowardly mob is now insulting us? Will we overcome Turks

and Arabs, will we be the terror of the most invincible nations, will our right arms make a way for us to the ends of the earth after the Cross of Christ, will we restore the kingdom of Israel, if we show our backs to these vile and effeminate Griffons? If we are defeated here in the confines of our own country, will we go any farther? Shall the laziness of Englishmen be made a joke to the ends of the world? My men, is not this new cause of grief to me a very just one? It may be, I think, that you are deliberately sparing your strength now, so that perhaps later on you may fight more boldly against Saladin...If I go away from here alive, Saladin will not see me unless I am victorious.²⁴

This idea of Salāh al-Dīn and King Richard as being interconnected via their roles in the Third Crusade informs the manner in which the writers perceive them conducting themselves, and their forces, throughout the conflict, with both displaying a keen awareness of the way in which their actions will affect their legacies. Thus, both the *Estoire* and *Itinerarium* vilify Salāh al-Dīn for failing to uphold his part of the agreement in the negotiated surrender of Acre and for allowing his soldiers to be slaughtered, and assume that he is universally reviled for his inaction in the matter by both Christian and Sarasin soldiers alike.²⁵ Moreover, when some of his soldiers suggest that they exact vengeance on the Christian pilgrims at the gates of Jerusalem for their coreligionists' actions in the slaughter at Acre, Salāh al-Dīn's counselors advise against it because of the harm it will do to their collective name as a result of their acting in clear violation of the negotiated terms of this recent truce that permit the pilgrims access to the city (*Itinerarium*, 375; *Estoire*, 189). This idea is also reflected in the actions of those closest to the principal figures, and in particular Salāh al-Dīn's brother, Sayf al-Dīn.²⁶

However, the position that King Richard and Salāh al-Dīn occupy relative to one another, their implied similarities to one another, and the unique place in which Salāh al-Dīn is situated as a Sarasin are perhaps best articulated in the response attributed to Hubert Walter, the bishop of Salisbury, during his conversation with Salāh al-Dīn, in regard to the question of the Christians' impressions of the Muslims in the *Itinerarium*:

'What I can say truly about my lord the king,' the bishop replied, 'and what can be said

with justification, is that there is no knight in the world who is his equal in military matters, nor equal to him in outstanding courage, nor in generous giving. He is certainly remarkable in having a character full of all commendable graces. What more shall I say? Putting your sins aside, if anyone, in my opinion, could combine your virtues with those of King Richard, and share them out between you so that both of you were furnished with the abilities of both, two such princes would not be found in the whole globe.²⁷

Of course, this is not to imply that the Familiar Sarasin is portrayed as the true equal of his Christian opponents, and in the case of Salāh al-Dīn, there is ample evidence of hostility toward him on the part of the writers. Indeed, the *Itinerarium* serves as an excellent example; in its description of Salāh al-Dīn's rise to power Salāh al-Dīn's success in winning the favor of the multitudes is attributed to a tax he imposed on the prostitutes of Damascus and their clients, the funds from which he then used to support the arts, winning the affection of the Damascenes through a corrupt practice thus by a corrupt practice, won the affection of the Damascenes (p. 27). In a similar manner, he describes Salāh al-Dīn's rise to power in Egypt as being aided in the main through an act of treachery (p. 28). The assessment of Salāh al-Dīn's actions and political position prior to his invasion of Palestine offered in the *Itinerarium* is as follows:

That pimp, who had a kingdom of brothels, an army in taverns, who studied dice and rice, is suddenly raised up on high. He sits among princes, no he is greater than princes! 'Holding the throne of glory' [1 Samuel ch. 2 v. 8] he rules the Egyptians, he subdues Damascus, he seizes the land of Roasia [al-Ruhā, or Edessa; now Urfa] and Gesira [al-Jazīra] and he penetrates and governs the most remote parts of India...

Storming and seizing, now by trick, now by arms, Saladin brings all these kingdoms under his control. Then he makes a single monarchy out of all these sceptres. He alone claims the governments of so many kings! The more he has, the more he wants, and he strives with all his strength to seize the Lord's Inheritance.

Then the opportunity arises for him to obtain his desire. Now he hopes to gain what he had never even dared to wish for. (pp. 28-9)

While this summation of Salāh al-Dīn's political career displays an obvious bias, as it is debatable whether the chronicler would have been as harsh in his assessment of the types of political maneuvering that took place in Continental Europe or in the Crusader States (indeed, King Richard is spared this type of criticism, although King Philip Augustus is

not always as fortunate), such denunciations may also serve to set the audience's opinion of Salāh al-Dīn at an early stage, so that as they progress through the text, they do not conceive an overly-sympathetic opinion of him when he is cast in a more positive light due to his accomplishments and demonstration of his political acumen. As such, this digression reinforces for the audience the reality that the Familiar Sarasin is, although Familiar, undeniably Sarasin.

The casting of Salāh al-Dīn in more conventionally Sarasin roles is also to be found in other historical accounts of the Third Crusade. Salāh al-Dīn re-emerges as a type of the Foreign Sarasin most often in reaction to Crusader victories. In recounting the Sarasin response to a defeat, the writers were dealing with a subject from which they were furthest removed, and as such, they were left with few alternatives save that of re-creating the scene in question as they imagined it would have taken place. Perhaps predictably, in the absence of concrete facts, traditional stereotypical images of the Sarasin re-appear. Thus, when, in his first encounter with the enemy, Richard and his forces sink a Sarasin dromond, Salāh al-Dīn is described in the *Itinerarium* as plucking the hair from his beard in rage (p. 199). In another instance, after their defeat in the Battle of Arsuf, Salāh al-Dīn admonishes his amīrs in a manner vaguely reminiscent of the raging sultans of the medieval romances:

'So! What magnificent exploits and extraordinary achievements by my most trusted warriors! They used to be so full of boasting and unbearable arrogance; I had bestowed such great gifts on them so often; and now, look! the Christians travel through the land of Syria just as they like without meeting any opposition or resistance. Where are my soldiers great boasts and brilliant exploits now? Where are their threats and extraordinary lance-thrusts now, and the sword-play their great boasts promised? Where are the brilliant opening battle manœuvres? Where are the indescribable armies that they boasted they were going to muster against the Christians to destroy them? See! the battle which they sought is now here, but where is the victory they boasted of? How the people of today have degenerated from our noble ancestors who gained so many brilliant and justly memorable victories against the Christians, victories which are retold to us daily and whose memory will endure forever! Things are going differently and shamefully for us. What a disgrace when our people have become the scum of the earth in warfare! We are nothing in comparison to our ancestors. We are not even worth an egg.'

(p. 260)

However, later, following a botched attempt to capture King Richard, Salāh al-Dīn appears somewhat amused by his soldiers' ineptitude.

In portraying Salāh al-Dīn dealing with defeat, the writers pre-figure what will become a familiar trope – that of the raving Sarasin monarch – to fill in the empty spaces in the historical narrative. In so doing, the writers add a veneer of legitimacy to the images of the Sarasin found in later works of popular fiction. As each genre – historical work and popular fiction – presents a similar image, the raving Sarasin, the image is reinforced, along with the presumption that at its core the image must reflect a basic truth. The result is an image that is not accurate in an historical context, but rather is accurate within the construct of perceived Sarasin behavior; a construct in which such problematic notions are continually reinforced through their repetition through different mediums.²⁸

Salāh al-Dīn was such a unique figure that Western writers apparently felt the need to treat him outside the context of the traditional ways of understanding and representing the Sarasin. He was a character in whom a European audience could find things to admire, but in whom European writers were at the same time constrained to find something to revile. As such, the writers' use of Salāh al-Dīn is perhaps reflective of ambivalence toward an enemy who was both near and distant in so many ways; or perhaps it reflects the writers' realization that in Salāh al-Dīn they had a figure that they could use to elicit a variety of responses from their audience - empathy, revulsion, admiration, fear – and their willingness to use him in this manner.

In the accounts of the negotiations between the various parties, Muslim and Christian, the chroniclers also focus on the role of Sayf al-Dīn, as he was an integral

participant in events. Along with his brother, Sayf al-Dīn emerges as the prototypical Familiar Sarasin in many of the accounts of the Third Crusade. As Salāh al-Dīn's envoy of choice for many of the most important negotiations and someone who, through the course of these negotiations, interacted with King Richard, he at times also calls attention to the similarity of the two leaders, and he often reflects this implied kinship through his actions. Thus, when Richard's camp is attacked without warning and the king is forced to fight on foot, it is Sayf al-Dīn who sends him two horses to make use of as he sees fit. As a man of some standing, he is cognizant of the position Richard occupies within his camp, and of the value of honoring the position even in an opponent. Richard de Templo calls the reader's attention to this, and to the shared values that are implicit in Sayf al-Dīn's actions in the *Itinerarium* when he writes "Courage is praiseworthy, even in an enemy! So a Turk and an enemy judged that the king should be honoured in this way because of his exceptional courage" (pp. 364-5).²⁹

But beyond such acts of chivalry, it is Sayf al-Dīn who at times calls attention to the unique qualities of Richard as compared to his Christian companions-in-arms, and the privileged position that he occupies as a consequence of these qualities. When Salāh al-Dīn is in the process of negotiating with both Richard and Conrad de Montferrat, the marquis of Tyre, it is Sayf al-Dīn who, in Ambroise's *Crusade*, advises against coming to terms with any Christian leader other than the king of England, emphasizing his ability to most adequately represent the Christian forces in the Levant due to his martial prowess.³⁰

Moreover, it is Sayf al-Dīn who emphasizes to the Crusaders themselves Richard's importance for the crusading enterprise shortly before the king concludes his stay in the Levant. In an incident related in Richard of Devize's *Chronicle*, Sayf al-Dīn,

while on a diplomatic mission on Salāh al-Dīn's behalf shortly after the Christians' recovery of Jaffa, is prevented from having a private audience with the king by his servants, who are worried that knowledge of the extent of the king's illness will give his enemies leverage in the ongoing negotiations. Sayf al-Dīn quickly ascertains the true state of affairs relative to Richard's condition, and then is quoted as saying:

O God of the Christians...if You are God, do not allow such a man, so necessary to Your people, to die so suddenly...I prophesy truly that if this man should die, things being as they are now, all you Christians will perish, and all this region will be ours on the next day, without a struggle.³¹

Thus, Sayf al-Dīn's exposition serves to remind Richard's followers, in addition to the audience, of the true importance of the king, putting him on a par (albeit implicitly) with his brother with respect to each figure's impact on his respective side's ability to accomplish its goals in the Levant.

As a Familiar Sarasin, at times Sayf al-Dīn appears to benefit from a more positive portrayal at the hands of the chroniclers than does his legendary brother. However, his character is not as central to the story of the Third Crusade as that of Salāh al-Dīn, and as such, he does not present the chroniclers with the issues presented by "the Sultan." Salāh al-Dīn was a leader who was, at minimum, on a par with the hero of these chronicles of the Third Crusade, King Richard I, and as such, there is an implicit sense of anxiety on the writers' part over which figure will demonstrate his superiority over the other in the context of the respective works,³² an anxiety which is intensified by the outcome of the Third Crusade itself. As such, at times there appears to be an attempt on the part of the writers to "stack the deck" in the favor of King Richard, and thus Salāh al-Dīn's questionable actions are magnified, and those of King Richard minimized or passed over without comment.³³

But while Salāh al-Dīn is subjected to intense scrutiny, and at times his reputation appears to suffer for it, Sayf al-Dīn, as a lesser figure, is exempted from a similar level of scrutiny. And thus he emerges from the accounts unscathed, and perhaps appearing to be a more reputable figure than his famous brother at times. However, as other accounts detail a far different story,³⁴ it is far more likely that the chroniclers were focused on the activities of Salāh al-Dīn (and what they revealed, or appeared to reveal about his character) to such an extent, that Sayf al-Dīn was able to benefit from his position of relative anonymity.

Perhaps the most striking examples of the triumph of Christianity in medieval popular fiction lie in the Sarasin converts themselves. The Sarasin convert of popular fiction represents the hopes of Western European Christians in the possibility of the conversion of non-Christians, in particular, Jews and Muslims, in that the Sarasin generally converts through the workings of divine intervention, love, or as a result of a recognition of the superiority of Christianity and the inefficacy of the Sarasin religion, often “revealed” under extreme circumstances, as within the context of a duel with a Christian opponent. Thus the Sarasin convert represents the possibility of conversion through dialogue or debate, the possibility that non-Christians can be converted through interaction with exemplary Christians, because such Christians will display the virtues of Christianity and, by comparison, the failings of the competing religion. Moreover, since the ranks of the Sarasin converts of popular fiction are peopled by the likes of Sarasin knights, princesses and kings, such characters represent the possibility that the best from among the enemy can be converted, and through their example, the masses may follow.

Another aspect of the Sarasin convert of popular fiction is his similarity to the medieval audience for whom the tales were composed. In appearance and behavior, the Sarasin convert is, in a manner of speaking, the most European of the Sarasins, and therefore the most likely candidate for conversion. Such characters are also the most desirable candidates for conversion; their credentials (beauty and position for Sarasin women, and skill in battle and nobility for Sarasin men) serve to mark them in the texts as potential converts. However, the process of conversion, while not necessarily a conventional battle, is nonetheless a type of conquest, and one that differs considerably depending on the gender of the Sarasin convert.

In the case of the Sarasin princess, conversion is a matter of conquest through love, whereby the princess is willing to forsake all, including religion, for the love of a Christian knight. Consequently, the conversion of the Sarasin princess also takes on many of the trappings of medieval Orientalist fantasy, in which an Eastern seductress becomes both a conquest for the Christian knight as a lover and future wife, and a conquest for Christendom, since a flower of Sarasindom has been plucked from its fold and all that it has to offer is now at the disposal of the Christian community into which she has been assimilated.

Princess Floripas of *The Sowdone of Babylone* stands as an excellent example of the prototypical Saracen convert. The daughter of the sultan, Laban, she is both a source of pride³⁵ and a trusted counselor. In fact, her first act in the text is to advise Laban what to do with Oliver and Roland, who have recently been captured, so as to ensure the safety of Ferumbras, who is a prisoner of the French (1,511-26). Moreover, she is intelligent, a quality which serves the Christian knights well throughout the work.

But perhaps most importantly, through the course of the text she becomes a means by which the Christian characters can inflict pain and suffering upon the Sarasins, and Laban in particular. Indeed, long before she is baptized, and before she has joined forces with King Charles and his peers, she is working to their benefit, and to the detriment of her father and his forces. Her desire to meet the imprisoned Oliver and Roland leads her to dispose of first her governess, and then the jailer (1,563-78; 1,584-1,606). Floripas' placing both her natural gifts and the gifts she has accrued as a consequence of her position at the disposal of the Christian forces is a constant theme in the text. Indeed, after disposing of the jailer, she works quickly to gain custody of the two prisoners, acts which include lying to her father in the process, promising to protect them from harm (1,607-46), and upon the arrival of the remainder of the twelve peers into her custody, she informs Sir Naymes, and the audience, of her long-standing love for Sir Guy and her desire to be baptized for his sake (1,891-6).

Having given herself to Sir Guy, and in so doing, to the cause of King Charles and his forces, Floripas not only becomes a willing instrument in the undoing of her father, but appears to derive a genuine satisfaction from his distress. When Lukafer, one of Laban's trusted advisors, is burned alive by Naymes, Floripas expresses her approval, and soon after advises the peers on how to proceed against her father (2,018-26). Once her allegiance to the Christian forces is revealed, she joins the fray in full, trading insults with Laban (2,212-30), providing the peers with alternative sources of sustenance (2,299-2,306), and later weapons with which to repel Laban's forces during a siege of the castle (2,475-86) (which they have commandeered), and generally working in tandem with the Christian knights against her father and his forces. Moreover, it is Floripas who

recognizes the banner of the advancing King Charles and his forces, and alerts the peers in a timely fashion, ensuring their participation in the rout of the assembled Sarasin forces (3,083-94). Thus it is little wonder that, upon his capture, Laban finds no comfort in being re-united with his daughter (3,129-32).

In her actions on behalf of the Christian forces subsequent to her declaration of love for Sir Guy, Floripas highlights a key concept in the trope of the Sarasin convert in medieval popular fiction, that of the link between religious and political affiliation.³⁶ Having allied herself with the forces of King Charles and assured them of her eventual conversion, it is not sufficient that she merely recognize her fate as being linked to their fate. Rather, as a soon-to-be-former Sarasin, she must actively participate in the ongoing conflict against the Sarasins, amongst whom are members of her family (although by this time Ferumbras has been baptized, unbeknownst to her), taking part in the conflict in a manner that would be both unexpected and inappropriate for a Christian princess. However, as a convert (or prospective convert), she must demonstrate her allegiance to her new faith and her new coreligionists by actively severing all ties to her former faith and the members of that community. In a sense, conversion is perceived as an act of betrayal, and as such, necessitates action on the part of the Sarasin convert to allay any fears on the part of other Christians regarding the motives and sincerity of the convert, or that they will be the victims of a similar betrayal at some point in the future. Thus the Sarasin convert, in this instance Floripas, displays a particular zeal in bringing about the downfall of former companions and coreligionists, as through their defeat and eventual annihilation, the convert is born anew within the context of his or her new religious community. By itself, the account of a trusted and loved princess who murders her

governess, collaborates with an outside force to bring about her father's downfall, and witnesses his execution without protest would be reprehensible; indeed, Laban's imprecations against her upon first seeing her subsequent to his capture³⁷ would be appropriate. However, as the actions of a Sarasin convert, they are both necessary and appropriate; moreover, they are part of a rite of passage, as Floripas, like all other Sarasin converts, must completely sever all ties with Sarasin society, and thus their Sarasin selves, in order to obtain a place in Christian society.

While the converted Sarasin princess is often noted for her beauty, it is skill in battle and nobility that are often the distinguishing characteristics of the converted Sarasin knight, qualities which, subsequent to his conversion, are used in the service of the Christian sovereign under whom he now lives, and the Christian community of which he is now a part. Perhaps one of the best examples of the converted Sarasin knight, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, Sir Otuell of *The Romance of Duke Rowlande and of Sir Otuell of Spayne*, for in Otuell one finds the prototypical Sarasin convert both prior to and following his conversion. From his introduction in *Sir Otuell*, Otuell is clearly presented as both an uncommon knight and a loyal Sarasin. He first appears in the text as a messenger, delivering an ultimatum to King Charles on behalf of the Sarasin emperor Garcy. In delivering the message, he identifies himself as a loyal servant of his Sarasin sovereign and ardent devotee of the Sarasin faith, and, through his bravado and threats, a knight of similar standing to Roland:

...my lorde þe Emperour Garcy...
In Paynym ne es none so doghety,
He hathe the flour of cheuallrye...
Charles I ne maye noghte honour the,
For þou hase greuede Mahoun & me,
 þat alle þis worlde has wroghte.
And Rowlande, if euer I may the see
At Batayle or at any Semble,

thi dedis schall dere be boghte. (98; 100-1; 103-8)

Then, for further emphasis, Otuell follows his pronouncements with his account of the Sarasin attack of Lombardy, the ensuing massacre of fifty thousand Christian knights, and his role in both the destruction of the city and the massacre (134-50). It is only after he has slain Sir Estut (who attacks him in anger as a result of Otuell's account of the sack of Lombardy) and secured the protection of King Charles against his barons, whose collective wrath he has aroused (151-83), that the Sarasin knight actually delivers the message for which he was sent to Charles's court: the king is to renounce Christianity, adopt the Sarasin religion, and recognize Garcy as his emperor; in return, he will be given England and Normandy to govern, and certain members from among the twelve peers will also be granted additional lands over which to rule (203-46).

Otuell's standing as a knight is further reinforced by both King Charles and Roland within the context of the duel between the two knights, during which the king prays for Roland's success and the conversion of the "gentill knyghte/ þat es so hardy and so wighte" (511-12). For his part, Roland offers both the king's daughter (Belesant) and his friendship, along with Oliver's friendship, as incentive for conversion (517-28). However, in a response typical of a Sarasin knight, Otuell rebuffs Roland's offer, returning threats of further violence, and the duel continues (529-40). Otuell's manner of declining his opponent's offer serves to highlight his qualities as a knight, for although his refusal to convert to Christianity can be read as an affront from a purely religious perspective, it would be highly irregular for a warrior engaged in a duel to capitulate instead of fighting. In the context of the duel, Sir Otuell's rejection of Roland's offer comes as no more of a surprise than Charles' rejection of Garcy's demands that he renounce Christianity in exchange for land; in a sense, both the responses of King

Charles and Sir Otuell spring from a similar sense of personal and cultural pride. Indeed, the prayer of the French king and his knight's offer serve to set the stage for Otuell's moment of conversion and emphasize his sense of self, as he cannot be brought to the baptismal font through the efforts of men, even men of the stature of King Charles and Sir Roland.

In the end, Otuell's conversion can be effected only through divine intervention; in this case, it takes the form of a dove sent from the heavens which alights on his helmet and inspires him to convert (577-85). Yet even in these circumstances he remains unconquered; neither his opponent, nor any of the spectators, are cognizant of his decision to convert prior to his announcement to Roland, and his decision takes place at a time in which the outcome of the duel is in doubt to the degree that the French king feels compelled to offer yet a third prayer for his knight.³⁸

Upon his conversion Otuell immediately demonstrates his loyalty to his new king and religious community. His first act after his baptism is to declare that he will "distruye þe heythyn blode," precluding all things, including marriage to the king's daughter (648; 658-60). As a Sarasin convert, he is cognizant of his precarious position relative to both the Sarasin community he has just abandoned, and the Christian community which he is attempting to enter and of the fact that his entrance into that community is dependant upon his complete severing of all ties with his former one. In essence, King Charles will become his ally only on the condition that Garcy is his enemy, and such a radical shift can be effected only through violence initiated by Otuell and directed against his former sovereign. Otuell acknowledges this reality in pledging to destroy the Sarasins, retake Lombardy and capture Garcy (who, as well as being the emperor, is also his uncle); in

effect, he must reverse the damage he helped inflict upon Christendom. Before he can enter Charles' court, he must efface the most powerful symbols of his Sarasin past: his works as a Sarasin knight, and his personal connections to the Sarasin world.

The reality of Otuell's precarious position as a Sarasin convert is reinforced by the reactions of both Christians and Sarasins to him after he converts. As a new convert, he has yet to be fully integrated into the brotherhood of the Christian knights and therefore is not a member in full standing of Charles's peers. Thus, despite previous assurances of the formation of a trio of sorts comprised of Roland, Oliver and Otuell (assurances which were made by no less an authority than Roland himself), upon their arrival in Lombardy, it is Roland, Oliver and Ogier who set off in search of adventure (760-8). As one who would now join both the Christian community and the fraternity of the peers, Otuell lacks the requisite body of work by which King Charles and his knights can judge him, and more importantly, through which bonds are formed within this closed community of warriors. Consequently, Otuell remains on the periphery of his new community, eagerly awaiting an opportunity to demonstrate his loyalty and his value as a knight.

While the attitude of the Christian knights towards Otuell is one of acceptance tempered by a degree of ambivalence, the Sarasins regard the Sarasin convert with open hostility. Since conversion represents a shift of temporal as well as spiritual allegiance, the Sarasin knight who converts is regarded by his former comrades as having committed an act of treason. However, until the conversion is confirmed through action by the Sarasin convert, the Sarasins are slow to believe the claims of conversion. It is the Sarasin Clarell who first learns of Otuell's conversion. His reaction is telling, in that he

expresses both wonder and dismay at the loss of Otuell from the Sarasin ranks and then advises him to recant:

...alas,
Now is this a wikkede case,
 & þou so noble a knyghte.
Whi dwelles þou there amonges thi fase?
Foullly there thou wiche was,
 & whi es this dede thus dighte?
I rede þat þou conuerte the in hye,
& then sall saughtyll with thyn Eme sir Garcy,
 & forsake not thy lawe. (1,147-55)

In essence, Clarell's advice is to consider the implications of his actions and repent of them while he can. When Otuell refuses, the duel between the two knights is a necessary consequence. For Clarell, Otuell's act constitutes treason, and as such, it must be punished. For Otuell, the duel represents an opportunity to sever his ties to the Sarasin community and his Sarasin past by championing the cause of Christianity against his former religion: in effect, to make real his earlier conversion in the eyes of both Sarasins and Christians alike. In this context, the religious overtones of the duel benefit Otuell's cause, and it is used to solidify his new position within the Christian community.

With the death of Clarell during the course of the duel, Otuell's conversion is made real for both Christians and Sarasins alike, and his relationship to each group fundamentally altered. His position among his new coreligionists is strengthened, and each subsequent act serves to further improve his situation, while his links to the Sarasin community are irrevocably severed. Otuell becomes as much an enemy to the Sarasins as King Charles and the peers, and perhaps even more of an enemy, since Otuell shares a personal history with his new enemies. Garcy's reaction to the sight of Otuell on the field of battle expresses his new standing in the eyes of his uncle and former ally:

...alas,...
...Renayede thefe my Cosyn was,
he ledis vs here a wikkede pase,

bothe with traye and tene. (1,513; 1,516-18)

Otuell's affiliation with both the Sarasin community as a whole and with his immediate family is all in the past tense in the eyes of the Sarasin emperor.

Otuell's subsequent actions (capturing Garcy and marrying Belesant) bring the narrative to a close in a predictable manner. But in a sense, the narrative of the conversion of Sir Otuell ends with the death of Clarell. While the capture of Garcy enables Otuell to assume the position in Christian society promised him by King Charles, it is his victory in a duel in which he champions Christianity which assures a place for him in Charles' kingdom and in Christian society. Prior to the duel, Otuell's position, like that of other Sarasin converts in medieval popular fiction, is very much in doubt and largely contingent upon his actions against his former allies on behalf of his new coreligionists. While the act of conversion represents a step for the Sarasin convert, it is but an initial step, and will not result in admission into Christian society without the equally important steps represented by the active severing of ties to the character's Sarasin past, and thus, the annihilation of the convert's Sarasin identity. In order to become fully integrated into the new society, the Sarasin convert must cast his or her fortune entirely with the Christian society. For the Sarasin convert, Sarasin society remains a viable alternative as long as links remain, as Clarell's offer to Otuell upon learning of his conversion demonstrates. It is only by destroying that option that the new Christian can ensure his or her position in Christian society. Thus, as the door to the Sarasin world and a Sarasin past closes for the Sarasin convert, a new door opens to reveal a Christian future within the Christian world in which he or she is now a member.

While there are numerous examples of Sarasin converts in medieval works of popular fiction, there is, perhaps predictably, a dearth of similar examples in the historical

accounts of the Third Crusade. In one sense this is to be expected; the exigencies of the Third Crusade did not provide the types of opportunities and circumstances that were attendant to conversion in many of the fictional accounts, and more importantly, the tales of conversion in the works of popular fiction were ultimately flights of fancy, and as such, were wholly inapplicable not only to the Crusaders' situation in the Levant, but also to instances of interaction between members of different religious groups in general, and Muslims and Christians in particular. The enemy, as it turned out, was, although foreign, not monstrous, and it became readily apparent that conversion of the enemy was not a practicable policy. Moreover, as the accounts plainly reveal, the Christian forces were not nearly as united as an enterprise of the magnitude of the Crusades would have required.³⁹ All of these contingencies, combined with the inescapable reality that the faith of the enemy was as intense as that of the Crusaders, worked against the conversion of the enemy, not to mention the extravagant kinds of conversion found in medieval works of popular fiction. And as the chroniclers sought to depict the Third Crusade accurately (give or take the occasional rhetorical flourish), their focus was not on the Crusade as an abstract concept in which conversion of the enemy might be a desired outcome, but rather on the reality of the situation as it presented itself, which was that the Third Crusade was, in the main, a military and political enterprise, in which religion was relevant only as it was associated with those two arenas.

As a result of the military, political and religious realities of the Third Crusade, the location of the scene of conversion, or rather, the collision of religions and the rejection of one by adherents of the other, in many of the historical accounts shifts, and the narrative of conversion no longer relates to individuals, but rather to cities, towns,

villages and fortresses. Locations are implicitly identified as Sarasin via their inhabitants and, more importantly, the presence of things indicative of the practice of another religion. These indicators of another religious presence take the form of either concrete representations of the religion such as edifices (e.g. mosques) or concrete examples of the active negation of Christianity through symbolic acts (e.g. the desecration of symbols associated with Christianity). It is the latter form of expression of the religious identity of a place that is most commonly recorded by the chroniclers, and there are a number of factors underlying their focus on this form of expression.

The position maintained by theologians in the Latin West at the time of the Third Crusade regarding Islam was that it was a heresy rather than a religion,⁴⁰ and scenes in which Christian symbols are desecrated serve to reinforce the image of a Sarasin heresy that negates and distorts fundamental aspects of Christianity rather than positively asserting a rival theological position via its own religious symbols. Moreover, such examples of overt hostility toward Christianity evoke the religious aspect of the Third Crusade for the audience, and can serve to remind the reader not only of the reason behind the Crusade, but also, in light of its outcome of the necessity for renewed action. And in addition to the aforementioned reasons, the chroniclers were actually quite uninformed about Islam and the ways in which it would have been manifested symbolically. While there appears to be some knowledge of Muslim beliefs and practices on the part of many of the chroniclers, much of it is at a very superficial level. As a result, the best way for them to identify the positive assertion of Islam would have been through locating examples of the active negation of Christianity.

Thus, there are numerous examples of the assertion of a Sarasin religion through acts negating Christianity in the various historical accounts. After the conquest of Acre, the *Itinerarium* describes the condition of the Christian churches and symbols at the time of the re-entry of Christians into the city en masse:

The state of the churches inside the city was horrible to behold, and even now it is distressing to remember the shocking things seen within them. For which of the faithful could gaze dry-eyed on the face of a venerable image of God's Son Himself crucified, or of some saint, which had been disfigured or dishonoured in some way? Who would not shudder at the horrific description of how that impious Turkish people abusively destroyed altars, and threw holy crosses on the ground, and beat them in contempt? (pp. 221-2)⁴¹

In a similar fashion, both Ambroise and Richard de Templo relate that, after the Sarasin capture of Jaffa, the Sarasins killed all of the pigs in the city, and then placed the bodies of the slain Christians together with the swine in a show of contempt.⁴² A similar state of affairs is reported in connection with the various Christian holy sites in Jerusalem in the *Itinerarium*, as Christian pilgrims are said to have found that the Sarasins were using many of these places as stables (p. 377).⁴³ Thus for the chroniclers, the areas under Sarasin control are, in effect, polluted by their religion, which, as a part of its manifestation, includes the active negation of Christianity. Consequently, the only way in which such areas can be rendered suitable for Christian habitation is through conquest, and the “conversion” of the city to Christianity through the assertion (or reassertion) of Christianity through symbols and symbolic acts.

Due to the nature of the Third Crusade (indeed, all Crusades) and the underlying religious foundation of the conflict, military actions were necessarily rendered religious actions at some level. Thus, the act of conquest on either side was invariably an act of conversion, since the result of the conquest was that the area in question was now “free” and re-absorbed into God's dominion. Thus, in writing of the conquest of Acre, Richard

de Templo describes it as having been “surrendered” (p. 221), and in a later passage, informs his audience that Richard strove to “conquer God’s inheritance.”⁴⁴

These acts of conquest, while themselves a form of conversion, are at times also accompanied by symbolic acts of conversion on the parts of the Crusaders. There are symbolic acts of conversion that were undertaken by members of the clergy that, while not mentioned in the chronicles, undoubtedly took place. However, the focus of the chroniclers most often falls on the reversal of Sarasin acts of desecration undertaken by the Crusaders themselves. Thus, in the aforementioned example of the Sarasins mingling the corpses of the slain Christians with those of pigs in Jaffa, both the *Estoire* and the *Itinerarium* state that the Christians, upon resuming control of Jaffa, recovered the corpses of their coreligionists and substituted them with those of the dead from among the enemy.⁴⁵ In this instance the Sarasin investiture of the city is, in part, asserted through both the assertion of practices, expressed through the killing of pigs,⁴⁶ and an insult, the mingling of the corpses of their enemies with the slaughtered animals. The Crusader response is to effectively return the favor, and in so doing, to implicitly reassert the dominion of Christianity in Jaffa.

The Third Crusade, much like the previous and subsequent ones, stood apart from other conflicts in that in many ways it represented the concrete expression of religious differences via armed conflict. Moreover, as the religious foundation of the conflict was universally acknowledged, the religious and the martial aspects of the conflict often occupied the same space. In such an atmosphere, victories and reverses gained an added significance. For the chroniclers of the Third Crusade, military success was a reflection of a greater spiritual superiority, and the convergence of doctrine and proper application

via practice and ritual. Similarly, conquest was akin to a form of conversion, as, even precluding individual conversion, the result was the absorption of another city, town or territory into the fold; this was significant in that not only was the area in question transformed into a safe space for one religious community, but conversely, it also became uninhabitable for one religious community. And given the atmosphere of heightened tension and religious intolerance that was part and parcel of life in the Levant during the period of the Crusades, the difference between the conquest and conversion of an area was often a question of interpretation.

The Sarasin, both as the representative of the Eastern Mediterranean Muslim of the Middle Ages and as the bogeyman of medieval popular fiction, was a study in contrasts: alien yet similar, feared and abhorred, yet consistently popular as a character in medieval fiction. In the historical context of the Middle Ages, and the Third Crusade in particular, the Sarasin as historical Muslim represented a very real threat located just beyond the borders of Western Europe (with the exception of Spain, which was experiencing a gradual process of Christian re-conquest). Moreover, the Sarasin represented an unconquerable threat in the cultural, political and religious arenas, and Sarasin leaders like Salāh al-Dīn consistently proved to be the equal of their Christian counterparts. And in the context of the medieval world, the edge in economic and military power, if one was to be found, lay not in Western Europe, but with their Eastern neighbors.

Ultimately, the West's answer to the Sarasin as a representative of historical Muslims was the Sarasin of medieval fiction. If the Sarasin in the historical context symbolized a threat militarily, politically and religiously, then the Sarasin of popular

fiction served as a counterweight, as he presented an image of the historical Sarasin's opposite, a character consistent in its ineptitude and impotence, that provided a ready target for Christian adversaries. In this context the threat posed by the historical Muslim was debunked through caricature, as the image of Muslim political and military strength was reduced to that of raving, ineffective sultans and hordes of Sarasin soldiers descending upon fields of battle against their Christian opponents like cattle to slaughter. And as the situation deteriorated in the Levant in the face of stiffening political opposition on the ground and reverses on the field of battle, the image of the Sarasin in popular fiction deteriorated further, and Christian triumphs in the literature served to counterbalance their defeats in the real world. With each Christian victory and Sarasin defeat, the Sarasin of popular fiction served to take a bit of the edge off of the ominous situation in the East and South that was a part of the audience's historical reality. Thus, while the Sarasin of popular fiction could not alter the historical reality of the Crusades or offer a viable solution to the situation in the Levant, it did provide its Western audience with a diversion, and a way in which to obtain a victory of sorts in the face of an increasingly difficult military and political situation in the East.

¹ Siobhain Bly Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 183-4.

² Depending on the work in question, one can indeed find this range of depictions of the Near Eastern Other within the same story (e.g. *The Sowdone of Babylone*), in which often the characters cast as most familiar relative to the Christian heroes are the characters who, in the course of the tale, will convert.

³ Physical Otherness in the depiction of the Near Eastern Other functions in a number of ways, including the way alluded to in the previous note, and is dealt with at a later point in this chapter.

⁴ The term “Sarasin” here denotes the European construction via literature and popular culture, and not historical Muslims. For a more detailed explanation of the concept of “Sarasin” versus Muslim, see Bly-Calkin’s *Saracens and the Formation of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript*, 2.

⁵ For lack of a better term, “European” is here employed; the term is meant to signify something akin, racially, to a Western European.

⁶ Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons & Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003) 169.

⁷ Of course, the understood implication is that the Sowdan’s transformation marks his exit from the realm of the demonic, as represented by his blackness, via baptism, and his entrance into the company of the righteous, represented by his new-found whiteness.

⁸ Even in instances in which Sarasins are not physically marked as Foreign Sarasins, they can often be identified by their extreme behavior, religious beliefs, and rituals, as in the case of the Soudan in the *Sowdone of Babylone*. *The Romaunce of the Sowdone of Babylone and of Ferumbras His Sone Who Conquered Rome*. Ed. Emil Hausknecht, Early English Text Society, e.s. 38. London, 1891.

⁹ Sir Ogier was a participant in a skirmish in which three Sarasin kings were killed. As a result of Sir Ogier’s intervention, Sir Clarell was released so that the peers could concentrate on repulsing the Sarasin ambush. *The Sege of Melayne, The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne, Together with a Fragment of The Song of Roland*. Ed. Sidney J. Herrtage, Early English Text Society, e.s. 35. London, 1880. ll. 865-73.

¹⁰ *The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell of Spayne* will henceforward be referred to by the abbreviated title *Sir Otuell*.

¹¹ *The English Charlemagne Romances, Part VII: The Boke of Duke Huon of Burdeux*, Ed. S.L. Lee, Early English Text Society, e.s. 40-41 (1882-87; reprint New York: Kraus Reprint, 1981) xviii.

¹² Giles, J. A., Thomas Johnes, Richard, Jean Joinville, and Aḥmad ibn Alī Maqrīzī, *Chronicles of the Crusades: Being Contemporary Narratives of the Crusade of Richard Coeur De Lion* (London: H.G. Bohn, 1848) iii.

¹³ *The Sowdone of Babylone*, l. 352. Further references to this romance will be by line numbers given parenthetically in the text.

¹⁴ Helen J. Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade: A Translation of the Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* (Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997) 247. Subsequent references will be by page number given parenthetically in the text. The *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* will henceforward be referred to as the *Itinerarium*.

¹⁵ This is exclusively a literary convention found in romances and mystery plays in which Sarasins appear, and serves to highlight moral and behavioral differences between Christians and Sarasins.

¹⁶ *The Romance of Duke Rowland and of Sir Otuell of Spayne*, ll. 849-55. Further references to this romance will be by line numbers given parenthetically in the text.

¹⁷ Otuell is one of the character examples in the section dealing with Sarasin converts in medieval fiction, and as such, his role within the context of the present text is examined in detail there.

¹⁸ However, this obligation did not prevent such writers from including dubious accounts of events and inserting fictitious speeches in the mouths of such famous Muslim leaders as Salāh al-Dīn in many of the accounts of the Third Crusade.

¹⁹ For example, in the *Itinerarium*, the enemy is described in these: “There were never more outstanding warriors or better defenders than these, whatever their beliefs. The mind is astounded and recoils at the memory of their deeds” (214). Similar expressions of admiration can be found in the *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*.

²⁰ Ambroise, and Gaston Bruno Paulin Paris. *L'estoire de la guerre sainte, histoire en vers de la troisième croisade (1190-1192) par Ambroise* Collection de documents inédits sur l'histoire de France, 1-2. (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1897). See also *The History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la Guerre Sainte, Vol. II*, Trans. Marianne Ailes (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003) 131-2. A similar account can be found in the *Itinerarium* (pp. 272-4). The *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte* will henceforward be referred to as the *Estoire*.

²¹ Ambroise describes Salāh al-Dīn's retreat in the *Estoire* in the following terms:
“Then was the news brought to Saladin and the account given of the assault on his people. He, the defeated man, more angry than a wolf, was feverish with fear. He did not dare wait there any longer but had his pavilions struck and his tents moved back into the plains.” (p. 180)

(“Eth vos la novele aportee/ A Salehadins e contee/ Que sa gent [i] ert assaillie/ E il, la persone faillie./ Qui estoit plus irez que leus./ Deust ester de peur fevereus./ Si n'osa illoc plus atendre./ Ainz fist ses paveillons destendre/ [E] ses tries sus es plains ariere...” *The History of the Holy War: Ambroise's Estoire de la Guerre Sainte, Vol. I*, Ed. Marianne Ailes (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003) 181.

One finds this description of the retreat in the *Itinerarium*:

“Saladin heard that the king had arrived and of his fine combat with his Turks and how he had cut to pieces all he met without distinction. Sudden fears rushed on him, for he was a very timid creature, like a frightened hare. Hurriedly tearing up his tents from their pitches he put spur to horse and fled before King Richard, not wishing to be seen by him.” (p. 357)

²² Perhaps the most striking examples of this sort of one-upmanship between the two leaders takes place during the events following the battle for Jaffa (July 26 – August 1, 1192), in which, after the Crusader victory, Richard pitches his tents in the very place from which Salāh al-Dīn had recently removed his own. Salāh al-Dīn, for his part, responds by sending a message to Richard stating that he is coming to capture him, if he dares await his approach. As is to be expected, the English king affirms that he is willing to await his approach. *Itinerarium*, 369.

²³ This occasion is the period of what would be ultimately fruitless negotiations (c. November 6, 1191) between the two leaders over the division of the lands of the Levant between the two forces, and in particular, the fates of Ascalon and Fort Erach of Mount Royal. The *Itinerarium* (pp. 272-4) provides the details of the substance of the negotiations. However, both the *Itinerarium* and the *Estoire* (pp. 131-2) reveal that King Richard was admonished by some of his peers for his perceived friendliness toward Salāh al-Dīn. Moreover, both make a point of remarking on the zeal with which Richard renewed his battle with the enemy after the breakdown of the negotiations, spurred on in part by feelings that he had been deceived

and in part by the desire to demonstrate that, contrary to the allegations of his detractors, his desire to wage war against the enemy had not waned.

²⁴ “O mei milites, O regni mei robur et corona, uos mille mecum pericula passi, uos qui uiribus tot michi / tiranos domuistis et ciuitates, uidetis quod uulcus ignauum iam nobis insultat? Expugnabimus nos Turcos et Arabes, erimus nos terrori gentibus inuictissimis, faciet nobis uiam dextera nostra usque ad terre terminus post crucem Christi, restuemus nos regnum Israel, qui uilibus et effeminatis Grifonibus terga dederimus? Nos hic in patrie nostre deuicti confinio tendemus ulterius, ut ex Anglorum inertia in finibus orbis fibula fiat? Estne, mei, michi iusta satis noua causa doloris? Videre quidem me uideor uos ex deliberatione uiribus parcere, ut olim cum Salahadino forte fortius confligatis... Si uiuus hinc iero, non uidebet me Salahadinus, nisi uictorem.” *Cronicon Richardi Divisensis De Tempore Regis Richardi Primi (The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes of the Time of King Richard the First)*, Trans. John T. Appleby (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1963) 20-1.

²⁵ In fact, there is reason to believe that there was a very different understanding of the terms of the negotiated surrender of Acre from the Muslim perspective, and that as a result of this difference Salāh al-Dīn was not perceived as having deserted his soldiers in their time of need, but rather, the Crusaders were seen as having slaughtered them needlessly. Bahā’ al-Dīn details the negotiations and the subsequent actions of Salāh al-Dīn from the Muslim perspective in his account of the Third Crusade.

²⁶ Sayf al-Dīn’s role in this capacity, and to a greater extent his role as a Familiar Sarasin, is the subject of the coming section.

²⁷ *Itinerarium*, 378. There is also an account of the conversation in the *Estoire* (p. 191).

²⁸ Edward Said offers an example of such a system in his examination of Orientalism as a discipline as a closed, self-reinforcing system in which each “fact” within the Orientalist system reinforces, and is at the same time informed by, previously held “facts”, verifiable only within the context of the system itself. *Orientalism*, pp. 69-71.

²⁹ Ambroise also praises Sayf al-Dīn for his actions in similar terms in the *Estoire* (p. 182).

³⁰ *Estoire*, 148.

³¹ “Deus...Christianorum, si Deus es, talem uirum tuis (tam) necessarium tam prepropere non patieris occumbere...In ueritate prenuntio quod si rebus ut nunc sunt / se habentibus uir iste decesserit, uos omnes Christiani peribitis, et tota hec region nostra erit in posterum sine litigio.”

Sayf al-Dīn then begins a lengthy monologue in which he expounds on such topics as the valor and value of King Richard, the healthy Sarasin respect for the English even in times prior to Richard’s arrival in the Levant, the history of Richard and his family, the king’s action en route to Acre, and the duplicity of the French. His exposition displays not only an extensive knowledge of the personal history of King Richard, but also a curious bias in favor of the English and against the French. *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes of the Time of King Richard the First*, 75-78.

³² This anxiety on the part of the writers finds expression in an interesting way toward the end of Richard de Templo’s *Itinerarium*. In relating the account of the king’s travels through continental Europe en route to England and the political intrigue that necessitated his taking an indirect route home, he laments the capture of King Richard in Germany, as it threatens to tarnish the memory of his accomplishments in the Levant. “What a shocking thing to happen! Although his adversaries had not been able to withstand him, he was shut up by obscure people. Although the combined forces of the whole of Saladin’s empire were not strong enough to overcome him, he was held prisoner in Germany” (p. 383).

³³ For example, both Ambroise and Richard de Templo fail to mention a curious incident in which King Richard attempts to aggravate the condition of the then-sick King Philip Augustus of France with a false report of his son's death in France. Naturally, it is reported in Ernoul's continuation of William of Tyre's work. Peter W. Edbury, *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade: Sources in Translation* (Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1996) 109.

³⁴ This is particularly true in relation to Sayf al-Dīn's actions subsequent to Salāh al-Dīn's death, in which he effectively dispossessed Salāh al-Dīn's children of their inheritance, all of which is recorded in the chronicles composed by Western Europeans who lived in the Levant and were familiar with the politics of the area. Ibid. 132-4.

³⁵ Indeed, the first mention of Floripas comes courtesy of her brother, Ferumbras, who offers her in marriage to Oliver, along with a fiefdom in exchange for renouncing Christianity. *The Romance of the Sowdone of Babylone and of Ferumbras His Sone Who Conquered Rome*, ll. 1,220-26.

³⁶ For an in-depth examination of religious identity as political identity, see the first chapter of Bly-Calkin's *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript*.

³⁷ "...fye on the, stronge hore, / Mahounde confound the!" (ll. 3,131-2)

³⁸ Otuell differs from other male Sarasin converts, such as Sir Ferumbras, in that his decision to convert is largely the product of divine intervention and free will, whereas in the case of Ferumbras and others the desire to convert arises out of necessity, often that of self-preservation, and is often accompanied by a disavowal of the Sarasin deities that are perceived to have abandoned the convert in his time of need. Even in a case such as that of the Sowdan of Damas in *The King of Tars*, his conversion is a result of both the inefficacy of the Sarasin deities to transform the product of his union with his Christian wife into a normal child, and the efficacy of the baptismal font in accomplishing this task.

³⁹ During the Third Crusade there were divisions between (a) the Crusaders from Continental Europe and their brethren who had settled in the Levant as a result of the previous Crusades; (b) breakdowns along ethnic and national lines (e.g. the French/ Anglo-Norman divide, which was exacerbated by the tension between King Richard I and King Philip Augustus); and (c) tension between the Christians from the Latin West and their coreligionists in Byzantium. This is to say nothing of the conflicts resulting from personal rivalries, petty jealousy and conflicting personalities which at times divided the Crusader camp as well. It is interesting to note that, along with Salah al-Din, the principal villains of the *Estoire* and the *Itinerarium* – Isaac, the renegade emperor of Cyprus; Conrad de Montferrat; and, to an extent, King Philip Augustus and his French soldiers – are all Christians.

⁴⁰ Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960) 184-8.

⁴¹ A similar account can also be found in Ambroise's *Estoire* (p. 104).

⁴² *Estoire*, 181; *Itinerarium*, 358.

⁴³ A similar description of the conditions of the Christian holy sites can be found in the *Estoire* (p. 190).

⁴⁴ Ibid. 227; this idea of the Crusaders fighting for God's inheritance is also a constant theme in Ambroise's *Estoire*, and indeed, similar ideas are to be found in many of the accounts of the Third Crusade.

⁴⁵ *Estoire*, 181; *Itinerarium*, 358.

⁴⁶ The killing of pigs is actually an example of an instance in which a rule – the prohibition of the consumption of pork – is taken to an extreme, and as such, is not so much a religious practice as it is an

extreme reaction, and may have been an expression of the heightened religious tension that was pervasive in the Levant as a result of the Crusades.

Chapter 3: Western Europeans through the Eyes of Medieval Muslims

For the medieval Muslims of the Eastern Mediterranean, their outlook on the outside world and their relationship to it was somewhat different from that of their counterparts in Western Europe. As the inhabitants of an Islamic empire which extended from the outer edge of China in the East to Spain south of the Pyrenees in the West, they were the inheritors of not only much of the ancient Greek and Roman empires, but also the Sassanian Empire in modern-day Iran and Iraq. Moreover, as inhabitants of a powerful, dynamic realm, they reaped the benefits of its military, political and economic strength, all of which infused them with a greater degree of confidence regarding the outside world.

During the first century of expansion (c. 640-740 C.E.) for what was then an Arab/Islamic polity, very little changed in the geographical outlook of the Arab Muslims, who looked primarily to the Qur'ān, the Traditions of the Prophet (*hadīth*), and pre-Islamic Arabic poetry as sources of knowledge.¹ While the conquest of much of the Eastern Mediterranean and parts of the Indian subcontinent provided them with access to the accumulated knowledge of the Iranian, Hellenic, Mesopotamian, and Indian civilizations, among others,² it was not until the reign of the 'Abbāsīd Caliph al-Mansūr (753-775 C.E.), under whom the two-century-long process of translation of foreign texts was initiated, that the acquisition of this ancient knowledge was begun in earnest.³ Greek, Indian and Persian geographical concepts all exercised a tremendous influence on Muslim geographical thought, but the Greek and Persian ideas had the most profound

effect on the development of medieval Muslim geography.⁴ From the Persian sources, the Muslim geographers adopted a concept that would feature prominently in their conception of the world, the idea of the earth being divided into seven *kishwars*, or equal geometric circles, with the fourth *kishwar* (which was the most favorably situated, and included the Iranian and Iraqi heartland) in the center, surrounded by the other six.⁵ From the Hellenic works, the Muslim geographers acquired the concepts⁶ and astronomical findings which informed much of the science which lay at the foundation of medieval Muslim geography, and which was most observable in their human, mathematical and physical geography.⁷

The works of famous scholars such as Aristotle and Plato, and lesser-known figures like Marinus of Tyre (70-130 C.E.) were very influential within emerging field of geography in the Muslim world during the eighth-tenth centuries; however, the and influence of Claudius Ptolemy was unmatched, and among his works *Geographikê Hyphêgêsis*, the *Almagest*, *Tetrabiblon* and *Apparitions of Fixed Stars* were all utilized by Muslim geographers, with the greatest amount of attention reserved for *Geographikê Hyphêgêsis*.⁸ The work of Ptolemy would remain largely unchanged in the hands of the Muslim writers, and would exert an unparalleled influence on Muslim thought in the field of geography for centuries.⁹ From Ptolemy, the Muslims received the classical concept of the climatic zones, or “climes,” of the earth, and their influence on both the physiological and psychological make-up of the peoples who inhabited them, although the Muslims’ division of the earth into seven latitudinal zones¹⁰ was actually in accordance with the Persian *kishwar* system.

Among the many early contributors to medieval Muslim geographical thought, a few individuals stand apart for their extraordinary achievements. Muhammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī (d. after 847 C.E.), known to future generations as al-Khwārizmī, translated Ptolemy's *Geography*, incorporating the additional information that had been gathered by Muslim scholars up to his time.¹¹ Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq al-Kindī (801-873 C.E.) expounded upon the Greek idea of the climes and the sun's influence on the various regions via its proximity, causing areas that were either too near or too distant to be infertile and sparsely populated as a result of the inordinate amount of heat or cold, and providing the "intermediate" zones with an optimal environment for the cultivation of food and civilization.¹² Abū 'l-Qāsim 'Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Khurradādhbih (820-912 C.E.), known commonly as ibn Khurradādhbih, produced the first Muslim geographical reference work on the various fiefdoms and principalities in the 'Abbāsid empire, *Kitāb al-Masālik wa 'l-mamālik* (The Book of Itineraries and Kingdoms), which would serve as a model for future geographers attempting to describe the Muslim and non-Muslim world;¹³ the title itself would be used for numerous subsequent works in the same vein by other authors. While this list is far from exhaustive and omits some of the brightest minds of the era in question, the aforementioned scholars were among the earliest contributors to the field of geography in the medieval Muslim world, and their works paved the way for the writers whose works dealing with the distant places and peoples of the world, particularly Europe and its inhabitants, will be the focus of much of this chapter.

In addition to the works dealing with theoretical geography and the *Masālik wa 'l-mamālik* literature, another genre emerged that dealt primarily with faraway places and

peoples: *'ajā'ib* literature. “*'ajā'ib*” is generally translated as “marvels,” and in the case of the study of foreign lands *'ajā'ib* literature during the tenth and eleventh century was characterized by its balance between realistic accounts of travel and flights of fancy.¹⁴ One of the earliest works of *'ajā'ib* literature was the *'Ajā'ib al-Hind* (Marvels of India) (ca. 953),¹⁵ attributed to a captain Burzug ibn Shahriyār, which is comprised of the tales of sailors who had traveled to East Africa, India, and some of the islands of South East Asia, and is a blend of accurate accounts and stories of the marvelous.¹⁶ During the formative years of medieval Muslim geography and through some of its greatest development during the tenth and eleventh centuries *'ajā'ib* literature appeared to reflect the geographical climate of the period at least to some degree, as there was a balance between fact and the fantastic in the various works within the genre. However, in the centuries that followed there was a marked shift toward the fantastic, and by the fourteenth century this shift was so profound that the work of Burzug ibn Shahriyār had been reformulated into a new cycle of stories that featured a new character: Sindbād the sailor.¹⁷

Throughout the development of geographical thought in the medieval Muslim world in the eighth-tenth centuries through the adaptation of foreign works and the observations of Muslim navigators, the focus was on: (a) the areas and peoples comprising the Muslim world; (b) the lands adjacent to Muslim lands (primarily in the area of the Eastern provinces, but also certain parts of East Africa); and (c) the East, and India in particular. Even in the *'ajā'ib* literature, much of the focus was on the East. One of the results of this particular focus was a general lack of attention paid to Europe, and Western Europe in particular.¹⁸ While there were periodic accounts of Muslim travel to

certain parts of Europe, such as that of Ibn Fadlān to the Upper Volga in the early tenth century and that of Ibn Ya'qūb's journey from Spain to Germany in the mid-tenth century,¹⁹ such accounts were rare, and this area of the world and its inhabitants were not generally given the same type of attention by Muslim geographers as the peoples and places of the East.

For the most part, the peoples of Europe, particularly in the West, were largely ignored, and the information on these areas and their inhabitants was often vague or erroneous. In some cases, a variety of different groups were conflated, with various ethnic groups lumped together under one name.²⁰ As for the Western Europeans, or *iFrānj* ("Franks") as they were known in the Muslim sources,²¹ very little was known of or written about them for much of the early years of Islamic empires. Al-Khwārizmī provided some geographical information regarding Western Europe via his Arabic adaptation of Ptolemy's *Geographikē Hyphêgêsis*,²² and Ibn Khurradādhbih informed his audience that the lands of the *iFrānj* were "polytheist," and adjoined Spain.²³ Writing in the early tenth century, Ibn Rusta provided an account of the city of Rome and mentioned the British Isles; all of his information was based on the account of a former prisoner of war, Hārūn ibn Yahyā.²⁴ However, this was the extent of the information available about Western Europe and its peoples through the earliest years of the tenth century. With the exception of the Byzantines, the lands and peoples of Europe, and Western Europe in particular, were paid little attention in the majority of the works of the Muslim geographers throughout the Middle Ages. However, as with all such trends, there were a few notable exceptions.

One of the earliest Muslim accounts of travel in Europe was that of the tenth-century writer Ibn Fadlān. Born Ahmad ibn Fadlān ibn al-Abbās ibn Rāshid ibn Hammād, Ibn Fadlān is something of a mysterious figure, as nothing is known regarding his life outside of his account of an embassy from the ‘Abbāsīd Caliph al-Muqtadir to the king of the Bulgars of which he was a part during the 920s.²⁵ The purpose of the embassy was missionary activity – to instruct the king’s subjects in the teachings of Islam – and came at the request of the king, who had sent a letter to the caliph,²⁶ although his motives may not have been entirely religious in nature.²⁷ The embassy left Baghdad on June 21, 921 and arrived at the Bulgar capital on May 12, 922, leaving after the king’s subjects had received religious instruction.²⁸ It is interesting to note that neither Ibn Fadlān nor the embassy are mentioned by any of the other Muslim writers of the tenth century, and the only existing information about it is to be found within the account itself.²⁹

Ibn Fadlān’s account does not deal with the peoples of Western Europe, but is focused on the Khazars, the *Rūs* (the peoples of present-day Russia, Ukraine and the Belarus),³⁰ the Slavs, the *Bashkīr* (the Turkish peoples of the Southern Urals),³¹ and various Turkish groups.³² In addition, while the work provides a detailed account of the embassy’s journey from Baghdad to the Upper Volga, no mention is made in the surviving text of either the return to Baghdad or the route taken from the Bulgar capital to Baghdad.³³ However, Ibn Fadlān’s legacy as a valuable contributor to medieval Muslim geography lies in the detailed information his account provides on the *Rūs* and Khazars, information which he acquired through both first-hand experience and from the accounts of individuals who were familiar with the two groups.³⁴ As such, Ibn Fadlān’s

account constitutes a substantial, if under-appreciated, contribution to medieval Muslims' understanding of the lands to the North and some of the peoples inhabiting them.

One of the greatest of the Muslim contributors to the field of medieval Muslim geography, particularly in the area of non-Muslim nations and peoples, was the tenth-century scholar Abū 'l-Hasan 'Alī ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Abd-Allāh al-Mas'ūdī (circa 896-956). Known to later generations as al-Mas'ūdī, is one of the most important, yet one of the most enigmatic literary figures of the classical Islamic period.³⁵ A polymath who lived during turbulent times for the 'Abbāsid caliphate that, while embattled, was still significant in a way in which it would not be by the time of the Crusades, al-Mas'ūdī wrote on a variety of subjects relating to: (a) religion,³⁶ including but not limited to objective and polemical treatments of Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Judaism and Manichaeism; philosophy and science; historical traditions in general; and general knowledge within the context of history.³⁷ Moreover, as a member of a sect that did not espouse an "orthodox" interpretation of Islam,³⁸ he brought a perspective to religious questions and controversies that was outside the mainstream of Muslim opinion.³⁹ Unfortunately, of his estimated thirty-six works, which include books and epistles (56), only two survive, *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* (Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems) and *Al-Tanbīh wa' l-Ishrāf* (Book of Indication and General View); information concerning the nature and content of the other works can be gathered only through references contained within the *Murūj al-Dhahab* and *Tanbīh*⁴⁰ (56).

In composing his works, al-Mas'ūdī drew upon a wide variety of sources, Islamic and pre-Islamic, in his treatment of the earth's geography in both the *Murūj al-Dhahab wa 'l Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* and *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l-Ishrāf*, and the influences of the

different types of sources and particular authors is evident in both of the aforementioned works.⁴¹ Among his various sources, the most important contributors to al-Mas'ūdī's understanding of world geography in the theoretical sense were the Greek and Muslim astronomers and geographers of the distant and recent past;⁴² his understanding of the physical geography of the world was largely influenced by Greek and Muslim philosophers.⁴³ Al-Mas'ūdī's writing on the subject of geography was also informed by other types of sources, but none of them exerted as great an influence as those of his Muslim and Greek predecessors.

Among the Greek sources, it was the works of Ptolemy and Aristotle that had the greatest impact on al-Mas'ūdī's understanding of the earth's geography, both in terms of theoretical geography and physical geography. Al-Mas'ūdī appears to have been well-acquainted with Ptolemy's *Almagest* and *Geographikê Hyphêgêsis*, and to have been at least familiar with his *Quadripartitum* and *Appearance of the Stationary Stars*.⁴⁴ From these works, he derived his theories regarding the circumference, diameter and shape of the earth; the division of the earth into three continents (Africa, Asia and Europe); the climatic zones; the seas; and of particular importance, the limits of the inhabited areas of the world. To the question of the boundaries of the habitable portions of the earth, al-Mas'ūdī cited Ptolemy's calculations regarding the northern and southern limits, although he also included the theories of al-Kindī in his discussion of the extent of habitable land south of the equator.⁴⁵

Aristotle was known to al-Mas'ūdī in terms of his insights on the physical geography of the world contained in the works *Meteorology*, *De Caelo*, *Metaphysics*, and his letter to his most famous pupil, who was at the time in India, adding to his legend.⁴⁶

From Aristotle, al-Mas‘ūdī derived his ideas regarding the existence of the substance ether, the relative size of the earth and the connected nature of the ocean, the notion that land and sea were in a constant state of change, and his theories on the mutual reaction of heat and cold. In addition, al-Mas‘ūdī learned of the theory that the polar and equatorial regions were incapable of sustaining life due to their extreme cold and heat, respectively, which was likely the basis for his division of land into the categories of inhabited and barren. Besides Aristotle and Ptolemy, the works of Marinus of Tyre, Geminus, and Hermes were also referenced by al-Mas‘ūdī,⁴⁷ but they did not exert an influence on al-Mas‘ūdī’s understanding of world geography proportionate to that of Aristotle and Ptolemy.

In addition to the Greek elements in his works, the *Murūj* and *Tanbīh* also reveal al-Mas‘ūdī’s acquaintance with the works of earlier Muslim astronomers, geographers and philosophers. In the area of astronomy, al-Mas‘ūdī was familiar with the works of al-Farghani, al-Battani, al-Khwārizmī and al-Balkhī,⁴⁸ as well as the works of the Caliph al-Ma’mūn’s astronomers. From these works he derived many of his ideas regarding the latitudes and longitudes of the earth, the curvature of its surface, and its circumference, diameter and shape. Of particular relevance to the discussion of al-Mas‘ūdī’s description of the various places and peoples of the world is the fact that he also derived both his approach of dividing the earth into four distinct quarters (North, South, East, and West), and its inhabitants into different groups according to color and “character” (which was attributed to the influence of the climate of the respective regions) from these earlier Muslim astronomers.⁴⁹

From the Muslim geographers, al-Mas‘ūdī acquired a great deal of material relating to descriptive and regional geography. While he consulted a number of works, Ibn Khurradādhbih’s *al-Masālik wa ’l-mamālik*, and to a lesser extent, al-Jāhiz’s *Kitāb al-Amsār wa ’Ajā’ib al-Buldān*, appear to have been most influential, although he criticized the work of the former scholar for its lack of sufficient amounts of detailed information regarding the areas it describes, and the work of the latter because he had not traveled to the places he described in his work.⁵⁰ Al-Mas‘ūdī was also well-acquainted with al-Kindī’s *Rasm al-Ma’mūr min al-‘Ard* and *Risāla fī ’l-Bihār wa ’l-Madd wa ’l-Jazr*, as well as Ahmad ibn al-Tayyib al-Sarakhsi’s *al-Masālik wa ’l-mamālik* and *Risāla fī ’l-Bihār wa ’l-Miyāh wa ’l-Jibāl*,⁵¹ and from these sources he obtained information regarding the sizes of the various bodies of water and other types of oceanographic information.⁵²

Beyond the influence of Greek and Muslim scholars, al-Mas‘ūdī’s works were also informed by other systems of thought. In his division of the earth into climes, al-Mas‘ūdī’s description of the various climes is actually in accordance with the Persian *kishwar* system.⁵³ Al-Mas‘ūdī’s works also incorporated both histories and legends into his descriptions of places and peoples;⁵⁴ he rarely hesitated to add clearly fantastic details into historical accounts. In recounting the history of a particular group, al-Mas‘ūdī valued the accounts provided by the group’s own historians, and whenever possible, he attempted to avail himself of such sources. As a result, he was able to gain greater insight into certain aspects of certain groups (e.g. the Persians) such as the groups’ genealogical accounts. This use of a wide variety of sources is one of the particular strengths of al-Mas‘ūdī, and contributes to the overall quality of both the *Murūj* and *Tanbīh*; in the case

of the *Murūj*, this willingness to consult foreign sources is relevant to his discussion of Western Europe and its peoples, as it enables him to provide his audience with a glimpse into the political system of the *IFranj*.

In addition to the previously mentioned sources of information, al-Mas'ūdī had recourse to another easily-accessible repository of information regarding many of the distant areas of the then known world: his own experiences as a traveler. Like many of his predecessors, al-Mas'ūdī made use of informants, generally Muslim sailors, merchants and others who were native to the lands in question,⁵⁵ to fill in the gaps in areas in which his knowledge was insufficient. However, al-Mas'ūdī was a traveler in his own right, and a substantial portion of his life was spent in foreign lands. One of al-Mas'ūdī's principal complaints regarding the works of other Muslim geographers was that they were often not informed by the types of personal observation that could only result from travel, and he took great pride in the fact that he was able to incorporate his own observations into his discussion of foreign territories and peoples.⁵⁶ Al-Mas'ūdī traversed the medieval Muslim world and beyond; his travels occurred during the greater part of his life, beginning in 915 with his journey to Persia and India, and ending with his death in Fustāt (present-day Cairo) in 956.⁵⁷ He traveled across his native Iraq; the majority of Persia; Azerbaijan; Armenia; India, including the Indus valley and its Western coast; parts of the East African coast; Arabia; Egypt and Syria, and could boast of having sailed on the Indian Ocean, and the Caspian, Mediterranean and Red Seas,⁵⁸ along with a multitude of rivers and smaller bodies of water. The information gathered by al-Mas'ūdī as a result of his travels figures prominently in both the *Murūj* and *Tanbīh*, serving as an example of the way in which, for al-Mas'ūdī, personal experience and

practical observation should be used in conjunction with, and when necessary as a corrective for, information taken from outside sources when writing about distant places and peoples. While these experiences were not directly applicable to his discussion of the places and peoples of Western Europe, they did inform his approach toward this subject in some aspects, particularly as it related to his desire to incorporate direct and indirect accounts about the area from native informants.

Al-Mas'ūdī was one of the first Muslim writers to examine the Western European political system in some depth, and in the *Murūj* of his works he goes so far as to provide a list containing the names of the kings of the “Franks” (which for al-Mas'ūdī and other Muslims was a term that included Western European groups as well) beginning with the reign of Clovis and continuing until Louis IV.⁵⁹ In providing these lists, al-Mas'ūdī also demonstrates his willingness to consult non-Muslim sources; he explains that the list in question is based on a book composed in 939 by a bishop for the future sovereign of Spain, the Umayyad Caliph al-Hakam.⁶⁰ In consulting non-Muslim sources and including material from these sources in his works, al-Mas'ūdī, like al-Idrīsī after him, displays a willingness to look beyond the existing local literature in an attempt to better understand the different peoples of the world, actually making use of material produced by the group under investigation, an act which in and of itself separates him from the majority of his peers. Although the information gleaned from the Western source does not greatly alter al-Mas'ūdī's overall impression of the Franks, it does appear to provide him with a slightly more textured understanding of Western European politics, and as a result his work was all the more valuable to contemporary Muslim audiences for the information it contained about the Franks in particular, and of enormous worth to modern scholars for

the insights it provides into the medieval Muslim perspective on the outside world and its inhabitants.

For al-Mas‘ūdī, the Franks share a common lineage with the Slavs, Lombards, Galicians and Bulgarians, all of whom are identified as the descendants of Japheth.⁶¹ It is somewhat interesting to find that the Turks, Khazars, and the peoples of Gog and Magog are also included amongst the descendants of Japheth. However, within this larger “family,” the Franks are identified as being among the most courageous in battle; only the Galicians are more formidable in combat. Moreover, the Franks are, according to al-Mas‘ūdī, the most numerous, the possessors of the largest expanse of territories, and practice the best form of government of all the nations of Japheth. The Franks are also distinguished by their loyalty to their sovereigns, above and beyond what is to be found amongst the other nations of Japheth.⁶² al-Mas‘ūdī also informs his reader that the term “Frank” is applied not only to the group as a whole, but is also the name given to their empire as well. However, this information constitutes the preamble to the more detailed analysis that comes in the subsequent pages of the *Murūj*.

Perhaps the most interesting section of the *Murūj*, and the greatest indication of al-Mas‘ūdī’s attention to detail in approaching any subject, is that of the list of Frankish kings he provides in the final portion of his discussion of the Franks. Beginning with the reign of Clovis and continuing to the time of al-Mas‘ūdī, the list contains the names of each of the sovereigns, the length of his rule, and other pertinent information and noteworthy facts. Thus, al-Mas‘ūdī informs the reader that the first king, Clovis, was a pagan, but was eventually converted to Christianity through the efforts of his Christian wife, Clotild. Al-Mas‘ūdī also makes mention of the fact that Charlemagne ruled during

the time of the Umayyad caliph al-Hakam. Charlemagne's son, Ludrick, is identified as the Frankish king who besieged Tortosa, while his son, Carl, is reported to have made peace with the Umayyads. In turn his son, also named Ludrick, is reported to have come to peaceful terms, not with the Muslims to the South, but rather with pagans living in his own country, purchasing a truce for seven years with six-hundred "ratls" of gold and six hundred ratls"⁶³ of silver. In al-Mas'ūdī's own time, he reports that according to the most recent accounts that have reached him, yet another Ludrick, son of Carl, has been king of the Franks for the last ten years. This last piece of information is singular, not only for its accuracy, but for the insight it provides into the indefatigable researcher who composed this work. At the beginning of the section, al-Mas'ūdī informs the reader that he came upon a list containing the names of the Frankish kings in a Frankish book in Fustat (present-day Cairo) in the year 336 A.H. (947 C.E.).⁶⁴ All indications point toward the fact that al-Mas'ūdī had already finished the *Murūj* when he came upon this foreign source, and then revised his work to include the new information.⁶⁵ This fact, if true, is a demonstration of both al-Mas'ūdī's willingness to consult and use foreign sources, and the lengths to which he went in order to ensure that his works presented the most current information on the subjects with which they were concerned. With these aspects of al-Mas'ūdī's character as a researcher in mind, it is perhaps easier to excuse him for some of the glaring inaccuracies one finds in both this and other sections of *Murūj*.

In his later work, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l-Ishrāf*, al-Mas'ūdī takes up the subject of the climatic divisions of the world and their effects on the nature and temperament of the peoples found therein. In his discussion of the various climes, he divides the earth into two parts, and then proceeds to describe the inhabitants of both regions. The description

al-Mas'ūdī provides of the peoples of the North (of whom the Franks are one group) enumerates many of the stereotypical attributes that were already circulating in association with Europeans in medieval Muslim literature:

As for the northern quarter, which is farther away from the sun, in the extreme north, and which is the abode of the *Saqāliba*, the *Afranja* [Franks] and the neighboring races, and where the influence of the sun is rather alleviated and the region is cold, moisture and snow, the people are characterized by good physique, rude behaviour, slow wit, harsh tongue, white complexion, thick flesh, blue eyes, thin skin, curly and red hair. All these characteristics are found due to the predominance of moisture in their lands, and their cold nature does not encourage firmness of religious belief. Those living farther north are characterized by dullness of mind, harsh behaviour and barbarism. These characteristics increase proportionately as we proceed further north.⁶⁶

In this passage, al-Mas'ūdī reinforces what was already quickly becoming a widely-held belief about the “character” of Western Europeans, identifying barbarity and lack of intelligence in all things as the principal characteristics of this group and its culture. The *Tanbīh* was in many ways a revised edition of the *Murūj* and largely reflects the thinking of the prior work, as well as contemporary thought regarding the Northern regions. In the same way in which the *Tanbīh* condensed much of the information found in the *Murūj* and other previous works, presenting the information in a concise manner, this passage serves to present al-Mas'ūdī ideas regarding the *IFranj* in their essential form.

With his breadth of knowledge regarding the distant places and peoples of the world, which was a product of his extensive consultation of Muslim and non-Muslim sources and his wide-ranging experiences abroad, al-Mas'ūdī's works were invaluable for the information they contained about the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds. Al-Mas'ūdī's attention to detail as a geographer was in part a reflection of his interest in history, and his belief that the history of a people could not be understood outside of the context of the environment, cultural and physical, of the group in question;⁶⁷ this idea would resonate with some of the best minds of the medieval Muslim world in the subsequent centuries.⁶⁸

Al-Mas‘ūdī’s interest in both pre-Islamic and non-Islamic societies, along with his interest in the various denominations within Islam and other religions in general, was also of great value to those who would follow in his footsteps, as these interests resulted in his amassing a wealth of information relating to these subjects. In addition, his methodology of privileging knowledge based on personal observation and practical experience was not only a motivating factor for his many sojourns abroad, but also resulted in a few findings which challenged widely-held beliefs.⁶⁹ Al-Mas‘ūdī’s travels to distant shores and inquiries into the culture, history and religion of the peoples with whom he came into contact resulted in a vast quantity of information in a variety of fields, and in those of geography and history in particular, and in a research model for future scholars in the medieval Muslim world to emulate.

Building upon the work of previous Muslim geographers, the twelfth-century scholar al-Idrīsī made a substantial contribution to the field of geography in providing a greater understanding of Western Europe and its inhabitants during the period of the Crusades. Abū ‘Abdullah Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Idrīsī al-Sharīf (1099-1165 C.E.), or al-Idrīsī as he was known to later generations, has been identified by some as the greatest cartographer and geographer of the medieval period.⁷⁰ A member of the powerful ‘Alawī Idrīsīds of Morocco, and thus a politically important figure,⁷¹ he is nonetheless best known for his masterpiece of geography and cartography, the *Kitāb Nuzhat al-mushtāq fī’ khtirāq al-āfāq*⁷² (The Book of pleasant journeys and far off lands), which came to be known as the *Book of Roger* to later generations, so named for the patron who had it written. The *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*, which was completed in 1154,⁷³ includes a preface, a map of the world, along with seventy smaller sectional maps, with

descriptions of each region in terms of its physical, political, and cultural features.⁷⁴ While al-Idrīsī is more at home in describing Europe, Western and Central Asia, and North Africa than China and other parts of Southeast Asia,⁷⁵ the value of *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* was unquestionable in the eyes of later Muslim writers. During the Middle Ages, it was used by such luminaries as the historian and sociologist Ibn Khaldūn,⁷⁶ who referred to al-Idrīsī by his honorific title “al-Sharīf” (the Noble).⁷⁷ Indeed, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* would remain a relevant text for its geographical information for Muslim writers into the nineteenth century.⁷⁸ However, despite its obvious value as a product of both Christian European and Muslim Mediterranean geographical insight, and its availability as a result of its having been composed in Norman Sicily, *Nuzhat al-Mushtāq* went largely unnoticed by Europeans throughout both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.⁷⁹

In composing the *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*, al-Idrīsī drew from a number of different sources for his information. Al-Idrīsī does not appear to have used the works of some of the most important Muslim geographers from among his predecessors, including al-Mas‘ūdī; he also failed to take advantage of many of the recorded accounts of earlier Muslim merchants and sailors, which worked to his detriment in his descriptions of the lands in the East.⁸⁰ He also borrowed heavily from Ibn- Khurradādhbih, particularly for his information regarding the earth’s sphericity, the equator, the earth’s circumference, and the inhabited regions of the earth.⁸¹

In most cases, al-Idrīsī looked to the accounts of merchants and sailors that were at his disposal in Sicily for information about Europe and the Mediterranean; he relied on both his own experiences and the accounts of Muslim merchants and sailors for his information about Africa and certain parts of Asia; and he made exclusive use of the

works of Ptolemy for information about the remainder of Asia.⁸² In terms of his maps of the world, al-Idrīsī looked primarily to maps derived from Ptolemy's works.⁸³ In addition to works in the Ptolemaic tradition, al-Idrīsī also made use of the work of Ibn Hawqal in constructing some of his maps; this is significant because Ibn Hawqal came out of the Balkhī School of cartography, which differed considerably from the Ptolemaic school in some aspects of cartography.⁸⁴ However, al-Idrīsī relied most heavily on maps following the Ptolemaic tradition, along with the information he obtained from the types of sources previously mentioned, for the lion's share of the information relating to the known world and its inhabitants, including the peoples and places of Western Europe, found in the *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*.

Al-Idrīsī's principle concern regarding Western Europe is the accurate representation of the region in terms of its physical geography, as well as providing a description of the cities and other densely-populated areas of note that one might encounter in traveling through the area, and in this respect he is masterful in his work. In describing Western Europe, al-Idrīsī enumerates the myriad settled areas (including cities and large villages), describes the topography of each of the nations in question, provides an account of both the natural and man-made wonders, and even goes so far as to calculate the distance between the settled areas of note. For example, in describing Tortosa, al-Idrīsī informs the reader that, "the city of Tortosa is a beautiful city on the Ebro River, between it and the Mediterranean Sea."⁸⁵ From this account of Tortosa's location, al-Idrīsī goes on to mention that it possesses an impenetrable fortress, and that it boasts of pine trees of unmatched quality which it ships to lands near and far, before concluding with the fact that it is forty-five miles from the city of Tarragona.⁸⁶

Al-Idrīsī offers similar detail in his descriptions of the Frankish territories, enumerating the many nations, provinces, cities and settlements that comprise the “lands of the Franks” such as Toulouse (“a beautiful, noble city that has villages and farms”),⁸⁷ Bourges, Clermont, and Dijon.⁸⁸ The same type of attention to detail can be found in al-Idrīsī’s account of the individual Frankish territories; he is meticulous in enumerating the various characteristics of each of the settled areas (cities, villages, provinces) of note, and never fails to provide the reader with an indication of the distance from one province to its nearest neighbor.⁸⁹ The city of Nevers is described as an important, noble city, possessing populated townships and ample harvests. Similarly, Macon is described as a beautiful, well-populated city and region that possesses an abundance of wealth, and is amply provisioned with farms, vineyards, and bountiful harvests.⁹⁰ Collectively, the lands of the Franks and the lands that are under their dominion are described as being more fertile, more beneficial in terms of producing revenue, in better condition, and more productive in terms of annual yields than the German territories,⁹¹ which are also the subject of al-Idrīsī’s attention, and which are also described in ample detail.⁹²

While al-Idrīsī is quite detailed in his description of the Frankish territories and their distinguishing features, he is surprisingly silent on the subject of the Franks themselves. Unlike al-Mas‘ūdī and other writers, for whom the “characteristics” of the Franks were of more interest than the lands they inhabited, al-Idrīsī appears somewhat reluctant to delve into the area of the defining “traits” of the Franks relative to other ethnic/racial groups. On the rare occasions in which he does refer to the characteristics of the Franks, the attribute he mentions most often is that of courage. In his description of Nevers he states that “in it are brave men.”⁹³ In a similar vein, when writing of one of the

German provinces, he informs the reader that “its people are brave in war and they possess a readiness and willingness [to fight].”⁹⁴ However, such references are few and far between; al-Idrīsī appears far more interested in the geography of Western Europe than in its inhabitants, a fact that is clearly reflected in the work itself.

As a general rule, individual Franks (and to a larger extent, individual Europeans) receive scant attention from al-Idrīsī within the context of *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*. When al-Idrīsī does make mention of an individual, the individual concerned is most likely a sovereign of some sort, and the reference is in regard to the principalities that constitute his kingdom. However, there is one instance in which individual Franks receive a great deal of attention (relative to the other nameless European figures that appear in the text). These individuals are Roger, the “son of Tancred,”⁹⁵ who is identified as the leader of the Norman conquest of Muslim Sicily in the mid-eleventh century,⁹⁶ and his descendants (in particular, Roger II).⁹⁷ Regarding Roger, “son of “Tancred,” al-Idrīsī is effusive in his praise of the Norman king, despite his role in wresting control of the island kingdom from al-Idrīsī’s coreligionists, a literary decision that was certainly influenced by the fact that the work in question was commissioned at the behest of Roger’s descendant, the current king of Sicily, Roger II. al-Idrīsī introduces the conqueror of Sicily as “the gallant man, the best [of men], the great, the powerful, the consecrated, the glorious Roger, son of Tancred, the flower of the kings of the Franks,”⁹⁸ in the course of identifying the man who undertook the conquest of a nation which is described in the preceding section as being “unique in time, virtuous and excellent and distinguished among the nations by [its] nobility.”⁹⁹ al-Idrīsī relates that the conquest itself was a long, drawn-out affair that began in the year 453 of the Muslim calendar,¹⁰⁰ and continued over a period of thirty years.¹⁰¹

Moreover, in detailing the Norman conquest of the island kingdom, al-Idrīsī takes pains to call attention to the manner in which Roger “son of Tancred” dealt with the newly-conquered inhabitants, granting them the free exercise of their religious beliefs, the ability to maintain the observance of Religious Law, and the security of their possessions, both in the present and for future generations.¹⁰²

In describing the arrangement between Roger and his new Muslim subjects in this manner, al-Idrīsī highlights one of the distinguishing features of Norman Sicily relative to other European nations led by Christian European sovereigns in the Middle Ages: its tolerance for religions other than Christianity. Indeed, the tolerance of the Norman kings of Sicily was the stuff of legend among Muslim writers through the time of Frederick II of Sicily and his son Manfred in the thirteenth century.¹⁰³ However, in describing the agreement between the Norman kings and their Muslim subjects in which the subjects were guaranteed the unencumbered practice of their religion in a cursory manner, al-Idrīsī leaves the reader with an image of the position of the Muslims in Sicily that is decidedly more positive than what is presented by another famous Muslim, Ibn Jubayr, in his account of his visit to the island kingdom some thirty years later.

In his description of the situation of the Muslims in Sicily, al-Idrīsī’s status as a guest of Roger II becomes a relevant factor, albeit indirectly. This is made more apparent when al-Idrīsī’s account is compared to that of another Muslim who visited Sicily, not as a guest of the king, but as an independent traveler. In his famous account of his travels, the Granadan Ibn Jubayr also remarks on the arrangement between the Norman rulers and their Muslim subjects, but paints a far darker picture of the position of the Muslims in the kingdom, and the future of their religion on the island. Ibn Jubayr writes of an

atmosphere in which the free practice of Islam is incrementally encroached upon, and in which the Muslim character of the kingdom is being undermined. Moreover, Ibn Jubayr presents a far less tolerant image of the rulers themselves, as he recounts interviews with Muslim members of the royal court who are constrained to practice their faith in secret.¹⁰⁴ Of course, writing as a visitor from what was at the time Muslim Spain, and for a wholly Muslim audience, Ibn Jubayr was not limited in any fashion, as was the case with al-Idrīsī, who was writing for the present king of Sicily. Despite the reputation of the Norman kings of Sicily for their tolerance, al-Idrīsī was in all probability conscious of the implicit restrictions on the scope of his observations, particularly regarding the political and religious situation in Sicily. Such an issue would not be a concern for the famous scholar who would follow in his footsteps two centuries later.

Unlike al-Mas‘ūdī and al-Idrīsī, the fourteenth-century scholar Ibn Khaldūn is rarely recognized for his statements on the subject of geography. As a historian and sociologist, Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Khaldūn Walī al-Dīn al-Tunisi al-Hadrami al-Ishbili al-Maliki, or Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406) as he came to be known to later generations, is often the object of a great deal of attention, and the recipient of effusive praise for his most famous work, the *Muqaddimah*.¹⁰⁵ Among the many contributors to the medieval Islamic legacy of scholarship, Ibn Khaldūn has come to be regarded as one of the truly original thinkers for his approach toward history, treating it as a science rather than a mere narrative, and he is regarded by many as a “founding father” of the discipline of sociology.¹⁰⁶ However, by comparison little attention has been given to Ibn Khaldūn’s discussion of world geography, despite the amount of attention it receives in the *Muqaddimah*. It may be that his ideas relating to

race/ethnicity have been overshadowed by his analysis of the historical phenomenon of the rise and fall of civilizations, and even his conception of what constitutes religious knowledge, his writings on geography, climate, and their influence on human beings. Moreover, as Ibn Khaldūn was, along with the other Muslim scholars of his time, the beneficiary of the wealth of knowledge, theoretical and practical, left by writers such as al-Khwārizmī, al-Mas‘ūdī, and al-Idrīsī, the information provided by the various Muslim accounts of the Crusades, especially as it related to the behavior and character of the Crusaders, and an additional century of contact with Western Europe through trade and diplomacy, he was ideally situated to draw the best information from the distant Muslim past and present it in conjunction with information from the era of the Crusades and the recent past to produce a truly accurate representation of Europe and its inhabitants. Finally, his capacity as an intellectual of the highest order makes his perspective on the issue of the various places and peoples of the world, Europe in particular, relevant, as it reflects the thinking of a writer who proved himself to be a discerning scholar and critic.

In composing the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn employed a variety of sources, Muslim and even non-Muslim, and his diligence about identifying his sources separates him from many of the other medieval Muslim historians.¹⁰⁷ For geography and cartography, Ibn Khaldūn relied heavily on al-Idrīsī’s *Nuzhat al-mushtāq*, using it as a primary point of reference for the sections in both the *Kitāb al-‘ibar* and its preface, the *Muqaddimah*, which dealt with questions relating to geography and cartography.¹⁰⁸ Commenting on the value of al-Idrīsī’s work, Ibn Khaldūn expresses his confidence in the comprehensive nature of the *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* in clear terms:

(All) this [information regarding the Nile, Euphrates, Tigris and Oxus rivers]¹⁰⁹ was mentioned by Ptolemy in his work and by the Sharīf (al-Idrīsī) in the *Book of Roger*. All the mountains, seas, and rivers to be found in the cultivated part of the earth are depicted

on maps and exhaustively treated in geography. We do not have to go any further into it.¹¹⁰

After a brief discussion of the limits of the inhabitable world, Ibn Khaldūn presents a map of the earth, which, he informs the reader, was drawn “as was done by the author of the *Book of Roger*.”¹¹¹ It is somewhat curious that Ibn Khaldūn depended upon the *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* to such an extent, in light of both his harsh criticism of past writers for some of the inaccuracies he found in their works, and the limitations of al-Idrīsī’s work, particularly in its depictions of the nations of the East. However, despite its limitations, which may not have been recognized by Ibn Khaldūn, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* serves as a vital source of information on world geography and cartography for the fourteenth-century scholar, a fact that is attested to both through his own admission and by the numerous similarities between the map he provides in *Kitāb al-‘ibar* and al-Idrīsī’s famous circular world map.¹¹²

While al-Idrīsī figures prominently as a source for Ibn Khaldūn on the subject of geography, al-Mas‘ūdī enjoys a similar position as a historical source, as no other historian is quoted as often as al-Mas‘ūdī,¹¹³ whose works, particularly the *Murūj* (and to a lesser extent, the *Tanbīh*) are given a greater amount of attention than any other historical sources in *Kitāb al-‘ibar*. While al-Mas‘ūdī is often quoted in conjunction with other Muslim historians as a means of either illustrating the variety of opinions regarding issues in which there are conflicting accounts or to show that there is consensus,¹¹⁴ he also receives particular attention above and beyond what is given to other Muslim historians from Ibn Khaldūn, who does not hesitate to praise or criticize him, depending on the circumstances. Thus, at one point in the *Muqaddimah*, he informs his audience that, “It is well known to competent persons and reliable experts that the works of al-Mas‘ūdī and al-Wāqīdī are suspect and objectionable in certain respects.”¹¹⁵ In this

statement, he points to both issues regarding the veracity of some of al-Mas‘ūdī’s statements, and the status of the tenth-century writer, who was a Shī’a, in the eyes of Sunnī theologians.¹¹⁶ In another instance, he acknowledges the fact that al-Mas‘ūdī’s travels enabled him to provide a detailed account of many of the nations of the world, but then remarks that his assessment of the conditions of the lands of the Berbers is “incomplete.”¹¹⁷ But while Ibn Khaldūn is sharp in his criticism of al-Mas‘ūdī on several occasions, he is also enthusiastic in his praise. In commenting upon the *Murūj*, Ibn Khaldūn writes:

In this work, al-Mas‘ūdī commented upon the conditions of nations and regions in the West and in the East during his period (which was) the three hundred and thirties [the nine hundred and forties]. He mentioned their sects and customs. He described the various countries, mountains, oceans, provinces, and dynasties. He distinguished between Arabic and non-Arabic groups. His book, thus, became the basic reference work for historians, their principal source for verifying historical information.¹¹⁸

It is al-Mas‘ūdī’s attention to the non-Islamic and pre-Islamic world that is of particular value to Ibn Khaldūn, who quotes al-Mas‘ūdī in reference to religions such as Zoroastrianism and Avesta, as well as to Jewish history, Christianity, and many other religions and movements of note.¹¹⁹ In addition, al-Mas‘ūdī’s approach toward history appears to have influenced Ibn Khaldūn in the formation of his conception of history as a science.¹²⁰ Al-Mas‘ūdī’s comprehensive approach toward history and his openness toward non-Islamic and pre-Islamic peoples and cultures were also sources of inspiration for Ibn Khaldūn, whose own work, while focusing primarily on the history of the Berbers of North Africa, eventually expanded to address many of the other nations and peoples of the world, Muslim and non-Muslim, although not nearly to the same degree as either the *Murūj* or *Tanbīh*.¹²¹ In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn affirms the value of al-Mas‘ūdī’s work when he discusses the need for historians of his time to emulate the tenth-century scholar in his approach toward history:

When there is a general change of conditions, it is as if the entire creation had changed and the whole world been altered, as if it were a new and repeated creation, a world brought into existence anew. Therefore, there is need at this time that someone should systematically set down the situation of the world among all regions and races, as well as the customs and sectarian beliefs that have changed for their adherents, doing for this age what al-Mas'ūdī did for his. This should be a model for future historians to follow.¹²²

For Ibn Khaldūn, al-Mas'ūdī's universal outlook relative to history was worthy of emulation, and more importantly, was necessary for an accurate understanding of the contemporary world. Al-Mas'ūdī's approach of understanding peoples in a way that takes into consideration both internal factors such as history and culture and external factors such as environment informed Ibn Khaldūn's writing, in which they were developed and articulated in a more profound manner. In so doing, Ibn Khaldūn demonstrates his ability to integrate ideas and information in order to inform and reinforce his perspective. This talent is employed in many different areas such as those of religion and history, and it is certainly not absent in his discussion of the effects of climate on human character, particularly as it applies to the peoples of the intemperate zones, among whom Europeans figured prominently.

In accordance with the opinions of Ptolemy and al-Idrīsī, Ibn Khaldūn describes the earth as being divided into seven habitable zones.¹²³ Of these seven zones, only the third, fourth and fifth zones are truly conducive to the development of civilized societies, as they are temperate, an ideal balance of heat and cold.¹²⁴ The peoples of the temperate zones include, according to Ibn Khaldūn, the inhabitants of Morocco, Syria, Iraq, Western India, China, Spain, and the Galicians.¹²⁵ He writes:

The human inhabitants of these zones are more temperate (well-proportioned) in their bodies, color, character qualities, and (general) conditions. They are found to be extremely moderate in their dwellings, clothing, foodstuffs, and crafts... They rival each other in production of the very best tools and implements... They avoid intemperance quite generally in all their conditions.¹²⁶

In contrast to their more refined neighbors, the inhabitants of the first and second zones, as well as those of the sixth and seventh zones, are marked by intemperance, due to the effects of excessive heat in the former case and excesses of cold in the latter.¹²⁷ Although for Ibn Khaldūn the pernicious effects of heat on human character and civilization are more profound than that of cold,¹²⁸ the inhabitants of the four intemperate zones are nonetheless lumped together in his analysis of the regions. The peoples of the sixth and seventh zones include the Slavs, the English, the Germans, and the Turks, among others.¹²⁹ Like their counterparts in Sub-Saharan Africa, the conditions of the Northern and Western Europeans are “remote from those of human beings and close to those of wild animals.”¹³⁰ Among the Europeans, the Slavs in particular are described as eschewing human contact, the reason being that their distance from a temperate climate results in a disposition that is more animal in nature, which consequently separates them from humans.¹³¹ In describing the peoples of the far North in these terms, Ibn Khaldūn reflected the perspective of not only previous Muslim scholars like al-Mas‘ūdī, but of classical scholars like Aristotle, who himself characterized northern peoples as more impulsive and less intelligent than the peoples of the South.¹³²

Ibn Khaldūn also perceives the peoples of the intemperate regions as being markedly different from their temperate counterparts in their apprehension of religion and religious concepts. The temperate zones are, for Ibn Khaldūn, the seats of religion and religious scholarship. By way of contrast, the intemperate zones are devoid of religion.

Of them, Ibn Khaldūn writes:

They are ignorant of prophecy and do not have a religious law, except for the small minority that lives near the temperate regions... in the north, there are those Slav, European Christian [Frank], and Turkish nations that have adopted Christianity. All the other inhabitants of the intemperate zones in the south and in the north are ignorant of all religion. (Religious) scholarship is lacking among them.¹³³

In adopting this position, Ibn Khaldūn hearkens back to the works of al-Mas‘ūdī, as he also theorizes that the perceived flaws in the make-up of the inhabitants of the intemperate regions resulted in flaws in the religious character of the peoples in question, along with their inability to display the other attributes of civilization witnessed among the peoples of the temperate zones.

The peoples of the intemperate zones are also distinct from their counterparts in the temperate zones in their physical appearance as well. For Ibn Khaldūn, the fourth zone, in particular, was the most temperate of the zones, more than the third and fifth zones, which were temperate, but bordered the intemperate second and sixth zones, respectively.¹³⁴ In describing the inhabitants of the fourth zone, he writes: “The physique and character of its inhabitants are temperate to the (high) degree necessitated by the composition of the air in which they live.”¹³⁵ This same principal holds true for the inhabitants of the intemperate zones. For the peoples of the first and second zones, the intemperate south, the overabundance of heat resulted in black skin.¹³⁶ For Europeans, the inhabitants of the sixth and seventh zones of the intemperate north, Ibn Khaldūn imagines a similar phenomenon at work, albeit with different results:

Something similar happens in the corresponding zones to the north, the seventh and sixth zones. There, a white color (of skin) is common among the inhabitants, likewise the result of the composition of the air in which they live, and which comes about under the influence of the excessive cold in the north. The sun is always on the horizon within the visual field (of the human observer), or close to it. It never ascends to the zenith, nor even (gets) close to it. The heat, therefore, is weak in this region, and the cold severe in (almost) all seasons. In consequence, the color of the inhabitants is white, and they tend to have little body hair. Further consequences of the excessive cold are blue eyes, freckled skin, and blond hair.¹³⁷

Such physical attributes were due entirely to the environment of the zone in which one lived, and as such, movement from one zone to another would result in a gradual

adjustment toward the physical characteristics peculiar to the new zone in the descendants of the individual in question.¹³⁸

Writing in the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldūn was part of a world far different from that of his predecessors such as al-Idrīsī, and particularly that of al-Mas‘ūdī. The ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate, which for al-Mas‘ūdī in the tenth century Muslim world was the preeminent military and political power, and for al-Idrīsī in the twelfth century was a venerable institution deserving of at least nominal respect, had been by Ibn Khaldūn’s time destroyed, extinguished during the Mongol conquests of the thirteenth century. Likewise, the Mediterranean Sea, which during al-Mas‘ūdī’s time had been almost the exclusive preserve of the Muslim powers, and during al-Idrīsī’s day was still largely controlled by Muslim interests, was in the time of Ibn Khaldūn a silent witness to the gradual, inexorable advance of European power and influence, in this instance due largely to their naval expertise. Ibn Khaldūn reflects this new reality in a discussion concerning the differences in prosperity that exist between the various nations of the world, where he writes: “At this time, we can observe the condition of the merchants of the Christian nations who come to the Muslims in the Maghrib [Morocco]. Their prosperity and affluence cannot be fully described because it is so great.”¹³⁹ This statement is a tacit acknowledgement of the role played by Western merchants, particularly merchants from the Italian republics of Venice, Genoa and Pisa, who had played a significant role in the establishment of the Crusader States through their naval support and the conveyance of supplies, and who in the aftermath of the Crusades had maintained strong commercial ties to the regional Muslim powers.¹⁴⁰

Ibn Khaldūn's comments about the changing role of Western Europe on the world stage were not limited to the commercial or military arena. In one of the most interesting digressions in the *Muqaddimah*, he refers to stories of a blossoming of scholarship at a high level in the nations of Western Europe:

We further hear now that the philosophical sciences are greatly cultivated in the land of Rome and along the adjacent northern shore of the country of the European Christians. They are said to be studied there again and to be taught in numerous classes. Existing systematic expositions of them are said to be comprehensive, the people who know them numerous, and the students of them very many.¹⁴¹

Here, one finds a reference to the growth of scholarship in Western Europe in a medieval Muslim work, written in a relatively objective manner. Moreover, this passage would appear to indicate that civilization is even possible in the intemperate sixth and seventh zones. However, Ibn Khaldūn is not able to mask his incredulity regarding the idea of the advance of scholarship in the land of the Franks. Upon concluding his account of these tales of European scholarship, he attaches both the proviso that “God knows better what exists there,”¹⁴² and reinforces it with a passage from the Qur’ān: “He creates whatever He wishes, and His is the choice.”¹⁴³ These two passages serve as indications of the fact that he cannot confirm the authenticity of the account in question, but that it is possible, as God, in His infinite power, is capable of transforming even the Franks into scholars.

In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn offers a glimpse at the latter stages of the evolution of the medieval Mediterranean world-view, in this instance as it relates to European Christians. The *Muqaddimah* is clearly grounded in the works of past Muslim scholars, as there are frequent references to the works of al-Mas‘ūdī and al-Idrīsī, among others; like many of the works of his predecessors, it also draws from non-Muslim sources. However, Ibn Khaldūn adopts a stance that is uniquely his own, examining many of the ideas of his predecessors in the light of historical evidence, anecdotal evidence and

his own theories concerning human nature to craft what he intends to be a more informed view of the world around him, both Muslim and non-Muslim. He is not always able to transcend the misconceptions espoused by his predecessors, but he is able to cast a critical eye on many of the widely-held ideas of his time which had escaped such scrutiny prior to his work, while transmitting, in a general sense, the greater body of knowledge regarding the various regions of what was then perceived to be the inhabitable world and the peoples who inhabited them. In the end, his contribution to the discussion of world geography falls firmly within the tradition of the Muslim writers of the medieval period, before, during and after the Crusades. As such, the *Muqaddimah* fits in well with the *Murūj* and *Tanbīh*, as well as the *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* in its treatment of the European Christians of its day.

Al-Mas'ūdī, al-Idrīsī and Ibn Khaldūn were all separated by time, circumstance, and areas of interest, and these differences apparent in the pages of their respective works. Writing as a Shī'a in the tenth century, and during a period of heightened tension between the Shī'ites and Sunnīs, al-Mas'ūdī had a different relationship with his audience, which would have been primarily composed of Sunnī Muslims, than did the Sunnī Ibn Khaldūn in the fourteenth century. However, neither of the two of them may have had as interesting a relationship with their audience as al-Idrīsī, who wrote in the twelfth century for a Norman king.

The three writers also differed in the focus of their respective works. Al-Mas'ūdī appears to have had the most ambitious design for his works in mind, as he attempted to address the various peoples of the world and their cultures and histories, with an eye toward the role played by the environment in the formation of a particular group's

“character” and culture. For his part, al-Idrīsī had the most narrow focus, providing a map of the then known world with an accompanying description of the various regions and peoples found therein. Ibn Khaldūn appears to have been influenced to some extent by al-Mas‘ūdī’s theory of understanding a people’s history and culture as being influenced by other factors, and the *Muqaddimah* certainly envisions a more substantial study of history as a science than even what was undertaken in al-Mas‘ūdī’s works, but the *Kitāb al-‘ibar* does not live up to the standards set forth in the *Muqaddimah*, and in the main its focus is on the history of the Berbers of North Africa.¹⁴⁴

One area in which the three were united was in the fact that each of them composed their most famous work while abroad. Al-Mas‘ūdī, a native of Baghdad, composed both the *Murūj* and *Tanbīh* in Fustāt (Cairo). Al-Idrīsī and Ibn Khaldūn, both natives of North Africa (Ceuta and Tunisia,¹⁴⁵ respectively), composed their masterpieces, the former in Sicily, the latter in Cairo.

The final, and perhaps most significant difference between the three writers lies in the way in which their respective works have been received over time; the *Muqaddimah*, the work of a Sunnī Muslim, is one of the most well-known and celebrated of medieval Muslim works, while the contributions of the Shī’a al-Mas‘ūdī were under-appreciated by later Muslim scholars. Even al-Idrīsī appears to have suffered somewhat at the hands of later Muslim historians for having taken up residence at the court of a non-Muslim king and praising him in his work.¹⁴⁶

However, despite their differences in these vital areas, the three writers are linked by their lasting contributions to medieval Muslims’ understanding of the world around them. While they may have written with different purposes, and for different audiences,

al-Mas‘ūdī, al-Idrīsī and Ibn Khaldūn each succeeded in making contributions to the field of medieval Muslim geography that influenced and benefited members of both the Muslim and non-Muslim world.

Along with the contributions of medieval Muslim geographers to the Muslim conception of the world beyond the borders of the various Muslim polities, medieval Muslim travelers also contributed to the conversation regarding geography through their individual accounts. These works, although not the works of geographers in the vein of al-Mas‘ūdī or al-Idrīsī, provided readers with what were ostensibly first-hand accounts of observations of and encounters with non-Muslim peoples in the remote corners of the world. As such, they offered an appraisal of these foreign peoples and their culture from the perspective of Muslims which served to fill in the blanks left by some of the works on geography, as well as presenting the information in a form that was more amenable to the tastes of a larger public audience.

One of the most celebrated contributors to the genre of medieval Muslim travel literature was the twelfth-century Spanish traveler Ibn Jubayr. Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr (1145-1217) was a native of Granada who, from February 3, 1183 to April 25, 1185, undertook a journey from Spain to the Arabian Peninsula in performance of the Hajj.¹⁴⁷ However, the journey to Mecca and Medina was only one part of Ibn Jubayr’s itinerary, and during the course of his travels he would pass through modern-day Iraq, the Levant, Egypt, and Sicily. During the course of his travels, Ibn Jubayr observed not only the sites of interest, but also the conditions of the inhabitants, the type of relations that existed between the various religious and ethnic/racial groups to be found and the general atmosphere of each. His attention to the social and political atmosphere of the places on

his itinerary is particularly valuable in that, as his travels through the Levant took place during 1183-85, he was able to witness the process by which Salāh al-Dīn consolidated his power in the area, as well as the reaction of the local Crusaders to these developments, and his comments on the political and military situation in the area offer a different perspective than that of many of the Muslim and Western sources, which were largely composed by writers allied to individual Muslim and Christian leaders, and whose works often reflect a partisan bias. Moreover, as a Spanish Muslim, Ibn Jubayr brought a familiarity to the realities of living in a multi-religious society informed by his experiences in his native land, and as such, he was able to assess the situations in both the Levant and Sicily through the prism of the historical circumstances of Spain. In addition, the military tension generated by the gradual, inexorable Christian Re-conquest of Spain provided him with valuable insight into the nature of the conflict found in the Levant, since the common theme of religiously-motivated warfare connected the two struggles. As such, Ibn Jubayr was in a unique position to comment not only on the situation of the Muslims living in the Levant, but also on the conditions of the Christians he found in both this region and in the other places that he visited in the course of his travels.

While Ibn Jubayr is regarded by some as being more moderate in his attitude toward Western Europeans than his contemporary coreligionists,¹⁴⁸ he nevertheless shares many of the popular medieval Muslim prejudices concerning the Franks, which periodically find their way on to the pages of his account. In describing the Crusader stronghold Acre, Ibn Jubayr recalls the oft-repeated Muslim charge of Frankish filth, which in this instance is conflated with religious error: “Unbelief and unpiousness there burn fiercely, and pigs [Christians] and crosses abound. It stinks and is filthy, being full

of refuse and excrement.”¹⁴⁹ In this extract, Ibn Jubayr, in describing the Christian Acre as being exceptionally filthy, evokes the long-held stereotype of a lack of hygiene among the Franks, reinforcing it through both the image he provides of a city choked by rubbish and excrement and through references to the religious pollution of the city at the hands of the Franks.¹⁵⁰ These themes of Frankish filth in both the immediate physical and spiritual sense, and the dangers of contamination that both types present to Muslims, is a recurring one throughout the course of the text, with the concerns of Ibn Jubayr becoming more pronounced as his travels bring him into closer contact with larger numbers of Christians in Frankish-controlled territories.

The theme of Western European filth also makes an appearance in Ibn Jubayr’s depiction of the city of Messina, a city he finds simultaneously alluring and repugnant. Describing the city as a bustling metropolis with a thriving marketplace in which the traveler will find all of the commodities necessary for a luxuriant existence,¹⁵¹ Ibn Jubayr is nonetheless compelled to comment upon the deleterious effects of the Frankish atmosphere of the city upon residents and visitors alike:

This city is the mart of the merchant infidels, the focus of ships from the world over, and thronging always with companies of travellers by reason of the lowness of prices. But it is cheerless because of the unbelief, no Muslim being settled there. Teeming with worshippers of the Cross, it chokes its inhabitants, and constricts them almost to strangling. It is full of smells and filth; and churlish too, for the stranger will find there no courtesy.¹⁵²

In this portrait of the city, Ibn Jubayr conflates the ideas of material filth, spiritual pollution and barbarity, which are all portrayed as being consonant with Frankish society. The city is “teeming” with Franks, who, like the abundant refuse in the city, make the city oppressive for inhabitants and travelers alike, while contributing to the material filth and odor found therein. Moreover, the Frankish presence produces an unpleasant, “cheerless” environment in Messina due to their lack of etiquette. As a result, the

physical, spiritual and social atmosphere of Messina is negatively impacted by the Franks, as their lack of cleanliness, unbelief, and lack of manners all leave an imprint on the city that the Muslim traveler is bound to notice.

For Ibn Jubayr, Frankish lands should hold no attraction for Muslims, as the overall atmosphere to be found in these areas is thoroughly antagonistic toward Muslim sensibilities in the religious, physical and cultural arenas. This idea is stated most emphatically in a digression during his account of his travels through Crusader-controlled Tyre, in which he shares his opinion on the subject of Muslim habitation of Frankish territories in no uncertain terms:

There can be no excuse in the eyes of God for a Muslim to stay in any infidel country, save when passing through it while the way lies clear in Muslim lands. They will face pains and terrors such as the abasement and destitution of the capitulation and more especially, amongst their base and lower orders, the hearing of what will distress the heart in the reviling of him [Muhammad] whose memory God has sanctified, and whose rank He has exalted; there is also the absence of cleanliness, the mixing with the pigs, and all the other prohibited matters too numerous to be related or enumerated. Beware, beware of entering their lands.¹⁵³

For the Muslim, according to Ibn Jubayr, the religious, cultural, and material realities of life in a Frankish land are wholly irreconcilable with Muslim sensibilities. The atmosphere in such lands is not just different from, but also antagonistic toward Muslim values, which is to say nothing of the military and political hostility that marks relations between Muslim and Western European nations, and places Muslims in Crusader-controlled territories in the unenviable position of having to witness their fellow Muslims from neighboring areas suffer as a result of the vicissitudes of war:

Among the misfortunes that one who visits their land will see are the Muslim prisoners walking in shackles and put to painful labour like slaves. In like condition are the Muslim women prisoners, their legs in iron rings. Hearts are rent for them, but compassion avails them nothing.¹⁵⁴

Thus Ibn Jubayr presents a grim picture of the areas of the Levant occupied by the Franks as being wholly at odds with Muslim sensibilities in the most fundamental areas of

Muslim life, and as such, wholly unsuitable for Muslim habitation. For Ibn Jubayr, Frankish lands are foreign not only in the immediately recognizable areas such as religion, but also in the aspects that constitute one's daily existence, the material, cultural, and social atmosphere of one's surroundings.

However, despite Ibn Jubayr's predisposition against the Franks, he does not hesitate to highlight areas in which the practices of the enemy are superior to those of his coreligionists. Just such an example is found in his description of the conditions of the Muslim inhabitants of the area of Tibnin, in which he inserts an aside on the comparative state of Muslims living under Frankish rule versus those living under the dominion of their coreligionists:

Our way lay through continuous farms and ordered settlements, whose inhabitants were Muslims, living comfortably with the Franks. God protect us from such temptation. They surrender half their crops to the Franks at harvest time, and pay as well a poll-tax of one dinar and five qirat for each person. Other than that, they are not interfered with, save for a light tax on the fruits of trees. Their houses and all their effects are left to their full possession. All the coastal cities occupied by the Franks are managed in this fashion, their rural districts, the villages and farms, belonging to the Muslims. But their hearts have been seduced, for they observe how unlike them in ease and comfort are their brethren in the Muslim regions under their (Muslim) governors. This is one of the misfortunes afflicting the Muslims. The Muslim community bewails the injustice of a landlord of its own faith, and applauds the conduct of an opponent and enemy, the Frankish landlord, and is accustomed to justice from him. He who laments this state must turn to God.¹⁵⁵

Ibn Jubayr's criticism of the failure of the local Muslim sovereigns to implement a system of governance that measures up to the standards of their Frankish neighbors is both an impartial appraisal of the practices of the Frankish potentates in the Levant in dealing with their Muslim subjects and an indictment of the Levantine Muslim kingdoms. In Ibn Jubayr's critique, he strikes a chord somewhat similar to that of the later author of *Mandeville's Travels* and Salāh al-Dīn himself, as all three individually lament the current condition of their coreligionists, observing with chagrin the fact that the believers are being outstripped by the unbelievers in piety and virtuous acts.¹⁵⁶ However, Ibn

Jubayr's observations are all the more salient in that whereas there is propagandistic value in the speech of the "soldan" of *Mandeville's Travels* and in Salāh al-Dīn's letter, Ibn Jubayr's digression appears to be purely a reaction to his personal observations and comparisons of the conditions of Muslims living in both Frankish and Muslim territories. The disappointment registered by Ibn Jubayr in this passage points to his underlying assumption of Muslim moral superiority, and the failure of the existing conditions to bear out this assumption.

Ibn Jubayr's description of Frankish lands and their inhabitants confirms and reinforces contemporary medieval Muslim perceptions of Western Europeans through the examples he provides in his account. Through his descriptions of both Crusader territories in Syria and Sicilian cities with a significant Frankish presence, the reader is left with an impression of material and spiritual corruption as hallmarks of Western European society. In his account, the culture of the continental Frank is presented as barbaric, depraved and unclean, and it is only those who have been tempered by contact with Muslims (in this case, the Norman King of Sicily, William II), who are regarded as being marginally civilized.

However, even in the instances in which one encounters such Franks, Ibn Jubayr's characterization of them is far from positive. For Ibn Jubayr, the situation in Sicily, in which Muslims lived in relative peace with their Norman overlords, carries an implicit threat for the future prospects of Muslim Sicilians, and the conciliatory behavior of the Sicilian Franks toward their Muslim neighbors is regarded as a dangerous temptation for the native Muslims.¹⁵⁷ Living on the frontiers of the Muslim and Christian worlds, Ibn Jubayr is deeply concerned with the issue of Western European expansion, and likely saw

parallels between the Norman conquest of Sicily and the ongoing conflict in his native Spain, not to mention the Crusader States. As such, Ibn Jubayr's position as an individual living in a multi-religious society is somewhat tempered by the military and political tension accompanying the Christian Re-conquest of Spain, which may have led him to adopt a negative view of his Frankish neighbors north of the Pyrenees, a view that resurfaces in his portrayal of the Franks he observed and encountered during the course of his remarkable two-year journey.

The medieval Muslim perspective on Western Europe and its peoples both prior to and during the period of the Crusades was one that was informed to a large extent by distance and the a lack of sufficient, accurate information. The relative remoteness of the centers of Western Europe from the centers of 'Abbasid power relegated the inhabitants of the former to the periphery of the collective medieval Muslim consciousness. This distance between the major centers of the Muslim world and Western Europe, geographically, culturally and religiously, also resulted in a considerable level of mutual ignorance on the parts of the Muslims and Western Europeans alike regarding their counterparts. For the Muslims, the general inaccessibility of Western European sources due to issues of language and the military, political and religious tensions that existed between the two entities effectively prevented valuable information about their Western counterparts from being available. In lieu of this vital, accurate information, Muslim writers turned to the accounts of their Muslim predecessors regarding the peoples of the West to construct a picture of Western Europe and its inhabitants. The result of such a compromise on the part of the greater number of the Muslim writers was a caricature of Western Europe its peoples not unlike the image of Eastern Mediterranean Muslims that

was current in the West. Moreover, the accounts of Muslim writers such as Ibn Jubayr, who had come in contact with Western Europeans in the course of traveling, did little to dispel the commonly-held, pejorative stereotypes regarding these peoples that were extant in the Muslim world, but rather served to reinforce them through their depictions of Western Europeans as unclean, uncouth, and generally unfit for the company of Muslims.

In the end, it was left to an unprecedented historical phenomenon to generate a greater awareness of and interest in Western Europe and its peoples among the Muslims, particularly in the Levant. As a distant, vaguely-defined enemy, the specter of the Western European had failed to make a lasting impression on the collective conscience of the Muslims during the first three centuries of the Muslim civilization. However, this condition was destined to change irrevocably; Western Europeans would soon become a very real threat against which the human and material resources of substantial parts of the Muslim world would have to be marshaled in a contestation of power. This new development, in which brute force would play the most significant role in shaping each of the combatants' views of their counterparts, would alter the trajectories of both of the competing powers both in the immediate and distant future, and would produce a dialectic between the nations and peoples that comprise the Muslim world and those that constitute Western Europe and its nearest relations that informs the discourse to the present day. This new, momentous change, the implications of which would not be fully appreciated initially by observers on either of the two competing sides, would later come to be known as the Crusades.

¹ “Djughrāfiyā,” [“Geography”] *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: C-G*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V. L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 575-6.

² “Geography,” *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia, Volume 1: A-K*, ed. Josef W. Meri (New York: Routledge, 2006) 284.

³ “Djughrāfiyā,” 576.

⁴ Ibid. 576.

⁵ Ibid. 577.

⁶ One such Greek concept was that of the “climes,” which was similar to the Persian concept of the *kishwars*. The two concepts were often used in conjunction one with the other, at times in a confused, haphazard manner. “Geography,” 284-5.

⁷ “Djughrāfiyā,” 578.

⁸ Ibid. 578.

⁹ Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 1999) 270.

¹⁰ Ibid. 270.

¹¹ Ibid. 577.

¹² Akhtar Husain Siddiqi, “Muslim Geographic Thought and the Influence of Greek Philosophy,” *GeoJournal* 37.1 (1995): 10.

¹³ “Ibn Khurradādhbih,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: H-IRAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 839. Also: “Geography,” 285.

¹⁴ “Adjā’ib,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: A-B*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 203.

¹⁵ “Geography,” 286.

¹⁶ “Adjā’ib,” 203.

¹⁷ Ibid, 203-4.

¹⁸ Of course, the Byzantine empire was the exception; as the northern neighbors and one of the primary enemies of the Caliphate, the *Rūm*, as they were known throughout the medieval Muslim world, were the objects of a great deal of attention.

¹⁹ “Geography,” 286.

²⁰ For example, the term *Saqāliba*, which is generally translated as “Slav,” was applied generally to various groups within Northern Europe with the principal features of fair hair and a ruddy complexion. See “*Sakāliba*,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: NED-SAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 872.

²¹ Nadia Maria El-Cheikh. "Byzantium Through the Islamic Prism from the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century," *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh, eds. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001) 56.

²² "IFrandj," *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: H-IRAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 1044.

²³ Ibid. 1044.

²⁴ Ibid. 1044.

²⁵ "Ibn Fadlān," *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: H-IRAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 759.

²⁶ Ibid. 759.

²⁷ The Bulghar king, who was identified as Almish ibn Shilki in the account, held sway over a kingdom that was comprised of both pagan tribes and some that had recently converted to Islam, and he may have wanted to establish a monotheistic state religion in order to consolidate his power. In addition, as he was also a client of the Khazars, he may have looked to establish an alliance with the caliph, who was hostile to the Khazars, to free himself from subservience to them. Richard Frye, *Ibn Fadlan's Journey to Russia* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005) 9. (A translation of the account can be found in this work).

²⁸ "Ibn Fadlān," 759.

²⁹ Ibid. 759. While Ibn Fadlān's experiences in Eastern Europe were largely overlooked by his contemporaries, they have been the subject of some attention in the present, and were the basis for the film, "The Thirteenth Knight."

³⁰ "Rūs," *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: NED-SAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 618.

³¹ "Bashdjirt," [From Bashkir] *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: A-B*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 1075.

³² *Ibn Fadlan's Journey to Russia*, 25.

³³ "Ibn Fadlān," 759.

³⁴ Ibid. 759.

³⁵ Ahmad M.H. Shboul, *Al-Mas'ūdī & His World: A Muslim Humanist and His Interest in non-Muslims*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1979) xv. This work will serve as the primary source for the information presented in this sub-section.

³⁶ Ibid. 56.

³⁷ Ibid. 60-8.

³⁸ It has been proven that al-Mas'ūdī was Shī'ite, although there has been some debate as to whether he was an Ismā'īlī or a Twelver (Imāmīte) Shī'ite. The majority holds that he was a Twelver Shī'ite. Ibid. 39-40.

³⁹ Ibid. 56-8.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 56.

⁴¹ Although both the *Murūj al-Dhahab wa 'l Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* and *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l-Ishrāf* will be discussed in the context of al-Mas'ūdī's sources of information, the *Murūj al-Dhahab wa 'l Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* will be the primary focus of the subsequent portions of this section. Also, the *Murūj al-Dhahab wa 'l Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* will be referred to by the abbreviation *Murūj*, while the *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l-Ishrāf* will be referred to by the abbreviation *Tanbīh*.

⁴² S. Maqbul Ahmad, "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography," *Islamic Culture* 27 (1953): 66.

⁴³ S. Maqbul Ahmad, "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography: Some Sources of His Knowledge," *Islamic Culture* 28 (1954): 275.

⁴⁴ "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography," 67.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 68.

⁴⁶ "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography: Some Sources of His Knowledge," 277-9.

⁴⁷ "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography," 70.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 71.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 72-3. Al-Mas'ūdī used the information regarding the earth's circumference, diameter and shape in the works of the aforementioned Muslim scholars in conjunction with the information found in the works of Ptolemy.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 75-7. Al-Mas'ūdī's chief criticism of the Muslim geographers was that like the example of al-Jāhiz, their works were not based on personal experience and observation as a result of travel, and as such could not be viewed as authoritative.

⁵¹ "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography: Some Sources of His Knowledge," 279-80.

⁵² Ibid. 280.

⁵³ "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography," 74.

⁵⁴ "Al-Mas'ūdī's Contributions to Medieval Arab Geography: Some Sources of His Knowledge," 281.

⁵⁵ *Al-Mas'ūdī and His World*, 178.

⁵⁶ In the opening passage of the *Murūj*, al-Mas'ūdī states:
For there can be no comparison between one who lingers among his own kinsmen and is satisfied with whatever information reaches him about his part of the world, and another who spends a lifetime in travelling the world, carried to and fro by his journeys, extracting every fine nugget from its mine and every valuable object from its place of seclusion. *Murūj*, Sec. 7. (English translation taken from *Islamic Historiography: The Histories of Mas'ūdī*, 1-2.)

⁵⁷ Tarīf Khalīdī, *Islamic Historiography: The Histories of Mas'ūdī* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975) xiii.; *Al-Mas'ūdī and His World*, 5, 16.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 5.

⁵⁹ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 270.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 270.

⁶¹ Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma'ādin al-Jawhar*, 36. The following is my close paraphrase of the Arabic text from this edition, as found in pages 36-9. The original text is found in Appendix A.

⁶² Ibid. 36.

⁶³ A ratl appears to have been an unspecified type of Frankish currency.

⁶⁴ *Al-Mas'ūdī and His World*, 191.

⁶⁵ *Al-Mas'ūdī and His World*, 191.

⁶⁶ *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa 'l-Ishrāf*, 23-4. Trans. S.M. Ziauddin Alavi, "Al-Mas'ūdī's Conception of the Relationship between Man and Environment," *Al-Mas'ūdī Millenary Commemoration Volume*, ed. S. Maqbul Ahmad and A. Rahman (Calcutta: Little Flower Press, 1960) 93-7. 95.

⁶⁷ *Islamic Historiography: The Histories of Mas'ūdī*, xvii.

⁶⁸ In particular, this idea played an important role in Ibn Khaldūn's approach to the study of history.

⁶⁹ For example, as a result of both his experiences on the Caspian Sea, his interviews with merchants and sailors, and his knowledge of a certain Russian expedition which had traveled along the Caspian en route to raiding a Muslim territory, al-Mas'ūdī correctly asserted that the Caspian Sea was not connected to the Black Sea, an idea which was widely held among Muslims and Europeans alike. European misconceptions regarding this supposed connection would not be corrected until the voyages of the missionary John de Plano Carpini in the thirteenth century.

Mohammad Shafi, "Al-Mas'ūdī as a Geographer," *Al-Mas'ūdī Millenary Commemoration Volume*, ed. S. Maqbul Ahmad and A. Rahman (Calcutta: Little Flower Press, 1960) 74.

⁷⁰ Nafīs Ahmad, *Muslim Contributions to Geography* (Lahore, Pakistan: Ashraf Press, 1972) 46.

⁷¹ There has been some speculation that Roger II's extension of his hospitality to al-Idrīsī was based on political calculations, as he may have been interested in installing al-Idrīsī as a puppet ruler, in Muslim Spain (which the Sicilian king hoped to conquer) or in his holdings in North Africa. S. Maqbul Ahmad, "Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī," *The History of Cartography, Volume II, Book One: Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, ed. J.B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992) 156.

⁷² The *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī' Khtirāq al-Āfāq* will be referred to by the abbreviated title *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* in future discussions of the work.

⁷³ Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982) 147.

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- ⁷⁴ “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 156, 158.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid. 157.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid, 170.
- ⁷⁷ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History, Volume I*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1958) 103.
- ⁷⁸ “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 171.
- ⁷⁹ “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 172; *Muslim Contributions to Geography*, 47.
- ⁸⁰ S. Maqbul Ahmad, *India and the Neighboring Territories in the Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī’ Khtirāq al-Āfāq of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960) 5.
- ⁸¹ Ibid. 6.
- ⁸² “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 169-70.
- ⁸³ Because of the fact that a number of Arabic translations of Ptolemy’s *Geographikê Hyphêgêsis* had been put forward from the mid-ninth century on, many of which contained additions to and corruptions of the original material, it is difficult to ascertain the identity of the translation that he used as the foundation of *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* or its quality. Ibid. 168.
- ⁸⁴ The Balkhī was one of the two schools of cartographic thought – the other being the older Ptolemaic school – which emerged during the early period of Muslim cartography. Two features distinguished the Balkhī school from the Ptolemaic: (1) followers of the Balkhī school limited their focus to the Muslim world, dealing primarily with regional maps within its confines; and (2) Balkhī maps lacked a mathematical basis for their latitudes and longitudes. “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 156-7.
- ⁸⁵ al-Idrīsī. *Kitab Nuzhat al Mushtaq fī’ Khtiraq al Āfāq*, vol. 2. Cairo: Al-Thaqafa Al-Denia Bookshop, 734. The following is my close paraphrase of various portions of the Arabic text from this edition. The portions in question are found in Appendix B.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid. 734.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid. 739.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid. 739, 742.
- ⁸⁹ While al-Idrīsī provides an exhaustive description of many of the populated areas that comprise what he describes as the “lands of the Franks”, the place names he ascribes to them are at times indecipherable relative to their English equivalent. As such, the true identity of many of the provinces remains something of a mystery (to this writer).
- ⁹⁰ Ibid. 742.
- ⁹¹ Ibid. 874.
- ⁹² Al-Idrīsī is always careful to distinguish between the lands that comprise the Frankish dominion and those of the Germans, at times enumerating the provinces that constitute the two respective kingdoms. In particular, he is meticulous in distinguishing between the territories that he identifies as “Frankish Burgundy” and “German Burgundy”. *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī’ Khtirāq al-Āfāq*, vol. 2, 742.

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- ⁹³ Ibid. 742.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid. 874.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid. 589.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid. 589.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid. 589-90.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid. 589.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid. 588.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 589. This corresponds roughly to the late 1050s C.E. The historian Ibn al-‘Athīr places the actual period of conquest at 484/1091-2. *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī l-ta’rīkh, Part I, The Years 491-541/1097-1146: The Coming of the Franks and the Muslim Response*, Trans. D.S. Richards (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006) 13.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid. 589.
- ¹⁰² Ibid. 589.
- ¹⁰³ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 337-41.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibn Jubayr, Muhammad ibn Ahmad, *Rihlat Ibn Jubayr* (Beirut: Dār Bayrūt lil-Tabā‘ah wa-al-Nashr, 1984). See also R.J.C. Broadhurst, trans., *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr* (London: The Camelot Press Ltd., 1952) 342.
- ¹⁰⁵ The *Muqaddimah* (Introduction) is in fact the preface to a larger work, the *Kitāb al-‘ibar*, which focuses on the history of the Berber tribes of North Africa, with some attention to world history as well. Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History, Vols. 1-3*. Trans. Franz Rosenthal. New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1958.
- ¹⁰⁶ Róbert Simon, *Ibn Khaldūn: History as Science and the Patrimonial Empire* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2002) 9.
- ¹⁰⁷ Walter J. Fischel, “Ibn Khaldūn and al-Mas‘ūdī,” *Al-Mas‘ūdī Millenary Commemoration Volume*, ed. S. Maqbul Ahmad and A. Rahman (Calcutta: Aligarh Muslim University, 1960) 52.
- ¹⁰⁸ “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 170.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Muqaddimah, Vol. 1*, 101-3.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid. 103.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid. 109.
- ¹¹² “Cartography of al-Sharīf al-Idrīsī,” 170.
- ¹¹³ “Ibn Khaldūn and al-Mas‘ūdī,” 54.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid. 54.

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- ¹¹⁵ *Muqaddimah*, 8.
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid. 8, n. 16.
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid. 65.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid. 63-4.
- ¹¹⁹ “Ibn Khaldūn and al-Mas‘ūdī,” 57.
- ¹²⁰ Ibid. 57.
- ¹²¹ Ibid. 58.
- ¹²² *Muqaddimah*, 65.
- ¹²³ *Muqaddimah*, 97.
- ¹²⁴ Ibid. 167.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid. 168.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid. 167-8.
- ¹²⁷ Ibid. 168-9.
- ¹²⁸ In an earlier section, Ibn Khaldūn explains this fact as part of his position that the northern quarter of the earth has a greater number of civilizations than the southern quarter. Ibid. 103-9.
- ¹²⁹ Ibid. 158-66.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid. 169.
- ¹³¹ Ibid. 168-9.
- ¹³² Arthur H. Williamson, “Scots, Indians and Empire: The Scottish Politics of Civilization 1519-1609,” *Past and Present* 150(1996): 47.
- ¹³³ *Muqaddimah*, 169.
- ¹³⁴ Ibid. 170-1.
- ¹³⁵ Ibid. 171.
- ¹³⁶ Ibid. 170.
- ¹³⁷ Ibid. 170.
- ¹³⁸ Ibid. 171.
- ¹³⁹ *Muqaddimah*, Vol. 2, 281.
- ¹⁴⁰ P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London: Longman Group Limited, 1986) 34, 103, 163.

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- ¹⁴¹ *Muqaddimah*, Vol. 3, 117-18.
- ¹⁴² Ibid. 118.
- ¹⁴³ Qur'ān 28.68.
- ¹⁴⁴ "Ibn Khaldūn," *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: H-IRAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 829.
- ¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 825.
- ¹⁴⁶ "Al-Idrīsī," *The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume III: H-IRAM*, ed. Bernard Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971) 1032.
- ¹⁴⁷ Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr: Being the chronicle of a medieval Spanish Moor concerning his journey to the Egypt of Saladin, the holy cities of Arabia, Baghdad the City of the Caliphs, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, trans. R.J.C. Broadhurst (London: The Camelot Press, Ltd., 1952) 15-16.
- ¹⁴⁸ "Introduction," *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, 19.
- ¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 318.
- ¹⁵⁰ "The Franks ravished it from Muslim hands... and the eyes of Islam were swollen with weeping for it; it was one of its griefs. Mosques became churches and minarets bell-towers..." Ibid. 318.
- ¹⁵¹ Ibid. 338-9.
- ¹⁵² Ibid. 338-9.
- ¹⁵³ Ibid. 321-2.
- ¹⁵⁴ Ibid. 322.
- ¹⁵⁵ Ibid. 316-17.
- ¹⁵⁶ For Salāh al-Dīn's critique of his coreligionists, see the excerpt of Abu Shama's reproduction of the Sultan's letter exhorting the faithful to action in Chapter 4.
- ¹⁵⁷ Ibid. 345.

Chapter 4: *Al-IFranj*: Crusaders in Muslim Historical Accounts

For the Muslims of the Levant, the sudden appearance of a Western European army in the area in 1097 was somewhat akin to the unexpected appearance of Vikings on the coast of England some centuries earlier. The arrival of thousands of Christian soldiers from the heart of Western Europe was both wholly unexpected and devastating, militarily and politically, for an area that was vulnerable to outside interference, and had been so for a few years. The result of the introduction of these forces into an area that was disorganized, fragmented, and vulnerable militarily was a number of sweeping, and stunning, European victories and the establishment of the Crusader States in relatively short order. Moreover, the newly-established kingdom was protected militarily by its supply of European soldiers in the Levant and its access to reinforcements on continental Europe, and politically by both the support it received from Europe and by the internecine feuding between the Muslim leaders in the surrounding areas, who appeared to prefer the existence of a kingdom ruled by Christian Europeans to the prospect of one of their Muslim neighbors increasing his power base through the recovery of the Crusader-controlled areas in the Levant and thus posing a threat to the territorial integrity of the other Muslim kingdoms in the area.¹ This lack of unity among the Muslims not only ensured the continued existence of the Crusader States, but even allowed for their expansion in the early twelfth century, as other parts of the surrounding area were conquered by the Crusaders, thus strengthening the nascent European community in the Levant. Thus the Crusaders guaranteed a place for themselves in the Levant, not only for

the present, but also for the foreseeable future, and announced the presence of the new kingdom as a player in Levantine politics.

With the success of the European forces, the Muslims of the Levant (and, to a lesser degree, Egypt) were faced with a new reality, a Christian European kingdom in their immediate vicinity, one that had been carved out of some of their own territory, including the sacred city of Jerusalem, with which they now had to co-exist. As the lack of unity among the Muslims which had facilitated the Crusader successes in the Levant had come about largely as a result of the recent deaths of a number capable, powerful Muslim leaders in both the Levant and the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole,² it was now left to second-tier rulers and politicians to find a way in which to peacefully co-exist with this new military and political force in the area, and largely because they did not have the means by which to expel the Crusaders. This lack of capable leadership was exacerbated by entrenched sectarian and political hostility amongst the competing Muslim groups in the Levant and Egypt that made the concept of any united, decisive action impracticable.³ In reality, the best each Muslim ruler in the Levant could hope to accomplish was the protection of the territorial integrity of his realm from outside invasion, Muslim or Christian, at the individual level, and the limitation of the expansion of Crusader power into other Muslim areas in the Levant at the collective level. With these sets of circumstances established as then new reality for the Muslims of the Levant, they were left with no other options but to adjust to the present situation, allow for the limited assimilation of their new neighbors into the cultural milieu of the Levant, and await more direct and decisive action from another corner of the Muslim world, help that would not come in a substantial form for many decades.

But while the course that events would take during the first few decades of the Western European presence in the Levant is easily understandable to the modern historian, it was anything but obvious to the Muslim rulers and ordinary inhabitants of the Levant, or to the Crusaders themselves. Perhaps one of the main factors contributing to the state of uncertainty in the region was the fact that, for the inhabitants of the Levant, the First Crusade did not appear to come to a speedy conclusion. Indeed, while the First Crusade is most commonly associated with the Crusader capture of Jerusalem in 1099, the Western presence in the region was originally felt with the arrival of the Crusaders in Constantinople in 1096,⁴ and felt definitively on July 4, 1097 with the Crusader victory over the Seljuq sultan Qilij Arslan I and his Turkish forces at Dorylaeum.⁵ The length of the period of uncertainty becomes more appreciable when one considers the fact that the expansion of Crusader territory in the Levant would continue, largely unchecked, until 1122-3, when Tyre fell to the Western forces, with the Venetians playing a pivotal role in its capture.⁶ Thus while Jerusalem, which was revered by Crusader and Muslim alike, was given the most attention by chroniclers on both sides of the struggle as the crown jewel of the Levant, it is nevertheless true that its fall to the Crusaders did not signal the end of the military action on the part of the Western forces in the area.

The continued activity on the part of the Crusaders necessitated a response from the Muslims in the Levant and the adjacent areas. The response of the Muslim leaders to the Crusaders tended to fall into one of four categories: active opposition, conciliation, general indifference, or some combination of any of these. For the local Seljuq rulers in the Levant, the response would be a combination of active opposition and conciliation through negotiated truces with the Crusaders (which generally involved the payment of

tribute on the part of the Muslim leaders).⁷ As a general rule, the local sovereigns were most concerned with their respective positions of power, fearing outside interference in the form of either Western Christians bent on conquest or Muslims from the East bent on re-asserting a more centralized Seljuq power based in Iraq, and had little regard for abstract concepts of Muslim unity.⁸ For the Fatimid rulers in Egypt, the response was initially one of relatively active opposition, followed by a gradual withdrawal from the military situation in the Levant.⁹

For the Muslim rulers of the East (the ‘Abbasid caliphs, who were the nominal rulers of Iraq, Iran and much of Central Asia, and the Seljuq Turks, who were the *de facto* rulers of these same areas), the response was indifference, followed by unsuccessful attempts at decisive military intervention, followed by a return to a more pronounced indifference. The Eastern rulers’ initial feelings of indifference toward the plight of the Muslims in the distant Levant were tempered only by the direct calls to action that were issued by some of the refugees from the affected area.¹⁰ However, in each instance in which the Seljuq sultan responded to the refugees’ repeated calls for assistance, his forces were thwarted by the intransigence of the local Seljuq overlords in the Levant, who suspected ulterior motives on the part of the power brokers in the East.¹¹ The result of the abortive attempts at military intervention, due in large part to the refusal of the local rulers to assist the Eastern forces, was a withdrawal of support from the main centers of the Muslim world in the East. Thus, the situation could not have been better for the Crusaders, as the local rulers in the Levant were not united, and individually too weak to oppose the Western forces, and the Muslims in the lands further East, who could check their progress, were largely indifferent to the situation in Syria. With this set of

circumstances, the continued expansion of Crusader power was assured, and by the end of 1109 the forces from Western Europe had carved out four Crusader States: Jerusalem, Edessa, Antioch, and Tripoli,¹² and the Muslims in the Levant were faced with a new, foreign power in the area, one which appeared to be there for the duration.

The first reactions of the peoples of the Levant to the First Crusade were those of shock and anger: shock at such an unexpected and devastating attack coming from an unexpected quarter of the world and at the astounding rate of success of the Crusaders in conquering substantial areas of the Levant; anger at both how the Western forces treated the inhabitants of many of the conquered areas of the Levant and at the appropriation and “conversion” of sacred Islamic monuments and spaces. However, along with these feelings of shock and anger, which would be the enduring feelings associated with the Crusades and the Crusader presence in the Levant, there was also a feeling of confusion on the part of the Muslims who witnessed these events unfold, whether up close or from a distance. The first area of confusion concerned the identity of the Crusaders. Initially, at least some of the Muslims in the area appear to have confused these Western Christians with the more familiar Christians with whom there was a pre-existing history of sporadic conflict, the Byzantines.¹³ This apparent confusion was further fuelled by the fact that the initial Crusader forces assembled in Constantinople and did in fact have a working relationship of sorts with the Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus. During his reign, the Byzantine-Crusader relationship soon became strained.¹⁴ Moreover, while there was a vague awareness of Western Europe and its inhabitants in the collective conscience of the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean, there was not, initially, a real understanding of the

differences between Western European and Byzantine Christians, though there would be on the part of the Muslim¹⁵ chroniclers in the years to come.¹⁶

The second area of confusion lay in identifying the motives of the Crusaders for an undertaking of the magnitude of the First Crusade. By and large, the historians of the area did not recognize either the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre under the Fatimid caliph al-Hākim in 1009-10,¹⁷ or the Byzantine calls for assistance from the West in its efforts against the Turks on its eastern borders, as motivating factors.¹⁸ Rather, many of the chroniclers perceived in the Western European conquest of parts of the Levant a broader pattern of conquest, beginning in Muslim Spain, through which Western Europeans looked to conquer large portions of the Muslim world.¹⁹ In his *al Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh* (“The Complete Work of History”),²⁰ the thirteenth century historian Ibn al-‘Athīr refers to the past European conquests of Muslim lands before beginning his account of the Crusades:

The power of the Franks and their increased importance were first manifested by their invasion of the lands of Islam and their conquest of part of them in the year 478 [1085-6], for [that was when] they took the city of Toledo and other cities of Spain, as we have already mentioned.

Then in the year 484 [1091-2] they attacked and conquered the island of Sicily, as we have also mentioned. They descended on the coasts of Ifrīqiya and seized some part, which was then taken back from them. Later they took other parts, as you shall see.²¹

In this excerpt, Ibn al-‘Athīr reflects the opinion of a number of Muslim historians both before and after his time, who saw in the Crusades a larger geopolitical movement on the part of the Western Europeans. By the time of Ibn al-‘Athīr, there was an understanding of the religious dimension of the Crusades, but the idea that the conquest of substantial parts of the Levant was connected to a larger Western European program of expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa was still a compelling one for the chroniclers.

The ambiguity of the motive for the Western invasion of the Levant as perceived by medieval Muslim historians was also reflected in the way the initial Crusading forces were depicted in Muslim writing. While the Western armies are clearly identified as the enemy and there was no doubt about their religious affiliation, any indications that a religious motivation drove the invasion itself went largely unexplored. Consequently, the religious dimension of the conflict goes largely unnoticed in many accounts of the initial wave of Western European conquest in the Levant in the last years of the eleventh century. There are, perhaps, a few reasons for the absence of religious coloring in the overall portrait of the First Crusade, notwithstanding the initial failure of the Muslim chroniclers to recognize the role of religion in the sudden appearance the Crusaders in the Levant.

For the Muslim chroniclers, the Crusaders were *al-Ifranj*, (“the Franks”), as opposed to *al-Rum* (the Byzantines),²² a term that would be used in reference to the Western Europeans consistently throughout the period of the Crusades. “Frank” as a designation would serve to distinguish Western Europeans from Armenian, Byzantine, and Syrian Christians both as regards religious practice and race. But for the immediate present of the First Crusade, the chroniclers’ account of the events in question are almost entirely devoid of any such outside information regarding the Crusaders beyond the names of their leaders. Rather, the focus is on the military actions and movements of the Franks, and related subjects, to the point that at times they almost appear to be a regular part of the military and political landscape of the Levant.

In the Muslim sources that deal with the Crusades, there are four areas in which the Crusaders are the particular focus of the chroniclers’ attention: the military and

political aspects of the conflict itself (military encounters, negotiations, etc.); individual Crusaders of note (i.e. famous leaders); religious issues (beliefs and practices); and Crusader culture. While the military and political aspects of the Crusades are the focus of all of the Muslim accounts, questions of Crusader culture and society, and even of their religion, are the provenance of accounts produced in the mid-twelfth century and beyond; this was due to the fluidity of the situation in the Levant during the First Crusade, along with the lack of an established Western European presence which would be a part of the fabric of the area in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In particular, attention to the Crusaders in a context other than that of the military struggle is more prevalent in accounts of the late twelfth- middle thirteenth century, since during this time the Western presence was firmly established and the actions of many of the Muslims at all levels of society seem to speak to a resignation to the fact that this foreign presence would be a part of the Levant for the foreseeable future. For obvious reasons, such an outlook was unlikely at the time of the First Crusade, while from the 1250's onward the situation had changed drastically; the re-conquest of the Levant began to appear inevitable and the embattled "Syrian Franks" who remained no longer cast the shadow, militarily and politically, that their ancestors had in the previous century.

Both the periods of immense Crusader strength and weakness are reflected in the way Muslim sources portray the Muslim leadership of the time. When the Western forces are enjoying a great deal of success during the conquests of the First Crusade and immediately subsequent years, the focus of the chroniclers is on the lack of effective leadership and unity among the Muslims of the Levant, Egypt, and the East. From the time of the rise of the Mamlūk dynasty in 1250, the historians' attention shifts to the

strength of the Muslim leaders, to the exclusion of all others, and the Crusader leadership begins to disappear into the background. It is during the period of the Second and Third Crusade (which served to halt the progress of the Muslims in re-conquering the Levant after the spectacular victories of Salāh al-Dīn in the 1180s), when the military and political situation, despite the ongoing conflict, was relatively stable, that some of the chroniclers directed their attention toward aspects of Crusader culture.

The process of surveying the chroniclers' depictions of Crusader culture and religious practices, as well of accounts of Crusaders of note, involves the compiling of numerous different sources and writers. Unlike many of the Western chroniclers, who were, in the main, similar in their approaches toward the enemy, differing only in their personal allegiance to a particular Crusade leader, the Muslim historians' approaches to the "Franks" and "Frankish" issues can, and do, vary widely. As a result, some writers, such as Usāmah ibn Munqidh, serve as the "experts" on matters of Crusader culture and law, while others act as more reliable resources for intra-Crusader politics. In the end, it is necessary to gather together the various Muslim sources in a patchwork fashion in order to obtain a comprehensive view Muslim of the Crusaders both on and off the field of battle.

Perhaps the most interesting arena of Crusader-Muslim contact, and one that offers valuable insight into the way in which Western Europeans were perceived by their Muslim neighbors in the Levant, was in the commonplace interaction between members of the two groups, removed from the military and political drama that is the focus of most Western and Muslim accounts. Unfortunately, such encounters went largely unreported in both Muslim and Western annals in favor of accounts of battle and tales of political

intrigue. Moreover, since both the Muslim and Western chroniclers were, for the most part, Muslim and Christian clerics, such instances of fraternization with the enemy were not viewed favorably, and there are instances in which individual Crusaders were criticized for being on friendly terms with Muslims.²³

For accounts of Crusader-Muslim interaction away from the theatre of war, the most valuable resource is the autobiography, the *Book of Instructions with Illustrations* (*Kitāb al I'tibār*), of Usāmah ibn Munqidh. Unlike the majority of the writers on both sides of the conflict, Usāmah ibn Munqidh was not a scholar by trade, although he was a voracious reader. Rather, he was a statesman, the Amīr of Shayzar (Caesarea), and one of the few Syrian Arabs whose role in the Crusades was recorded.²⁴ Moreover, the position of this amīr (who was born in 1095, the year in which Pope Urban II issued the call to arms heard across Europe)²⁵ enabled him to traverse the broad spectrum of both local Crusader and Muslim societies, providing him, and his audience, with valuable insight into both groups, despite the biases he harbors relative to each. In his youth, the amīr witnessed the Crusader conquest of significant portions of Syria and the resulting formation of the Crusader States; but he lived to see the Muslim resurgence under 'Imād al-Dīn Zangī and Nūr al-Dīn, and he died during the year that followed the Muslim recovery of Jerusalem under Salāh al-Dīn in 1187.

However, he was not merely a passive spectator during this turbulent period, but was a consummate politician; in particular, his close relationship with the Shi'ite Fatimids of Egypt (who were deposed by Salāh al-Dīn at the behest of Nūr al-Dīn) may have been the cause for the turn in his political fortunes which resulted in his observing the triumphs of Salāh al-Dīn from a distance during the final years of his life.²⁶ Usāmah

ibn Munqidh's experiences among the Crusaders was every bit as rich and diverse as those amongst his coreligionists, as he came into contact with crusaders of all types, from the leaders of the Crusader armies, to the everyday soldiers making a new life for themselves in the Levant,²⁷ and his autobiography reflects all of these experiences. Despite writing of these experiences amongst Muslims and Crusaders, Usāmah ibn Munqidh remains the amīr from Shayzar in his outlook, and so his accounts of his experiences, and those of his Muslim friends, among the Franks are valuable for the light they shed on Muslims' perspective on their new neighbors from the West.

For Usāmah, the Franks are, despite his close relationships with a few individuals, the enemy, and more often than not the reader finds some type of malediction attached to references to them. Moreover, his stories involving the Franks are designed to denigrate them, their customs and their beliefs. Some of the anecdotes also come across as far-fetched, and at times lurid, as if crafted to evoke popular stereotypes of Christian Europeans held by members of his audience.²⁸ Thus, one finds the following account, which is intended to illustrate Frankish men's lack of jealousy concerning their spouses:

Here is a fact of the same nature of which I was witness. When I was in Neapolis, I lived at the house of a man named Mou'izz at whose house [Muslims] used to stay. Our windows opened on to the street. Opposite, on the other side, there lived a Frank who sold wine to the merchants. ...One day, going to his bedroom, the wine-merchant found a man in bed with his wife. "What has induced you to come in to my wife?" he asked. "I was tired," the other said, "and I came in to rest myself." "But how," said the Frank, "did you go in to my bed?" "I found a couch smoothed over like a rug and I went to sleep on it." "But my wife was sleeping by your side." "The bed belonged to her, could I turn her away from it?" "By the truth of my religion," the husband answered, "I swear to you that if you do it again we shall see an estrangement between us." That is what discontent is with a Frank and that is the measure of his jealousy. (177-8)

Such a story clearly cannot be taken at face value, but rather is a caricature of Western Europeans which employs Eastern Mediterranean stereotypes of Franks' loose morals, along with their lack of an "appropriate" level of vigilance regarding their wives and their

honor, and it presents a tale in which both stereotypes are presented in extreme forms for the amusement of his audience. Moreover, Usāmah is careful to present a figure for which the audience will not feel sympathy, as he is twice removed from an Eastern Mediterranean Muslim audience. Racially, he is a Frank, and as such, part of an unwanted presence in the Levant. And while the religious separation between the Frank in the story and Usāmah's Muslim audience is implicit, this difference is presented in emphatic terms by his identification as a wine-seller, an occupation that places him beyond the boundaries of what is religiously acceptable.²⁹ This double-screen, established within the context of the narrative, effectively moves the Frankish husband from the realm of the potentially pitiable, as one who has been cuckolded, into the realm of the comic figure, one who has received ample recompense both as an enemy of Muslims, and as one who profits from a forbidden practice.

For Usāmah ibn Munqidh, the singular positive attribute of the Franks is their courage and skill in battle, a quality that, according to him, is highly valued in Frankish society. As Usāmah implies in one passage, it is the most important criterion in Frankish society, as the illustrative example he provides is meant to show:

The Franks (may Allāh turn from them!) have none of the virtues of men except bravery. It is only the knights who are given prominence and superiority among them. The knights are really the only men who count among them. They are also considered as the arbiters of councils, judgments and decisions. One day I demanded justice of them for some flocks of sheep which the lord of Paneas had taken in the forest. ...I said to King Fulk, son of Fulk:³⁰ "This lord has committed an act of hostility against us and has carried off our flocks. It was at the time when the sheep were lambing; their lambs died at birth. He has given them back to us after he has caused the death of their offspring."

The king at once said to six or seven knights: "Hold a session and do him justice." They left the room, went apart, and discussed the matter until they had come to an agreement. Then they returned to the room where the king held audience and said, "We have decided that the lord of Paneas is bound to compensate them for the loss that he has caused them by the death of their lambs." The king ordered him to pay this debt. ...Now, once a decision has been pronounced by the knights, neither the king nor any other chief of the Franks can alter it or diminish it, such is the importance of the knight in their eyes! (86)

Having established the importance of the knight in Frankish society, he also reports some of the physical attributes that are esteemed in a Frankish knight,³¹ although coming as it does, after a discussion of the influence knights wield in Frankish society, it seems to portray the Franks as shallow in their focusing so much attention on appearance in choosing such important figures.

Although the nature of Frankish society is so portrayed in this manner by Usāmah ibn Munqidh, he does not hesitate to draw attention to the Franks' ability to recognize and appreciate demonstrations of martial prowess by both their companions and their enemies, members of a kind of universal fraternity of warriors. To this end, the amīr reports an encounter with a Frankish knight during the course of a battle in which he was an active participant:

...In the rear of the Franks was a knight mounted on a dark roan horse which looked like a camel. He wore his coat of mail and his cuirass. I was afraid of him and I did not worry about his not deigning to take the offensive against me. Suddenly he spurred his horse and I was delighted to see its tail glitter.... I hurled myself on the knight, struck him, and my lance pierced his body, coming out almost a cubit in length. The lightness of my body, the violence of the blow and the speed of my horse tumbled me out of my saddle. I got into it again, flourished my lance, quite convinced that I had killed the Frank, and collected my comrades....

My uncle (may Allāh have mercy upon him!) arrived some days later, having taken leave of Nadjm ad-Dīn Ilgāzī (may Allāh have mercy upon him!). He at once sent a messenger to me, asking me to appear before him at the usual time. He received me, having by his side one of the Franks. "This knight," he said, "has come from Apamea and wants to see the soldier who tilted with the knight Phillip, for the Franks were amazed at the blow which he received which pierced his coat of mail in two places at the edge and yet the knight's life was saved." (52-4)

Thus, the Franks are capable of appreciating martial prowess within any context and in any individual, even if it comes at the expense of one of their own. In this particular instance, Usāmah ibn Munqidh appears to point to values shared by the two sides, as they both demonstrate an appreciation for individuals who are skilled in the practice of warfare.

However, the amīr's compliments of the Franks rarely come without a qualification that often serves to all but negate the positive attribute in question, and his remarks concerning valor among them Franks is no exception. While Usāmah readily acknowledges courage and martial prowess as being found in great measure among the Franks, he makes it clear that these are the only qualities they possess, portraying the qualities as instinctual rather than developments of any type of cognitive process:

Anyone who is acquainted with what concerns the Franks can only glorify and sanctify Allāh the All-Powerful; for he has seen in them animals who are superior in courage and in zeal for fighting but in nothing else, just as beasts are superior in strength and aggressiveness. (172)

In describing the Franks in this manner, Usāmah recasts his earlier comments regarding the proficiency of the Franks in battle, transforming it from a positive attribute worthy of praise into something more akin to a distinguishing physical characteristic such as might be found among animals. For Usāmah, the Franks are not courageous in battle in the manner of his companions; rather, they have the distinguishing characteristic of being war-like just as other animals possess the characteristics of speed or strength.

The amīr further expounds upon the barbarity of the Franks in his discussion of the role of violence in the Crusader courts. Having already explained the manner in which Frankish knights are esteemed as a result of their martial prowess (86), Usāmah provides an illustration of the negative implications of such evaluation and the reliance upon violence as a determiner of justice through an anecdote about the case of a farmer accused of aiding and abetting a group of thieves from an adjacent Muslim area:

At Neapolis, I was once present at a curious sight. They brought in two men for a trial by battle, the cause being the following. Some [Muslim] brigands had raided some property in the neighborhood of Neapolis. A farmer was suspected of having guided the brigands to this spot. The farmer took flight but soon returned, the king³² having had his children imprisoned. "Treat me with equity," said the accused, "and allow me to fight with him who has named me as the person who brought the brigands into the village." The king then said to the lord who had received the village as a fief: "Send for his opponent." The lord returned to his village, picked out a blacksmith who was working

there, and said to him, “You must go and fight a duel.” For the owner of the fief was primarily anxious to see that none of his laborers got himself killed, for fear his crops should suffer. (181)

At this juncture in the narrative, Usāmah has painted a picture in which it is unlikely that justice will be served; a legal matter – the question of the farmer’s guilt or innocence in rendering assistance to a group of brigands – is to be settled through a duel, which is not likely to establish anything conclusively outside of which of the two combatants is the superior warrior. Moreover, the farmer is denied even the opportunity to face his accuser in combat, but rather the accuser is able to offer a proxy, in this case a strong yet “expendable” young blacksmith, whose participation in the duel ensures that the lord of the village will not have to risk losing one of his field hands to the vicissitudes of such combat.

As the duel unfolds, the picture becomes more disturbing. The challenger, who is described as “an old man of great courage” (181), comports himself well against a younger opponent in a scene that abounds with grisly images.³³ When, at the instigation of the sheriff (182), the duel comes to an end, with the young blacksmith victorious, Usāmah describes the aftermath, in which the authorities attempt to add a veneer of justice to the proceedings:

At once they put a rope round the neck of the corpse, which they took away and hung on a gibbet. The lord who had chosen the blacksmith gave him a considerable piece of property, made him get on a horse with his followers, took him off and went away. See from this example what law and judicial proceedings mean among the Franks... (182)

In this example, the alleged barbarity of the Franks is on full display for the audience, for whom the lesson is that courage and enthusiasm for battle, while admirable in the context of combat, is inappropriate in other circumstances. The preceding anecdote serves as a clear illustration of the fact that the Franks have not come to this understanding, but rather have allowed their proclivity toward violence to spill over into other aspects of

society. For the amīr, this is but one example of the implications of the natural bellicosity of the Franks, and the reason for which it deserves condemnation rather than praise.

Not content to leave his audience with but one illustration of Crusader barbarity, Usāmah provides another example of the “Frankish” manner of justice in the form of the tale of blind young man whom he came across in the course of his travels. This young man had been in the habit of killing Frankish pilgrims (183), but in time, the Franks began to suspect him guilty of the very crimes he had committed and in accordance with their customs, the man was put on trial:

They fitted up an enormous cask, filled it with water and placed a wooden plank across it. Then the suspect was bound, hung by a rope from his shoulders, and thrown into the cask. If he were innocent, he would sink into the water and would be pulled out by means of this rope without being allowed to die. On the other hand, if he had committed any fault, it would be impossible for him to sink in the water. The unfortunate man when thrown into the cask tried hard to reach the bottom but did not succeed, and had to submit to the rigour of their judgment... They passed a red-hot stiletto over his eyes and blinded him. (183)

Although this “trial” happened, in this particular instance, to arrive at an appropriate “verdict,” clearly Usāmah ibn Munqidh thought it lacked both the appearance and substance of justice. This example, much like the previous one, serves to reinforce stereotypes of Frankish barbarity, stereotypes that the amīr of Shayzar evokes and endorses in his discussions of other aspects of Frankish culture and customs.

If the Franks’ innate courage is both a positive and negative attribute in the estimation of the amīr, there is no such ambiguity in the author’s discussion of the question of constancy among his neighbors from the West. For Usāmah, the Franks are duplicitous by nature, and as such, are not to be trusted. Even when there is an existing agreement, Franks will seek to circumvent it to the greatest degree possible. To illustrate this point, Usāmah provides one particularly poignant example of the alleged deceitful nature of the Franks. He recounts his family’s ordeals in traveling through the territory of

Baldwin III (1142-1162) en route to Damascus. According to Usāmah, the sultan Nūr al-Dīn had obtained safe passage for his family from the Crusader king (43-4). However, despite this agreement, his loved ones encountered trouble soon after entering Crusader territory:

On leaving Damietta, they set sail in a Frankish ship and crossed the open sea. When they came near Acre, the king (may Allāh have no mercy upon him!), who happened to be there, sent out men in a light skiff. These men broke the ship with their axes, in sight of my family. The king mounted his horse and remained on the shore, plundering everything that he found there.

My servant swam up to him, carrying the safe conduct, and said to him: "O king, my master, is not this your safe conduct?" "Certainly," replied the king, "but it is the custom among the [Muslims] that, when one of their ships is wrecked before a town, the inhabitants of that town have the right to plunder it." "Are you going to take us prisoners?" asked my servant. "No," the king answered. He (the curse of Allāh upon him!) had them collected in a house and went so far as to search the women and take from them all their possessions.

There were in the ship apparel which the women had placed there, clothes, pearls, swords, arms, gold and silver of the value of about 30,000 pieces of gold.

The king took the whole of it and gave the travelers 500 pieces of gold, saying to them, "Here is enough money to take you home." Now, they numbered not less than fifty persons, women and men. (44-5)

This is, for Usāmah, a clear example of Frankish duplicity. The individual in question, Baldwin III, puts forth the utmost effort to circumvent his guarantee of safe passage to the Muslim travelers, violating the spirit of the agreement through his extemporaneous, literal interpretation of the covenant. While Usāmah's family and their retinue do arrive safely in Damascus (45), they are greatly imperiled by the very individual who is ostensibly the guarantor of their ability to travel safely through his dominions.

Usāmah ibn Munqidh assumes a far different tone in his discussion of Frankish marital relations, in which Frankish men are depicted as comic figures rather than villains. One of his examples of the Frankish men's approach toward their spouses, and, for Usāmah, the exorbitant amount of trust they display, has already been cited,³⁴ which is more in keeping with the conventions of a *fabliaux* than a chronicle or memoir. Yet the tale in question is largely representative of the amīr's characterization of Franks' marital

affairs. Perhaps the most serious observations he offers on the subject can be found in his prefatory comments on the topic:

The Franks understand neither the feelings of honour nor the nature of jealousy. If one of them is walking with his wife and he meets another man, the latter takes the woman's hand and goes and talks to her while the husband stands aside waiting for the end of the interview. If the woman prolongs it unreasonably, the husband leaves her alone with her companion and goes back. (177)

In this passage, the reader finds Usāmah's main issue in regard to Frankish conjugal relations: husbands are not jealous of their wives, presumably, in his estimation, because they do not attach an appropriate level of importance to the institution of marriage and the way in which it reflects on them and their standing within the community. From this point, the discussion takes a turn toward the farcical, as Usāmah relates the aforementioned story of the Frankish wine-seller in Nablus, which is followed by an even more outrageous "anecdote" involving a Frankish knight, his wife, and a Muslim bath house attendant (178-9), an even more lurid story. These two tales, which appear to be designed to do little beyond deriding the Crusader community, and the men in particular, are then followed by an interesting observation by the amīr concerning Frankish behavior in general, and Frankish courage in particular:

Consider this absolute contradiction. Here are men without jealousy and without a feeling of honour. On the other hand, they are endowed with great courage. Generally speaking, courage originates solely in feelings of honour and the care people take to avoid any slur on their reputation. (179)

For Usāmah, the courage of the Franks is all the more curious a characteristic, as it does not appear to be the outward manifestation of a sense of honor and the accompanying desire to protect that honor. Since the Franks, in his estimation, do not attach honor to the appropriate institutions, they must not have a sense of honor. Thus, this observation serves to distance the Franks even further from other peoples as a race without an identifiable motivating force behind that courage regularly exhibited by them on the

battlefield; their works of heroism appear to be instinctual rather than the products of meditated actions.

While Usāmah ibn Munqidh's portrayal of the relationships between Frankish men and women tends to portray them as farcical, one of his contemporaries, 'Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahani, who served as both Nūr al-Dīn's secretary and Salāh al-Dīn's chancellor,³⁵ exploits another Eastern Mediterranean stereotype regarding Western Europeans' sexual relationships, one which emphasizes the loose morals and wantonness of Frankish women. In one passage, he describes the arrival of a group of prostitutes from Europe come to ply their trade:³⁶

There arrived by ship three hundred lovely Frankish women, full of youth and beauty, assembled from beyond the sea and offering themselves for sin. They were expatriates come to help expatriates, ready to cheer the fallen and sustained in turn to give support and assistance, and they glowed with ardour for carnal intercourse. They were all licentious harlots, proud and scornful, who took and gave, foul-fleshed and sinful, singers and coquettes, appearing proudly in public, ardent and inflamed, tinted and painted, desirable and appetizing, exquisite and graceful, who ripped open and patched up, lacerated and mended, erred and ogled, urged and seduced, consoled and solicited, seductive and languid, desired and desiring, amused and amusing, versatile and cunning, like tipsy adolescents, making love and selling themselves for gold, bold and ardent, loving and passionate, pink-faced and unblushing, black-eyed and bullying, callipygian and graceful, with nasal voices and fleshy thighs, blue-eyed and grey-eyed, broken-down little fools. Each one trailed the train of her robe behind her and bewitched the beholder with her effulgence. She swayed like a sapling, walked proudly with a cross on her breast, sold her graces for gratitude, and longed to lose her robe and her honour.³⁷

Here 'Imād al-Dīn, in an ornate style for which he is famous,³⁸ portrays these Frankish women in a manner different from the way in which the amīr of Shayzar presents his Western characters, as cunning seductresses rather than as mere participants in the cuckolding of their husbands. For Usāmah ibn Munqidh, the focus is on the perceived indifference of Frankish men regarding their wives; the moral laxity is, in a sense, a by-product of the men's failure to effectively safeguard their marriages, much in the manner of the cuckolded husbands of the fabliau. For 'Imād al-Dīn, who is writing chiefly as a partisan propagandist for Salāh al-Dīn, the concern is the moral laxity that allegedly runs

rampant among the Franks. These divergent objectives on the parts of the two writers result in two different portraits of the same enemy's sexual mores. While the amīr's approach to the subject is more personal, that of a married man who is observing other men interact with their wives, the chancellor deals with the issue from a distance. This personal approach distinguishes Usāmah ibn Munqidh from 'Imād al-Dīn, and the majority of the other Muslim chroniclers. Usāmah's comments, which are based on his observations, are more likely to reflect what Muslims who actually encountered the Franks thought of them than are those accounts which merely repeat stereotypes.

Another incident that, for the amīr, is representative of Crusader culture in general, takes place on the occasion of a holiday celebration in Tiberias, for which he claims he was present:

I happened to be at Tiberias when the Franks were celebrating one of their feasts. The knights had left the town to take part in a tournament. They had brought with them two decrepit old women whom they placed at one end of the hippodrome while at the other they put a pig tied up and placed conspicuously on a piece of rock. The knights ordered a race between the two old women. They both started, accompanied by an escort of knights, who obstructed their passage; at every step they fell over and got up again, causing the spectators to roar with laughter. In the end, one of them got there first and took the pig as the prize of victory. (180-1)

Such an account evokes stereotypes of Frankish barbarism and filth, in the context of a bizarre scene. The presence of the Frankish knights reinforces the idea that violence is part and parcel of Frankish society, and their actions, obstructing the progress of two old women and holding them up for ridicule rather than helping them, points to the counter-productivity of such violence in the public sphere. The pig, an unclean animal in the eyes of medieval Eastern Mediterranean Muslims, being made the object of the women's endeavors, serves to underscore the larger idea of Franks as unclean, polluting the Levant through their presence. The image of the two old women racing, and falling, is simultaneously barbarous and comical, barbarous in its implications for the treatment of

individuals who should occupy a more distinguished position in any society, and comical both for the immediate image it presents,³⁹ and by extension, as a representation of Frankish society as a whole as violent, haphazard, and uncivilized. Consequently, the amīr's audience is provided with an anecdote from which they can derive personal satisfaction, both at face value as a humorous tale, and as something to be used in the denigration of their Frankish neighbors.

For Usāmah, the best Franks are those who have been tempered by prolonged contact with Muslims, since they have become, by degrees, familiar with Muslim customs, adopting many of these themselves, and thus losing some of their innate Frankish barbarism (176). To illustrate this point, he relates the story of a friend who, while in Antioch, is invited to the house of a knight who had come on the First Crusade and subsequently taken up residence in the Levant (184). Upon arriving, he finds that a splendid repast is prepared for the knight and his company; however the narrator refrains from eating, due to his concerns over what may be in front of him. Noticing this, his host assures him that he has nothing to fear, as the knight has Egyptian cooks who prepare only local cuisine; moreover, he does not eat pork (184-5). This is sufficient for the narrator, who proceeds to eat, but in a cautious manner (185). Later, this same knight saves the life of Usāmah's friend when a Frankish woman mistakes him for a man who had slain her brother. The narrator, who is unable to communicate with the woman, is surrounded by a group of Franks and despairs of his life, but the knight appears and resolves the situation (185). However, for the amīr, such individuals are the exception rather than the rule, since they have been altered by their time in the Levant and consequently have lost much of their "authentic" Frankish barbarism.

In the end, Usāmah ibn Munqidh appears to vacillate between outright hostility and condescension in his appraisal of Franks and Frankish customs. In matters of war he reveals a grudging admiration for their courage and ability, tempered by his partisan interests as a Muslim involved in the Counter-Crusade. In all other matters, he finds the Franks by turns barbarous and amusing, and in the course of the work he utters invectives and maledictions upon these new Western neighbors as he describes their system of justice and their duplicity, while sharing a good-natured laugh with the reader at the expense of Frankish men. However, the predominant tone of the amīr concerning the Franks and their customs is one of condescension. He finds humor in their behavior toward their spouses, and relates the story of the race between the two old women in the hippodrome in the manner of an appalled, yet amused spectator. Even in matters of faith, as we shall see, his expressions of outrage at the beliefs and practices of the Franks reveal an underlying, yet consistent, tone of condescension.

For the amīr, his accounts of Frankish beliefs and customs serve to emphasize the superiority of his Eastern Mediterranean Arab-Muslim culture. This bias extends even to coreligionists, as he readily admits that not only is he unfamiliar with any of the “Frankish” languages (88), but also Turkish (198), the native language of many of the amīrs and soldiers with whom he works in close proximity and the language of a group that had been a major presence in the area for nearly four centuries. It is the Frankish threat to this hierarchy, in particular the military aspects of this threat, which elicits the full measure of Usāmah’s anger and vitriol. Off of the battlefield, when the threat to this hierarchy is greatly diminished, and the relative superiority of his Eastern Mediterranean culture, religion, and values appear self-evident, the amīr relaxes, and when writing of the

Crusaders, their customs and faith, assumes a tone of outrage, exasperation, and amusement that one might expect to find in a parent's description of a recalcitrant child.

Like their Western counterparts, Muslim writers found the religious dimension of the Crusades both compelling and of enormous propagandistic value. As perhaps the most important motivating factor for both the Crusaders and the Crusades itself, religion and religious difference came to play an important role in the way Muslim writers came to view both the wars that comprised the Crusades and the Crusaders as a group. While one would expect that such a fundamental distinction would be the first thing the chroniclers noted, the religious diversity found in the Eastern Mediterranean littoral may have served to obfuscate the religious nature of the Crusading enterprise at the beginning. Although religion was a defining characteristic of the two groups in conflict during the period of the Crusades, it was also a defining characteristic of the Christian Byzantines and Armenians, with whom the Muslims of the area were in intermittent conflict, as well as of the indigenous Christians of Syria and Lebanon, with whom they lived in relative peace. Perceived religious differences were equally, and in certain ways more, of a motivating factor in the sectarian clashes with the Shi'ite Fatimids of Egypt, and also played a role in the conflict between various Sunni sovereigns and the Isma'iliyya "Assassins."⁴⁰ In each of these cases, while religion was the publicly articulated justification for the tension, political considerations often determined whether conflict or peace would be the order of the day.

Moreover, such inter and intra-religious strife was by no means exclusive to the Muslims of the Eastern Mediterranean; it was also present among the various Christian groups, and the Crusaders themselves would become embroiled in this soon after their

arrival.⁴¹ It would culminate in the disastrous Fourth Crusade and Sack of Constantinople, brought about in large part by both sectarian and political tensions between the Christians of Byzantium and the Latin West, who were thrown together in closer proximity as a result of the Crusades.⁴² Because political considerations served to divide both Muslims and Christians alike, resulting in inter-religious alliances between the various Muslim groups and Byzantines, Armenians, and Crusaders, the religious dimension of the Crusades was not felt by the local Muslim sovereigns with the same degree of urgency felt by their Western counterparts, for whom it was the very catalyst which brought them to the Levant. For the local Seljuq rulers, the fact that the Crusaders were Christian was not compelling in and of itself; Muslim-Byzantine conflict was not uncommon, and there had been an ongoing contestation of power between the two groups in the Levant for some time.⁴³ And perhaps of equal importance for the Muslim leaders and chroniclers was the fact that the Crusaders did not immediately seem to constitute a coherent and unified political entity, distinct from other Christian groups in the Levant. However, such distinctions would be drawn in the years following the First Crusade, and it would not be long before the religious dimension of the Crusades would become as prominent in the literature of the Muslim historians as it was in that of their Western Christian counterparts.

When they came to distinguish the Crusaders from the indigenous Christians of the Levant (especially the Armenians and the Byzantines) and to identify the religious motivations of the Crusades, the Muslim chroniclers often seized upon the cross and its significance, as well as upon the places regarded as holy by the Western soldiers. While the cross was a familiar symbol in the religious milieu of the Levant, it took on an added

significance with the coming of the Crusaders because it came to mark Frankish conquest and colonization: the cross was the emblem that, when affixed to a structure in the Levant, represented the appropriation of Islamic sites for Christian purposes.⁴⁴ This significance of the cross as an emblem of Christian conquest in the Levant, and the enmity it could arouse within the local Muslim population, can be seen in Ibn al- ‘Athīr’s description of the removal of a cross that had been placed upon the Dome of the Rock by the Crusaders, one of the first acts of Salāh al-Dīn’s forces upon their conquest of Jerusalem in 1187.⁴⁵ The cross is recognized as both an important symbol for the Franks, but also, and perhaps more importantly, as an important holy relic. In particular, the Muslim chroniclers recognized the importance of the True Cross to the Franks, and the demoralizing effects that would accompany the loss of this most holy of Christian relics. In recounting the Muslim victory in the Battle of Hattīn (which crippled the Crusader forces in the Levant and led to the fall of Jerusalem to Salāh al-Dīn and, subsequently, to the Third Crusade), both Ibn al-‘Athīr and ‘Imād al-Dīn focus on the importance of the capture of the True Cross by the Muslims during the course of the battle, with ‘Imād al-Dīn, who was a member of Salāh al-Dīn’s retinue at the time, providing a more dramatic account:

At the same time as the King was taken the ‘True Cross’ was also captured, and the idolaters who were trying to defend it were routed. It was this cross, brought into position and raised on high, to which all Christians prostrated themselves and bowed their heads. Indeed, they maintain that it is made of the wood of the cross on which, they say, he whom they adore was hung, and so they venerate it and prostrate themselves before it. They had housed it in a casing of gold, adorned it with pearls and gems, and kept it ready for the festival of the Passion, for the observance of their yearly ceremony. When the priests exposed it to view and the heads (of the bearers) bore it along all would run and cast themselves down around it, and no one was allowed to lag behind or hang back without forfeiting his liberty. Its capture was for them more important than the loss of the King and was the gravest blow that they sustained in that battle. The cross was a prize without equal, for it was the supreme object of their faith.⁴⁶

Thus, the Muslim chroniclers are well aware of the importance of the True Cross to the enemy, and consequently of the propaganda value that it holds for the Muslims in the context of the current struggle. Indeed, the value of the True Cross to the morale of the enemy was attested to by the Crusaders themselves after their conquest of Acre in 1191, as its return was one of the conditions for the release of the Muslim prisoners taken after the capitulation of the city.⁴⁷

If the True Cross was the most important relic, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was the most important monument in Medieval Christianity, a fact of which the Muslim chroniclers were well aware. Derisively referred to as the “Church of Refuse” by many of the writers,⁴⁸ they were nonetheless aware, as were Muslims in general, of the significance of the Church to Christians as a pilgrimage site. There are two chief indicators of the writers’ recognition of the Church’s importance: their description of the Crusaders’ attachment to the Church and desire to maintain possession of it during the days leading to the Muslim recovery of Jerusalem in 1187; and the accounts of the discussions among the Muslim leaders regarding what to do with the holy site after they recovered the city. Once again, the chronicler ‘Imād al-Dīn, as an eye-witness to the events on the Muslim side, offers the best insight into the thinking of both camps. As for the Crusaders’ desire to maintain possession of Jerusalem, and in particular the Church, a speech attributed to the Franks shows the writer’s acute awareness of the sanctity of the Church in their eyes:

The Franks said: ‘Here our heads will fall, we will pour forth our souls, spill our blood, give up our lives; we shall endure blows and wounds, we shall be prodigal of our spirits in defense of the place where the Spirit dwells. This is our Church of the Resurrection, here we shall take up our position and from here make our sorties, here our cry goes up, here our penitence is performed, our banners float, our cloud spreads. We love this place, we are bound to it, our honour lies in honouring it, its salvation is ours, its safety is ours, its survival is ours.’⁴⁹

This speech appears to have accurately represented the feelings of the Crusaders, and their desperation in the final days before the fall of Jerusalem.⁵⁰ Their devotion to the site itself appears to have made an impression on the Muslim leaders, some of whom, in ‘Imād al-Dīn’s account, articulate the position that the destruction of the Church would deter Christian pilgrims, armed or otherwise, from coming to the city, a position which is quickly refuted:

Many discussions were held with him [Salāh al-Dīn] about its fate; some advised him to demolish it and remove all trace of it, making it impossible to visit,... ‘When its buildings are destroyed,’ they said, ‘and its fires spent and extinguished, and its traces rubbed out and removed, and its soil ploughed up, and the Church scattered far and wide, then the people will cease to visit it, and the longings of those destined to damnation will no longer turn to seeing it, whereas if it is left standing the pilgrimage will go on without end.’ But the majority said: ‘Demolishing and destroying it would serve no purpose, nor would it prevent the infidels from visiting it or prevent their having access to it. For it is not the building as it appears to the eyes, but the home of the Cross and the Sepulchre that is the object of worship. The various Christian races would still be making pilgrimages here even if the earth had been dug up and thrown into the sky. And when ‘Umar, prince of the believers, conquered Jerusalem in the early days of Islām, he confirmed to the Christians the possession of the place, and did not order them to demolish the building on it.’⁵¹

For the Muslim chroniclers, holy symbols, relics, and monuments carried a special significance to the Franks, and could often encourage them to victory in adverse situations. This had been so since the discovery of the “Lance of the Messiah” by Peter Bartholomew in 1098 and the subsequent Crusader victory over superior numbers outside of Antioch.⁵² In their belief in and reliance upon holy symbols, objects, and places, Crusaders were no different from the Muslims with whom they were contending for control of the Levant. However, the Western writers do not appear to have had a similar level of awareness about the sacred symbols and objects of their Muslim adversaries, and so the Muslim chroniclers stand out for their understanding of this aspect of the religious dimension of the Crusades.

But beyond the material symbols and monuments, the Muslim chroniclers understood, and at times appreciated, religious fervor that transcended concrete objects

and places, and that animated the Western soldiers. It is not improbable that the chroniclers perceived in the crusading ethic of their foes something akin to the popular concept of holy war that was being evoked in the Muslim Eastern Mediterranean in response to the Western presence in the Levant. Whether or not the writers recognized any parallels between the two concepts, they were well aware of the role that religious fervor could play in inspiring Crusaders to greater acts of valor on the field of battle. An example of the chroniclers' cognizance of the role of religious fervor as a motivating force for the enemy can be found in Bahā' al-Dīn's account of the capture of the fortress of Tibrīn (Toron) in July 1187.⁵³ Bahā' al-Dīn, who served as qadi⁵⁴ for the army of Salāh al-Dīn, acknowledges the role of faith in the Franks' resistance to the siege:

The garrison was composed of men of tried valour and very zealous for their faith, therefore they held out with wonderful endurance; but God came to the Sultan's [Salāh al-Dīn] assistance, and he carried the place by storm on the 18th of the month, and led the survivors of the garrison into captivity. (116)

The qadi provides another example of the role of religious fervor in the Crusader cause in his description of the famine that afflicted the Crusader territories in the latter half of 1190 and the Crusaders' persistence in the face of such hardships:

We were constantly kept informed as to the enemy; they were suffering severely from scarcity of food, for famine prevailed throughout the territories, and had now invaded their camp. The scarcity reached such a height that at Antioch the price of a sack of corn rose to ninety-six Tyrian dinars. But this only strengthened to the resolution of the besiegers. (223)⁵⁵

While such resolve was not displayed by all of the Crusaders at Acre,⁵⁶ it is clear that the Franks as a whole are buoyed by their devotion to the cause.

Perhaps the most compelling example of the recognition and appreciation of the religious fervor of the Franks and its role in the crusading effort comes from the mouth of one of the most famous leaders on either side of the conflict, via a Muslim historian. In his famous work *The book of the Two Gardens* (*Kitāb ar-Raudatain*), the thirteenth

century philologist and anthologist Abu Shama⁵⁷ reproduces a letter attributed to Salāh al-Dīn in which he calls for increased support from the surrounding Muslim kingdoms. In the course of this letter, the Sultan reproaches his coreligionists by comparing their efforts to that of the enemy:

Where is the sense of honour of the Muslims, the pride of the believers, the zeal of the faithful? We shall never cease to be amazed at how the Unbelievers, for their part, have shown trust, and it is the Muslims who have been lacking in zeal. Not one of them has responded to the call, not one intervenes to straighten what is distorted; but observe how far the Franks have gone; what unity they have achieved, what aims they pursue, what help they have given, what sums of money they have borrowed and spent, what wealth they have collected and distributed and divided among them! There is not a king left in their lands or islands, not a lord or a rich man who has not competed with his neighbours to produce more support, and rivalled his peers in strenuous military effort. In defense of their religion they consider it a small thing to spend life and soul, and they have kept their infidel brothers supplied with arms and champions for the war. And all they have done, and all their generosity, has been done purely out of zeal for Him they Worship, in jealous defence of their Faith. Every Frank feels that once we have reconquered the (Syrian) coast, and the veil of their honour is torn off and destroyed, this country will slip from their grasp, and our hand will reach out toward their own countries.⁵⁸

This letter is remarkable in its appraisal of the Crusader war effort, including the principles guiding it, and the writer assesses the Muslim war effort by comparison. It is all the more noteworthy in light of the statements of the “soudan” on the topic of the moral state of Christendom in *Mandeville’s Travels*,⁵⁹ because in this instance one finds a historical sultan bemoaning the complacency of the Muslims in combating Christian aggression. Salāh al-Dīn’s appraisal of the Crusaders’ devotion, when viewed in the light of some of the contemporary Western evaluations of the Christian crusade effort,⁶⁰ appears generous by comparison. However, it is perhaps the highest praise of the devotion displayed by the Western European forces in prosecuting this holy war, and of the religious convictions that motivated the enterprise.

The admirable level of religious conviction and its manifestation on the front lines aside, the Franks remained non-Muslims, and as such, beyond the boundaries of acceptable beliefs and practices for the Muslim writers. As a result, one finds frequent

references to the Franks as idolaters, polytheists, heretics, and other such appellations in a manner reminiscent of their Western counterparts' use of such designations to refer to the Muslim enemy. 'Imād al-Dīn, for example, portrays the conflict in loosely religious terms when he describes Salāh al-Dīn's march to Jerusalem in 1187:

Saladin marched forward to take up the reins of Jerusalem that now hung loose, to silence the Christian clappers and allow the muezzin to be heard again, to remove the heavy hand of unbelief with the right hand of Faith, to purify Jerusalem of the pollution of those races, of the filth of the dregs of humanity, to reduce the minds to silence by silencing the bells.⁶¹

Such a passage, in its concern with cleansing Jerusalem of both the "filth" of the Frankish race and the "pollution" of their unbelief, echoes concerns voiced by Western writers concerning Muslims in the Levant.

However the Franks were but one of several groups of Christians in the Eastern Mediterranean, and simply identifying them as Christians was not sufficient to meet the needs of a well-constructed polemic. In characterizing and subsequently lampooning Franks as Christians, the Muslim writers integrated other stereotypes of Western Europeans and presented them as aspects of their faith.. In particular, as Christians, Franks were portrayed as unsophisticated in their beliefs, lacking the sophisticated understanding of Christian doctrine and dogma displayed by Eastern Christians. An example of this perceived Frankish simplicity can be found in Usāmah ibn Munqidh's account of a conversation between a Templar and the amīr Mu'īn al-Dīn Anar (d. 1149)⁶² in the Dome of the Rock:

I saw one of the Templars go up to the emir Mou'īn ad-Dīn (may Allāh have mercy upon him!) when he was in the cathedral of the Rock (As-Sakhra). "Would you like," he asked him, "to see God as a child?" "Yes, certainly," answered Mou'īn ad-Dīn. The Templar went before us until he showed us an image of Mary with the Messiah as a child (may he be saved!) on her lap. "Here," said the Templar, "is God as a child." May Allāh raise himself above those who speak such impious things!⁶³

Such an example serves to reinforce stereotypes of Frankish simplicity, since the knight's statements about the icon is hardly the type of explanation one would expect from a Christian who is well-versed in the subtleties of Christian doctrine, especially in conversation with a Muslim for whom artistic representations of holy figures is forbidden. Usāmah ibn Munqidh leaves the reader to imagine an incredulous yet amused amīr Mu'īn al-Dīn as he stands before the painting in question listening to the Templar's explanation, undoubtedly sharing Usāmah's sense of outrage and condescension toward his Western tour guide.

This perceived naiveté on the part of the Franks in matters of faith also resulted, in the estimation of the Muslim writers, in an inherent gullibility on their part which could be exploited to advantage. This gullibility was most apparent, for the chroniclers, in the Franks' susceptibility to being manipulated into believing that ordinary occurrences or phenomena were in fact miraculous. An example of this credulity is found in Ibn al-'Athīr's account of Peter Bartholomew's discovery, in Antioch during the First Crusade, of the "Lance of the Messiah" (believed to have been the lance that pierced Jesus' side during the Crucifixion),⁶⁴ an event that was followed by a Crusader victory over a Muslim army that was better provisioned and numerically superior:

There was a monk there, of influence amongst them, who was a cunning man. He said to them, "The Messiah (blessings be upon Him) had a lance which was buried in the church at Antioch, which was a great building. If you find it, you will prevail, but if you do not find it, then destruction is assured." He had previously buried a lance in a place there and removed the traces [of his digging]. He commanded them to fast and repent, which they did for three days. On the fourth day he took them all into the place, accompanied by the common people and workmen. They dug everywhere and found it as he had said. "Rejoice in your coming victory," he said to them.⁶⁵

Thus, the discovery of the Lance, and the subsequent Crusader victory, apparently aided by a belief that it had been preordained from on High, is portrayed in this account as the results of an elaborate hoax contrived by a religious leader from among the Crusaders

who presumably “knew” that his countrymen were easily duped in matters of faith, and who used this knowledge to advance the objectives of the First Crusade.

The simplicity and credulity of the Crusaders led Muslim historians to depict another characteristic of Frankish Christians: their propensity toward displays of faith that are ridiculous or unseemly. In his account of the siege of Damascus in 1148, the thirteenth-century historian Sibṭ Ibn al-Jauzī⁶⁶ relates the following account of a priest within the Crusader camp:

The Franks had with them a great Priest with a long beard, whose teachings they obeyed. On the tenth day of their siege of Damascus he mounted his ass, hung a cross round his neck, took two more in his hand and hung another round the ass's neck. He had the Testaments and the crosses and the Holy Scriptures set before him and assembled the army in his presence; the only ones to remain behind were those guarding the tents. Then he said: “The Messiah has promised me that today I shall wipe out this city.” At that moment the Muslims opened the city gates and in the name of Islām charged as one man into the face of death. ...One of the men of the Damascus militia reached the Priest, who was fighting in the front line, struck his head from his body and killed his ass too.⁶⁷

In the priest of this account, regardless of its veracity, one finds perhaps the nearest equivalent to the Foreign Sarasin of the medieval romances. Here is a figure who has taken the concept of religious warfare to its most literal, and absurd, extreme, riding into battle on an ass rather than a charger, and equipped with religious symbols and texts rather than weapons. Like his Sarasin counterparts in the romances, he is also destined to become a body upon which his enemies can exact a measure of vengeance through violent actions, as both he and his ass are killed in the ensuing melee. Moreover, like the Foreign Sarasin of the medieval romances, he serves to debunk the threat of the Other, in this instance Christian Other, by taking its most threatening aspects (here, the religious fervor and enthusiasm of the Crusaders), and rendering them ridiculous. Just as such ludicrous depictions of Sarasins provided some relief to Christian European audiences in the face of reverses on the field of battle at the hands of a real Muslim enemy, so too such

depictions of Franks may have offered a welcome diversion for a Muslim audience in the Eastern Mediterranean for whom the Crusaders still presented a marked threat.

The faith of the Crusaders was a complex issue for the Muslim historians, since it united them with the other Christians in the area, yet distinguished them because of its outward manifestation. For the Muslims, the religious conviction of the Franks was something to be admired because it inspired them to heroic feats in battle and to greater sacrifices for the cause of religion, effects that were not unfamiliar to the Muslims. But at the same time, this religious conviction was to be abhorred because it was unbelief, and perhaps even more so because the Christianity of the Franks appeared to be at even greater variance with Islam than the denominations of Christianity found in the Levant and the surrounding areas.

But perhaps what most distinguished the Christianity of the Crusaders was the fact that it was not indigenous to the area and, as a result, did not have a history of co-existence with the other faiths found there. The soldiers who came on the Crusades were, for the most part, from parts of Western Europe that did not contain the large non-Christian populations found in Spain or Sicily, to say nothing of the situation in the Levant. Whereas the Armenian, Byzantine, and in particular, Syrian Christians had come, in time, to co-exist with their Muslim neighbors (or at least, in the case of the Byzantines, to accept the Muslim presence as a religious, political and social reality), the Crusaders were unaccustomed to such religious diversity and had ostensibly come to eliminate it. As a result, the Crusaders distinguished themselves from their coreligionists in the East by their militancy, which served to alienate and antagonize both the general Muslim population as a whole, and the Muslim historians in particular.

Besides religion, of course, the Muslim chroniclers commented on the military struggle, and over the prolonged periods of conflict, these writers recorded observations about the military abilities and tendencies of the Franks. On the whole, the chroniclers' portrayal of the Franks at war accords with what Usāmah ibn Munqidh wrote on this subject: the Franks were courageous, formidable warriors, and were respected as such by their Muslim contemporaries. Since the Franks' perceived skill in battle was regarded as a characteristic of their "Frankish-ness," the writers do not tend to go into great detail concerning displays of valor on the part of either individual Crusaders or groups of them; rather, such incidents are often recorded without comment. Thus, in Bahā' al-Dīn's account one finds this passage regarding the Crusaders' defense of a battle standard during an encounter that took place on November 13, 1190 outside of Acre (226):

The Franks defended it [the battle standard] zealously, even at the cost of their lives. Their foot-soldiers formed an outer ring like a wall to cover their cavalry, and they used their arbalests and bows with such skill that no one could get near, or single out their horsemen. (227)

In this instance the chronicler Bahā' al-Dīn, acknowledges the vigorous defense put forward by the Crusaders and its effectiveness, but appears unmoved by the dedication of the enemy in literally rallying around the flag. Beyond details such as those contained in this account, specific information relating to Crusader tactics are generally relayed in a straightforward manner and without comment from the writer. It is perhaps a reflection of the level of performance by the Crusaders in combat, in conjunction with the pervasive stereotypes regarding Frankish barbarism, that feats of heroism performed by Frankish warriors are recounted without comment by the Muslim historians.

However, in certain instances aspects of the comportment of the Crusaders as a group in battle does excite the admiration of the chroniclers. At one point in his account,

Bahā' al-Dīn describes the discipline of the Frankish foot-soldiers during a march south of Caesarea, during which they came under attack from Muslim archers:

Their troops continued to advance in the order we have just described, all the while maintaining a steady fight. The Moslems discharged arrows at them from all sides to annoy them, and force them to charge; but in this they were unsuccessful. These men exercised wonderful self-control; they went on their way without any hurry, whilst their ships followed their line of march along the coast, and in this manner they reached their halting place. (283)

Bahā' al-Dīn continues, praising in emphatic terms the foot-soldiers charged with carrying the baggage and tents due to the general lack of pack animals (283) during this march from Acre to Ascalon:

One cannot help admiring the patience displayed by these people, who bore the most wearing fatigue without having any participation in the management of affairs, or deriving any personal advantage. (283)

Such a display of patience among the enemy rank-and-file, even in the midst of a skirmish, elicits praise from no less a personage than the qadi of Salāh al-Dīn's army. Plaudits of this sort for displays of valor by the enemy were, although rare, not unknown, nor were they to be found exclusively within the Muslim sources.

Among the rank-and-file of the Crusaders, there were two groups that stood out for both the Muslim soldiers and historians: the knights of the military/religious orders of the Hospitallers and the Templars.⁶⁸ These orders are not consistently identified by the writers as performing singular acts on the field of battle, but rather are acknowledged implicitly in the Muslim sources for their overall impact within the context of the larger struggle. One such example of this type of recognition on the part of the Muslim historians is to be found in 'Imād al-Dīn's account of Salāh al-Dīn's treatment of the captured Templars and Hospitallers after the victory at the Battle of Hattīn. In this account Salāh al-Dīn, despite his ordinarily for his humane treatment of prisoners of war,

reveals how impressed he had been by the knights of these two orders during this conflict:

On the morning of Monday..., two days after the victory, the Sultan sought out the Templars and Hospitallers who had been captured and said: "I shall purify the land of these two impure races." He assigned fifty *dinar* to every man who had taken one of them prisoner, and immediately the army brought forth at least a hundred of them. He ordered that they should be beheaded, choosing to have them dead rather than in prison.⁶⁹

This kind of acknowledgment of the damage inflicted upon the Muslim forces by the knights of the two orders is often posthumous, as in Ibn al-‘Athīr’s description of the aftermath of the battle outside of Saffuriyya in May 1187:

God gave the Muslims victory at last and the Franks turned and fled. Some were killed and the rest captured. Among the dead was the Grand Master of the Hospital, one of the most famous Frankish noblemen, who had done much harm to the cause of Islām.⁷⁰

The accomplishments of the Templars and Hospitallers in the service of the Crusades, implicit in ‘Imād al-Dīn’s account of Salāh al-Dīn’s execution of members of the two orders after the Battle of Hattīn, is in this instance openly acknowledged in an individual who had done a great deal of damage to the Muslim. But perhaps the greatest plaudits bestowed upon the members of either of the two orders comes from the thirteenth-century chronicler Ibn Wasil’s account of the complete rout of the Crusaders near Damietta in April 1250.⁷¹ In this excerpt, the compliment comes via a reference to a company of Muslim soldiers and their exploits on the field of battle:

As Wednesday dawned the Muslims had surrounded the Franks and were slaughtering them, dealing out death and captivity. Not one escaped. It is said that the dead numbered 30,000. In the battle the Bahrite mamlūks⁷² of al-Malik as-Salih distinguished themselves by their courage and audacity: they caused the Franks terrible losses and played the major part in the victory. They fought furiously: it was they who flung themselves into the pursuit of the enemy: *they were Islām’s Templars*.⁷³

For Ibn Wasil, the comparison of this group of mamlūk soldiers to the Templars is indicative of the feats of heroism they accomplished on the battlefield, and as such, it is perhaps the most poignant illustration of the level of respect accorded the Templars and

Hospitallers in the Muslim sources as two orders whose knights stood apart for their courage and skill in warfare, even among a people renowned for their courage and martial prowess.

Perhaps the most noteworthy Muslim account from the front lines has nothing to do with the accomplishments of the combatants on either side. Rather, it is an account in which the common humanity of both groups becomes manifest, under an unlikely set of circumstances. The writer in question is Bahā' al-Dīn, and the occasion occurs during the early stages of the protracted Crusader siege of Acre (which ended with the capitulation of the city on July 12, 1191):⁷⁴

The soldiers of both sides grew so accustomed to meeting that sometimes a Moslem and a Frank would leave off fighting in order to have a conversation; sometimes the two parties would mingle together, singing and dancing, so intimate had they become, and afterwards they would begin fighting again. One day, wearying of this constant warfare, the soldiers of both sides said to one another: "How long are the men to fight without allowing the boys their share in the pleasure? Let us arrange a fight between two parties of young fellows, the one from your side, the other from ours." Boys were fetched from the city to contend with the Frankish youths.... This is a strange occurrence such as seldom happens. (161-2)

It is remarkable that, given the nature of the siege, which was a drawn out affair in which both the Muslim inhabitants of Acre and the besieging Crusaders suffered greatly from food shortages and the vicissitudes of the enterprise, that nevertheless such an example of mutual recognition of a shared humanity could be found. It is perhaps equally remarkable that the writer in question, who was emotionally invested in the Counter-Crusade, and who had actually composed a treatise on the proper prosecution of Holy War (24), deemed this set of incidents to be worthy of inclusion in an account of an undertaking of this type.

While accounts of battles and skirmishes comprise the greater part of the Muslim chronicles of the Crusades, the individual Crusader and his behavior on the field of battle does not appear to have been a subject of interest for the writers. Perhaps this lack of

interest stems, at least in part, from the well-established Eastern Mediterranean conception of Franks as innately courageous and fierce in battle, and the performance of the Crusaders was thus taken for granted. More likely, it reflects bias on the part of the Muslim historians; like their Western counterparts, they may have sought to minimize the specific accomplishments and successes of the enemy in favor of Muslim achievements on the battlefield. In this case, it would have been sufficient to acknowledge the enemy as being proficient in battle, without exciting any unwanted admiration for them through specific examples. In all probability, the reason for the lack of attention to such things was a combination of all of the aforementioned reasons, in conjunction with the desire of the writers to present their audiences with a narrative of Muslim victory over a formidable Frankish opponent. Since the narrative of Muslim victory was, in many cases, the narrative of the success of an individual potentate to whom the writer in question was connected, it was not in the interests of the writer to narrate the exploits of the enemy. Rather, the enemy was to be defeated (to the extent that the historical reality made this possible), and while he may have shared the stage with the Muslim protagonists as a matter of historical fact, he was often little more than the villain in the Muslim accounts.

However, when it comes to political activities, the Muslim writers are indeed keen to single out individual Franks, for these authors are interested in representing the political situation in the Levant in its entirety; consequently, Western actors are not excluded from the narrative. This willingness on the part of the chroniclers to record the political activities of the Crusaders is likely an indication of both the complexity of the political milieu in the Levant and the degree to which the Crusader States had been integrated into the region. That the Franks had forcibly “settled” into the Levant through

conquest of its other inhabitants certainly distinguished them from their new neighbors and was a major contributing factor to the ongoing conflict that marked the period. But apart from that, the languages, culture and religion of the Franks were not so alien as to isolate them from the political scene, which already manifested religious and ethnic diversity: religious between Muslim and Christian (Armenian, Byzantine and indigenous Syrian), and between Muslim sects (Sunni, Shi'a and Isma'iliyya); ethnic between Arabs, Turks, and Kurds, among others.

Both the "Syrian" Franks (Western Europeans who had settled in the area as a result of the Crusades, along with their descendants) as well as continental Franks (other Europeans) were, as Franks, the enemy, and this reality is omnipresent in the historians' accounts of their leaders' activities. Nevertheless, the writers do not hesitate to acknowledge intelligence, wisdom, and capable leadership when these qualities are demonstrated by individual Franks, and the chroniclers display the ability to assess the value of Frankish leaders to the cause of the Crusades. Moreover, many of the Muslim chroniclers are able to evaluate the individual leaders' capabilities and legacy among the Crusaders in the Levant in much the same way Muslim leaders are gauged relative to their peers. Conflicts of interest do arise from the writers' allegiance to individual Muslim leaders among the ranks of the Counter-Crusade;⁷⁵ but these are not factors in the appraisal of Frankish leaders and consequently, they are periodically able to exhibit a level of objectivity in assessing individual Western leaders which escapes them in discussions of their coreligionists, an objectivity which is seldom found in the Western sources.

While the politics of European leaders of the Crusades interest the Muslim historians from the outset of the Crusades until the fall of Acre in 1291, this interest can wane according to military and political shifts of power on the Muslim side of the conflict. During the initial stages of the Crusades, the focus of the Muslim historians is on the political fragmentation and general ineptitude that characterized the Muslim response to the crisis, rather than on the actions of the leaders of the Western forces that were conquering large swathes of the Levant. In the same fashion, the period extending from the end of the Fifth Crusade to the fall of Acre is a time in which the Western leaders are once again overshadowed by their Muslim counterparts, as the chroniclers begin to recount the complete Muslim recovery of the Levant, focusing on the broad theme of Muslim triumph and Frankish capitulation. It is during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and in particular the time surrounding the Second and Third Crusades, when the Muslim and Crusader forces are most evenly matched, and thus make for the best political theater, that the Muslim historians present their most detailed and insightful assessments of the Western leaders of the Crusade. At this point, after the Western forces have established the Crusader States in the Levant and before their demise seems inevitable, and while the Crusaders are living in the Levant as residents interacting politically with their Muslim neighbors, the Muslim accounts of the Europeans offer the most relevant, and most valuable, information.

Of the many figures of note among the Crusaders during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the most interesting individuals are often those who are either vilified or lauded in the Muslim sources. Although all of the leaders of the Crusade are reviled to an extent by the Muslim historians, no figure among the Crusaders is so reviled

as Reynaud de Chatillon (Prince Arnāt of al-Karak in the Muslim sources);⁷⁶ he elicits universal condemnation he elicited from the chroniclers. Reynaud's transgressions against the Muslims were two-fold: he had violated the terms of a truce, seizing a caravan and imprisoning and torturing the travelers,⁷⁷ and more importantly, he had undertaken a mission against the cities of Mecca and Medina (1182-1183).⁷⁸ In his biography of Salāh al-Dīn, Bahā al-Dīn provides an account of Reynaud de Chatillon's actions in his notorious seizing of the caravan, which was a contravention of the established truce between the Crusaders and Muslims:

This accursed Arnāt was a great infidel, and a very strong man. On one occasion, when there was a truce between the Moslems and the Franks, he treacherously attacked and carried off a caravan that passed through his territory, coming from Egypt. He seized these people, put them to torture, and put some of them in grain-pits, and imprisoned some in narrow cells. When they objected that there was a truce between the two peoples, he replied: 'Ask your Muhammad to deliver you.' The Sultan, to whom these words were reported, took an oath to slay the infidel with his own hand, if God should ever place him in his power. (42-3)

The accounts provided by the Muslim chroniclers of the death of Reynaud de Chatillon all follow a similar outline, with little variation. After the Muslim victory at Hattīn, the Frankish prisoners of note, including Guy de Lusignan (the standing King of Jerusalem) and Reynaud de Chatillon, are presented to Salāh al-Dīn in his tent. The Sultan provides King Guy with a cool drink, as he is suffering from thirst, but when the King shares the drink with Reynaud, the Sultan makes it clear that it was the King, and not he, who offered Reynaud de Chatillon the drink. This clarification is important, as Salāh al-Dīn follows an Arab custom which stipulates that an act of hospitality on the part of a captor toward a prisoner, including feeding the captive, confers the protection of the captor on the captive in question (115). At this point, the Sultan enumerates Reynaud's transgressions to him, and then he is either killed by the Sultan himself,⁷⁹ or he is gravely injured, and then decapitated by members of Salāh al-Dīn's retinue.⁸⁰ Bahā' al-Dīn's

account is particularly poignant, for in it Salāh al-Dīn actually reminds Reynaud of the taunt which he had directed at the travelers in the captured caravan:

He [Salāh al-Dīn] seated the King at the entrance, then summoned the prince [Reynaud de Chatillon], and reminded him of what he had said, adding: 'Behold, I will support Muhammad against thee!'...He then called upon him to embrace Islām, and, on his refusal, drew his saber and struck him a blow which severed his arm from the shoulder. Those who were present quickly despatched the prisoner, and God hurled his soul into hell. (115)

Ibn al-‘Athīr presents an account that is largely similar, but with two minor variations:

Salāh al-Dīn is credited with decapitating Reynaud de Chatillon, and after the execution, the Sultan refers to both Reynaud’s failed mission against Mecca and Medina and to his capture of the caravan as being his reasons for executing this particular prisoner.⁸¹

Reynaud de Chatillon’s death is, in all of the accounts, portrayed as just retribution for his crimes against Muslims, and the fact that he is brought to account for his actions by the most powerful Muslim in the Levant, at a time when his power is at its peak, is not lost upon any of the chroniclers.

While a figure such as Reynaud de Chatillon was clearly a villain in the view of the Muslim writers, there were characters who elicited a mixed response in the sources, alternately drawing praise and censure. Two such figures were Count Raymond of Tripoli and Conrad de Montferrat, the Marquis of Tyre. Count Raymond of Tripoli is a study in contrasts as portrayed in the Muslim sources. On the one hand, he is described by Ibn al-‘Athīr as one of the bravest and most intelligent of the Franks of the period leading up to Salāh al-Dīn’s conquest of Jerusalem and as a capable administrator.⁸² However, Ibn al-‘Athīr also identifies the Count’s alliance with Salāh al-Dīn subsequent to his estrangement from Guy de Lusignan, the King of Jerusalem at the time, as being a key factor in the Muslim recovery of Jerusalem.⁸³ Moreover, his reluctance to aid his coreligionists against the Muslim forces at the Battle of Saffuriyya⁸⁴ and his desertion at

the Battle of Hattīn⁸⁵ are both recorded by Ibn al-‘Athīr, who goes on to relate the death of the Count at Tripoli “of rage and fury at the disaster that had befallen the Franks in particular, and all Christendom in general”⁸⁶ – a disaster he had helped to bring about.

Conrad de Montferrat, the Marquis of Tyre, is a similarly complex character in the Muslim sources. While he is singularly vilified in Western accounts of the Third Crusade such as the *Itinerarium* and the *Estoire*, his treatment in the Muslim sources is more nuanced. Perhaps the chronicler who was closest to his situation on the Muslim side, Bahā’ al-Dīn, provides a portrait of the marquis that reveals a shrewd, capable leader whose ambitions occasionally got the best of him, to the detriment of the larger objectives of the Third Crusade. One of the earliest references to the marquis by Bahā’ al-Dīn comes in his account of the meeting between the marquis and the king of the Germans near Tripoli. In this instance, the marquis is described as “one of the wiliest and most influential of all the princes of the Franks” (207). Moreover, the qadi asserts that the marquis was largely responsible for inciting the Europeans abroad to embark on another crusade to aid the Franks in the Levant (207-8). Later in his account, Bahā’ al-Dīn reveals the value of the marquis to the Franks while explaining the benefits that would accrue to the Muslims as a result of the tension between the marquis and Richard I:

The marquis’s rupture with the Franks was a good thing for the Moslems, for the enemy lost in him their most energetic leader, their most experienced warrior, and their cleverest counsellor. (318)

His disenchantment with Richard I, and his attempts to negotiate a separate peace with Salāh al-Dīn are seized upon by the Sultan, who recognizes in them an opportunity to fragment the crusade effort (322). It is perhaps in part for this reason, the marquis’ willingness to undermine the efforts of his coreligionists for his own personal advancement, his failure to fulfill his obligations as a warrior for his faith, that Bahā’ al-

Dīn records the marquis' assassination in terms that are reminiscent of those employed in the description of the demise of Reynaud de Chatillon:

On the 16th of the month Rabi'a II (May 1, 1192) we received a dispatch from our envoy accredited to the marquis, announcing that the prince had just been assassinated, and his soul hurled by God into hell-fire. (332)

Despite his talents and capacity to lead, his death is recounted in the same ignominious terms as that of the greatest of the villains among the Crusaders.

A reason for the attitude of Bahā' al-Dīn displays towards the assassination of the marquis may be found in a meeting that was reported to have taken place concerning which of the two groups of Franks, the contingent of Richard I or that of Conrad de Montferrat, Salāh al-Dīn should come to terms with in order to establish a meaningful peace in the Levant. The recommendation of the Sultan's amīrs is decidedly in favor of the English king, and their reason is one that is merits attention:

The council decided that if peace were to be made, an arrangement should be concluded with the king: for an honest alliance between Moslems and the Franks (of Syria) could hardly be counted on, and they must expect to be betrayed by them. (324)

This characterization of "Syrian" Franks as being treacherous was not novel;⁸⁷ the Muslims of the Levant had come to realize that their new neighbors from the West would act in their own interests, even at the expense of the overall objectives of the Crusades. Ibn al-ʿAthīr provides a compelling example of this concept at work in his account of the letter that was sent by the mamlūk Muʿīn al-Dīn Unur (who was the *de facto* ruler of Damascus at the time) to the Syrian Franks during the Crusaders' siege of Damascus (1148) in the Second Crusade, and of the subsequent actions of the Syrian Franks:

To the Syrian Franks he wrote: 'What reason have you for supporting these people against us when you know that if they take the city they will seize your possessions on the coast? I warn you that if I feel that I am losing the battle I shall hand the city over to Saif ad-Dīn, and you may be sure that if he becomes ruler of Damascus you will not be allowed to keep a foothold in Syria.' This message persuaded them to break their alliance with the King of Germany [Conrad III]⁸⁸ in exchange for the fortress of Baniyās from Muʿīn ad-Dīn. So the Syrian Franks had a private discussion with the King of Germany and frightened him with their tales of Saif ad-Dīn, his vast

army, his constant reinforcements, and the probability that he would take Damascus despite anything that they could do to prevent him. They were so persuasive that the king withdrew his forces from Damascus. The Syrian Franks took over Baniyās and the German Franks returned to their homeland, which is north of Constantinople and to one side. Thus God delivered the believers from their distress.⁸⁹

Such actions on the part of the Syrian Franks, which served only to undermine the greater purpose of the very movement that had led to the establishment of a Western European presence in the Levant in the first place, along with the actions of individuals such as Reynaud de Chatillon, contributed to a general distrust for Syrian Franks among both Muslims and continental Europeans, a sense of suspicion which may have been a contributing factor in Bahā' al-Dīn's decidedly negative final assessment of Conrad de Montferrat. Whatever the qadi's reasons may have been for this harsh critique, it is an interesting fact that of the individuals among the Crusaders who are portrayed in a positive light, the majority of them are Crusaders who have come directly from Western Europe.

Among the many individual Crusaders who earned the plaudits of their Muslim counterparts, Richard I serves as perhaps the most suitable example. In terms of his standing amongst his peers as European monarch, his pivotal role in the Third Crusade, and its historical significance relative to the other crusades, the English king stands apart from other leaders of note such as Frederick II, Manfred (Frederick II's illegitimate son and heir), Baldwin the Little or Louis IX of France (St. Louis).⁹⁰ While Frederick II Hohenstaufen (the Holy Roman Emperor and ruler of Sicily)⁹¹ and his heir Manfred are the recipients of abundant praise, it is for their perceived cultural proximity to the Muslim writers, and their distance from the other Western European Christian rulers. The chroniclers who write of Frederick II speak of him as being a student of the arts and sciences,⁹² being a Christian in name only,⁹³ his estrangement from the Pope and his

alleged criticism of the system by which a pope is chosen.⁹⁴ In addition, two letters written in Arabic in the Emperor's own hand are reproduced, as testament to his cultural affinity for Muslims.⁹⁵ In a similar fashion, the chroniclers report Manfred's conflicts with the papacy⁹⁶ and his establishment of a scientific institute in Lucera which was based on the template provided by Muslim institutes.⁹⁷ Thus, both Frederick II and Manfred are praised, not as good ambassadors for Western European culture and religion while on Crusade, but rather for their adoption of and preference for the culture of the Muslim world. Celebrated as virtual crypto-Muslims in the Muslim sources, the Emperor and his son are thus not the best examples of individual Crusaders who are presented in a positive light in the Muslim sources.

Baldwin the Little and Louis IX, while certainly not crypto-Muslims, both occupied periods in the history of the Crusades when the focus of the Muslim historians was concentrated on the Muslim leaders of the resistance, which served largely to marginalize the two of them in the accounts, certainly to a greater extent than was the case with Richard I. Baldwin the Little (d. 1131-2)⁹⁸ ruled just before the emergence of an organized Muslim response to the Western European presence in the Levant, a time that for historians like Ibn al-ʿAthīr was marked to a greater extent by Muslim impotence than by Frankish success.⁹⁹ In a similar manner, Louis IX also operated during a time when the Crusaders themselves were largely overshadowed, in the eyes of the Muslim chroniclers, by their Muslim counterparts, but for very different reasons. By the time of Louis IX's Crusade, the balance of power had shifted to the Muslim side; indeed, the Seventh Crusade ended in 1250 in one of the most thorough defeats of the Crusader forces and was the most dramatic reversal for the cause since the defeat at Hattīn and the

fall of Jerusalem in 1187. From this period until the fall of Acre in 1291, the focus of the Muslim historians is on the Turkish leaders of the re-conquest of the Syrian coast, with the various leaders from among the Franks making sporadic appearances as the frustrated or defeated enemy. By Louis IX's time the story for the Muslim writers was not the Frankish presence in the Levant, but rather the Muslim resurgence.

As one of the most visible leaders in the Crusade movement of the twelfth century, Richard I stands out among other Western European leaders in a number of ways. As a leader in the ongoing conflict, the English king was perhaps the only Crusader to operate during a time when both sides were led by men of solid repute, as his adversary was none other than Salāh al-Dīn, a fact that generated a great deal of interest on both sides of the struggle. He was also fortunate enough to lead a Crusade at a time the two respective forces were evenly matched. Moreover, the English king was a leader in perhaps the last Crusade marked by European victories rather than defeats, for while the Crusaders were not able to recapture Jerusalem, their actions served to effectively postpone the Muslim re-conquest of the Syrian coastline for another century, and memories of Richard I's exploits would remain fresh in the minds of Muslims years after he had returned to his kingdom. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Third Crusade was the last Crusade in which both the theater of battle and the primary focus of the Crusaders was the Levant. Subsequent Crusades would see the focus shift from the Levant to Constantinople, and then Egypt, and by the time the Crusaders' attention returned to the Levant, the rising tide of the Muslim re-conquest had become inexorable. Even the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem in 1228 had been due more to a political settlement than to military actions on the part of the Crusaders.¹⁰⁰ Thus Richard I, as the

primary leader of the Third Crusade, was the last leader of a crusade which was so conducted that it clearly reflected the thinking and objectives of the original crusading enterprise.

Richard I is singled out as leader of the Third Crusade by the Muslim writers even before his arrival in Acre. Prior to his account of the arrival of the English king, Bahā' al-Dīn describes him in the following terms:

The king of England was very powerful, very brave, and full of resolution. He had distinguished himself in many a battle, and displayed the greatest boldness in all his campaigns. As regards his kingdom and rank, he was inferior to the king of France, but he outstripped him in wealth, in valour, and in fame as a soldier. (242)

In his description of the position of Richard I relative to the King of France (Philip Augustus), Bahā' al-Dīn draws a crucial distinction between the two monarchs, between possessing the trappings of power and privilege and having the experience necessary to lead ably along with the respect of one's peers and followers. In a section found earlier in the account, Bahā' al-Dīn explains the position of Philip Augustus as a monarch among other European monarchs in the following manner:

This monarch held very high rank amongst the Christians; he commanded the respect of their most powerful princes; all the besiegers' [of Acre] forces would have to put themselves under his orders as soon as he arrived, and his authority would be universally acknowledged. (240)

Despite the superior rank of the French king, it is clear in Bahā' al-Dīn's account of Richard I's arrival which of the two monarchs demands the greatest degree of respect from both the Crusaders and the Muslims. The qadi describes the atmosphere of the Crusader camp as one of euphoria subsequent to the arrival of the English king:

The Franks were filled with so great joy at his arrival that they lit huge and terrible fires that night in their camp – a sure sign of the important support he had brought them. Their leaders had oftentimes boasted to us that he would come, and held his arrival as a menace over our heads; and now, according to the people who frequented their camp, they expected, the very moment he landed, to see him fulfil their dearest wish of pushing forward with the siege of the city. (249)

What is perhaps most remarkable about this description of the Crusaders' estimation of Richard I is not the degree of confidence they are alleged to have in him, but rather that Bahā' al-Dīn appears to validate their feelings with his characterization of the English king: "This prince indeed was justly distinguished for his good judgment and wide experience, for his extreme daring and insatiable ambition" (249).

Equally surprising is the qadi's description of the Muslim forces upon the arrival of Richard I. Bahā' al-Dīn is frank in his admission of the fear the king's reputation inspired among the rank-and-file of the Muslim forces, revealing that prior to his arrival, both his general standing as a leader and his exploits in Cyprus (which he had conquered en route to Acre) generated a great deal of anxiety in the Muslim camp (248). Upon the arrival of Richard I, and the subsequent reaction within the Crusader camp, Bahā' al-Dīn paints a somber picture of an apprehensive Muslim camp, in which only Salāh al-Dīn remains calm, facing the new challenge with the characteristic aplomb that one comes to expect in reading the Muslim accounts of the Sultan:

...when the Moslems heard of his arrival, they were filled with terror and alarm. The Sultan, nevertheless, received the news undisturbed, for he counted upon God's favour and protection, and manifested the purity of his motives in warring against the Franks. (249)

Thus from the outset, Richard I is portrayed as an unprecedented, dangerous new threat to the Muslim cause in the Levant, and as a worthy opponent for the redoubtable Salāh al-Dīn.

In the course of his time in the Levant, there is but one instance in which Richard I earns the censure of Bahā' al-Dīn for actions deemed to exceed the bounds of acceptable behavior in a time of war. This occasion is the massacre of the Muslim captives of Acre, which took place a month or two after the capture of the city. While the Western sources tend to blame Salāh al-Dīn for the massacre, accusing him of failing to

meet the terms of the treaty in the specified time, and thus forcing the king's hand,¹⁰¹ Bahā' al-Dīn presents a far different scenario, in which the Sultan attempts to work within the framework of the agreed-upon treaty but encounters an obstinate enemy. According to the qadi, the payments stipulated by the treaty, along with certain Frankish prisoners, were to be delivered in three installments (271). However, the Muslims' inability to locate certain individuals from among the group of requested Frankish captives led the two parties to an impasse at the end of the first period, at which point both parties demanded assurances of good faith from one another that were impracticable (271-2). Although Bahā' al-Dīn does acknowledge the fact that Salāh al-Dīn was tardy in fulfilling the terms of the treaty (272), the actions of Richard I are, for him, a clear breach of the terms of the treaty and an indication of the bad faith in which the Franks had negotiated the treaty in the first place:

He [Richard I] had promised to spare their lives if they surrendered the city, adding that if the Sultan sent him what had been agreed upon, he would give them their liberty, with permission to take their wives and children with them and to carry away all their movable property; if the Sultan did not fulfil the conditions, they were to become slaves. The king broke the solemn promises he had made them, and openly showed the intentions he had hitherto concealed, and carried out what he had purposed to do as soon as he had received the money and the Frank prisoners. (272-3)

For Bahā' al-Dīn, the actions taken by the English king violated the terms of the treaty, which specified the penalty for non-compliance on the part of the Sultan, and therefore indicated the low regard in which he held the treaty itself. The qadi also speculates about the king's reasons for carrying out the massacre, listing two possible motives:

Various motives have been assigned for this massacre. According to some, the prisoners were killed to avenge the deaths of those slain previously by the Moslems; others say that the king of England, having made up his mind to try and take Ascalon, did not think it prudent to leave so many prisoners behind in Acre. God only knows what his reason really was. (273-4)

This episode is the only instance in which Bahā' al-Dīn criticizes Richard I beyond the standard maledictions that are reserved specifically for the enemy. In the massacre of the

Muslim prisoners of Acre, the king had overstepped the boundaries of acts pardonable due to the exigencies of war, and the massacre would live on in the minds of Muslims in the region for generations, serving as both a point of reference, and a convenient excuse for the Mamlūk Sultan al-Ashraf in the wake of his massacre of the Frankish prisoners who were taken during the Muslim conquest of Acre in 1291.¹⁰²

Beyond Richard I's culpability in the massacre of the Muslims outside of Acre, Bahā' al-Dīn's portrayal of the English king is, for the most part, positive, and many of his complaints about the king relate to Richard's success in prosecuting the Crusade. In his account of the struggle between Salāh al-Dīn and Richard, the qadi portrays the king as a brave and resolute warrior, providing in one instance, during the contest for Jaffa in the summer of 1192, an image of Richard I literally defying the assembled Muslim forces as a whole:

I have been assured by men who were there, that on that day the king of England, lance in hand, rode along the whole length of our army from right to left, and not one of our soldiers left the ranks to attack him. The Sultan was wroth thereat... (376)

At an earlier point in the account of the struggle for Jaffa, Bahā' al-Dīn goes so far as to quote the English king as he questions the Sultan's actions in retreating before the Crusaders as they came ashore in Jaffa, a line of questioning whose implications do not flatter the Sultan and, as the qadi himself acknowledges, is only half in jest:

'This Sultan is mighty, and there is none greater or mightier than him in this land of Islām. Why, then, did he make off at my first appearance? By God! I was not even armed or ready to fight; I am still wearing only the shoes I wore on board. Why, then, did you retreat?' (371-2)

However, this potentially embarrassing line of questioning is immediately followed by expressions of admiration, attributed to Richard, regarding the speed with which Salāh al-Dīn was able to capture Jaffa,¹⁰³ and the integrity of the image of the Sultan presented in the narrative as a whole remains undisturbed.

In addition to the king's ability to wage war successfully against the Muslims, Bahā' al-Dīn also portrays Richard I as a shrewd and pragmatic politician. As such, he is capable of using dissension within the ranks of the Muslims to his advantage, much in the manner in which Salāh al-Dīn is described as pitting the partisans of the English king against the supporters of Conrad de Montferrat during his negotiations with both parties. Thus Richard I is accused of impeding the negotiations for peace that were taking place in the spring of 1192 in order to obtain some type of advantage from the political dispute that had surfaced within Salāh al-Dīn's family, hoping that this dissension within the Sultan's ranks would lead to his accepting terms that were more favorable for the Crusaders (331). On another occasion, the qadi complains of the cunning of the king, as he attempts to use his projected return to England, an eventuality the Muslims are eager to see come about sooner rather than later, as leverage in negotiating for a distribution of land that is more favorable to the Crusaders' interests in the Levant. In this particular instance, the king's emissary is quoted as delivering a cleverly couched ultimatum to the Sultan, which elicits a sharp response from Bahā' al-Dīn:

'The king begs you to allow him to keep those three places [i.e. Ascalon, Dārūn, and Gaza] as they are, and not to demolish them; of what importance can they be in the eyes of so powerful a prince? The king is forced to persist in his request by the obstinacy of the Franks, who refuse to consent to their being given up... Therefore, if you will give him the cities in question, peace can be made on every point... in this way everything can be settled, and the king will be able to depart. If peace is not concluded, the Franks will not suffer him to go, and he could not withstand them.' See the cunning of this accursed man! To obtain his own ends, he would employ first force, and then smooth-speaking; and, although he knew he was obliged to depart, he maintained the same line of conduct. God alone could protect the Moslems against his wiles... (358-9)

Bahā' al-Dīn is both perturbed and impressed by the king's ability to use his presence in the Levant as leverage, even during a time in which both his allies and adversaries knew that he was under tremendous pressure to return to England (357). For the qadi this

display, while detestable for the problems it presents to the Sultan and his agenda, is nevertheless the mark of a shrewd negotiator.

But for Bahā' al-Dīn, the English king also exhibits a remarkable pragmatism in the way in which he negotiates for peace, and moments in which this pragmatism is on display seldom escape the qadi's notice. From the outset, Richard I is portrayed as a practical politician. This pragmatism manifests itself, in part, in the king's ability to differentiate between things that are valuable to the strategic interests of the Crusaders and those which are less important, and this is particularly apparent in his position concerning Jerusalem, which gradually diminishes in importance during the course of the negotiations (308, 322-3) until the only crucial item is the question of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (358). By way of contrast, items of strategic value remain the key points of contention throughout the negotiations.¹⁰⁴ Thus, Richard I distinguishes himself in the narrative for his ability to privilege practical considerations above all others in negotiating for an advantageous distribution of territories, and Bahā' al-Dīn conveys his grudging admiration for this quality in the king.

The pragmatism of Richard I is also on display within the pages of the qadi's account of the king's candor in representing his personal interests. At various points in the latter parts of the narrative, Bahā' al-Dīn depicts the English king as being strikingly frank about his desire to return to England, due to his concerns about the fluctuating political situation in England (which is primarily a result of his brother John's attempts to usurp the throne in Richard's absence). Shortly after Richard I's arrival in Jaffa, Bahā' al-Dīn recalls the king's desire to expedite the peace, a desire that he conveys to the Sultan's envoy in no uncertain terms:

'Greet the Sultan from me, and tell him that I beseech him, in God's name, to grant me the

peace I ask at his hands; this state of things must be put a stop to; my own country beyond the sea is being ruined. There is no advantage either to you or me in suffering the present condition of things to continue.’ (372)

After the forces of Richard I have successfully repulsed the Muslim forces from Jaffa, Bahā’ al-Dīn quotes the Sultan’s chamberlain as he recounts an annoyed king who refuses him entry into the city, and gives voice to both his irritation with the perceived intransigence of Salāh al-Dīn and his disappointment over his own frustrated ambitions of returning to England: “How long am I to go on making advances to the Sultan that he will not accept? I was anxious above all things to be able to return to my own country, but now the winter is here, and the rain has begun” (377). But it is perhaps in a private conversation with the Sultan’s chamberlain in which he proposes what will be the eventual framework for the settlement between the two forces, that the king reveals both the extent of his personal ambitions in the continuing negotiations and the skeptical eye through which he has come to view the crusading enterprise, with the greatest degree of candor:

‘*Beg my brother*¹⁰⁵ el-Melek el-‘Ādel to consider what means can be used to induce the Sultan to make peace, and ask him to request that the city of Ascalon may be given to me. I will take my departure, leaving him here, and with a very small force he will get the remainder of their territory out of the hands of the Franks. My only object is to retain the position I hold amongst the Franks. If the Sultan will not forgo his pretensions to Ascalon, then let (el-‘Ādel) procure me an indemnity for the sums I have laid out in repairing its fortifications.’ (380)

Thus the Richard I of Bahā’ al-Dīn’s account is, in matters of war and peace, as pragmatic as his adversary Salāh al-Dīn,¹⁰⁶ whose life is the subject of the text as a whole.

The image of Richard I presented in Bahā’ al-Dīn’s account of the battles, skirmishes, and negotiations of the Third Crusade is not altogether different from the portrayal of the English king in the Western accounts. The qadi’s anecdotes of the king’s bravery and sagacity are certainly echoed in the Anglo-Norman chronicles, and his assessment of the political acumen is in accord with the Western historical record of

Richard I (as well as some of the partisan French accounts). Rather, what distinguishes Bahā' al-Dīn's depiction of the English king is his perspective. As a religious leader in the Muslim army, he finds Richard I's successes a source of consternation, and Richard's military and political savvy a source of exasperation. For the qadi it is his leader, Salāh al-Dīn, who is the model of the sovereign/warrior: pragmatic, uncompromising and zealous in times of war and equitable, generous and magnanimous in times of peace. Richard I is, for all of his accomplishments, but a worthy adversary for the Sultan; the hyperbole is reserved for Salāh al-Dīn, as is the praise, while the maledictions and calumny are set aside for the English king. Thus, Bahā' al-Dīn's greatest compliment to the king comes in the form of his declaration that "we never had among our enemies a man more crafty or bolder than he" (359). Coming from the qadi, such grudging admiration is perhaps a more eloquent tribute to the king than any of the rhetorical flourishes found in the most partisan of the Western sources.

When the Western European forces of the First Crusade arrived in the Levant in 1097, they unwittingly became a part of a wholly new cultural, military and political landscape, which would in turn alter and be altered by them. However, the Crusades were not solely a Western experience. For the peoples of the Levant, and to a lesser extent the surrounding area, the sudden appearance of armed forces from a distant corner of the globe was both an unexpected and devastating turn of events. Levantines, regardless of religious or political affiliation, were faced with the prospect of having to accommodate a new presence on the Syrian coast that was different in culture, language, and to varying degrees, faith. While the adjustment was difficult for the indigenous Christians of the Levant, as well as for the Armenian and Byzantine Christians of the neighboring areas, it

was particularly demanding for the Levantine Muslims who had occupied a position of religious and cultural prominence in the region. Their situation was exacerbated by the fact that, as Muslims, they were in fact the primary targets for the Crusaders, and as such, they felt the largest measure of the Crusaders' aggression.

As both the indigenous Levantine Muslims and their Turkish sovereigns resisted the Crusaders unsuccessfully during the First Crusade, adapted to the reality of a Western European presence in the Levant, and then embarked upon the counter-offensive which would eventually result in the demise of the Crusader States, their experiences were recorded in the annals of Muslim history by some of the greatest historians of the era. These writers, in the course of their accounts, revealed a Muslim perspective of their new Christian European neighbors and adversaries which, much like the outlook of their Western counterparts, not only contained religious, racial and cultural prejudice, but even appeared to revel in it on occasion. The Muslim chroniclers, like their Western counterparts, were confident of the sanctity of their endeavor in the eyes of God, and of the concurrent damnation of the enemy. Moreover, drawing on preexisting stereotypes of Western Europeans, some writers presented accounts of Crusader actions both on and off the field of battle that played upon and reinforced popular Eastern Mediterranean preconceptions of Franks and Frankish society in general. Even aspects of Frankish behavior that the writers find praiseworthy, such as courage in battle and religious fervor, are eventually, in the course of the narratives, re-cast to the detriment of the enemy. Thus, the martial prowess of the Franks is explained as being instinctual rather than heroic, and thus minimized, while accounts of the religious fervor of the Crusaders remind the audience of the errors in belief and practice which are to be found among the enemy. In

many ways, the Muslim accounts of the Crusades serve as a mirror image of the Western accounts, as they are similar in focus, language and tone, and differ only in that the respective writers, Muslim and Christian, champion opposing sides in the conflict.

What does distinguish the accounts of the Muslim historians from those of their Western counterparts is the detailed picture they present of the military and political scene in the Levant, and in the Eastern Mediterranean world beyond the Crusader-Muslim conflict. For the Western writers, the Crusade is the story; however, for their Muslim counterparts it is but one aspect of the military and political history of the individual, dynasty, or area to whom or to which each writer is attached. As such, while Muslim unity against the Franks is a necessity for the individual historians, this concept becomes more of an abstraction for the Muslim leaders in the Muslim sources, who appear to devote more energy toward consolidating power at the expense of their coreligionists than in combating the Franks, whom they are as apt to receive as allies as they are to encounter on the battlefield.

In the final analysis, this is the message of the Muslim sources: the initial failure of the Muslims in repulsing the Crusaders and the reason for the continued existence of the Crusader States was the result of the reluctance of the Muslim leaders to privilege the collective good of the Levantine Muslims over their individual ambitions. For the Muslim historians, the leaders who are devoted to the expulsion of the Crusaders are few and far between, and are often limited in the undertaking by resistance on the part of their coreligionists and by dynastic concerns, while the majority of the Muslim rulers are not concerned with the Frankish presence in the Levant. This cynicism on the part of many of the Muslim sovereigns would be justified to an extent by the events of the twelfth

century, when on several separate occasions the Syrian Franks, apparently taking their cues from their Muslim neighbors, placed their own local ambitions above the collective interests of their coreligionists from continental Europe during the Second and Third Crusades, frustrating the larger objectives of the Crusades as a whole in the process. However, the internal strife within the Crusader camp was not a concern for the Muslim chroniclers, except for the opportunities it presented to the Muslims to reabsorb the individual Crusader states into the Muslim Levant.

In their concern with the prosecution of the Counter-Crusade, their emotional and ideological investment in the conflict, and their disgust with the fragmentation and political maneuvering within the Muslim contingent, the Muslim chroniclers are in many ways reminiscent of their Western counterparts. In the cases of both the Christian European and Muslim chroniclers of the Crusades the reader is presented with partisan narratives that betray a cultural and religious bias, and tend to exaggerate victories and minimize defeats at every opportunity. However, despite their shortcomings, these accounts present a realistic representation of the Crusades as they were experienced, and perhaps more importantly, as they were perceived by individuals who either participated in the conflict, or were in some way affected by it. Both the Muslim and Western sources present crucial insights into and perspectives on the Crusade phenomenon that, taken together, impart an accurate image of the Crusades as they were experienced by many of the participants on both sides. And in that, the chronicles of the Crusades, both Western and Muslim, are invaluable.

¹ Lack of unity was perhaps the key ingredient to the continued existence of the Crusader States for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The provincial Turkish rulers in the surrounding areas of the Levant jealously guarded their individual kingdoms, to the point of occasionally turning away military aid from their more powerful Muslim neighbors to the East, to the consternation of their subjects. It was not until the emergence of the atabeg 'Imād al-Dīn Zengi in the mid-twelfth century that the Muslims of the Levant would begin to unite (a process that was continued under his son Nūr al-Dīn, and largely completed by Salāh al-Dīn). This unity would mark a decisive and inexorable shift in the fortunes of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, which would be put on the defensive until 1291, when the last European outposts in the Levant were reabsorbed into the Muslim Levant, and the European military presence in the area was brought to an end.

² The years 1092-4 had witnessed the deaths of the most capable rulers and leaders in the Muslim world from Egypt to the eastern reaches. In 1092, the vizier, and effective ruler of the Seljuq Turk Empire, Nizam al-Mulk, was murdered; this was followed by the death of the third Seljuq sultan, Malikshah, one month later. The year 1094 saw the deaths of the Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir, who had been in power for fifty-eight years, and of his vizier, Badr al-Jamali, who, among his many accomplishments, had designed and overseen the construction of the wall of Cairo. This year also witnessed the death of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Muqtadi. P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades* (London: Longman, 1986) 10-15.

³ The Seljuq Turks of the Levant were Sunni Muslims, ostensibly ruling the area under the authority of the Sunni 'Abbasid caliph in Bagdad. However, while the caliph was powerless to exert any real control over his "dominions" in the Levant, the Turkish rulers of the Levant were fearful that their brethren in the eastern reaches of the Seljuq empire would look to take substantive control of Syria. The Fatimid caliph was based in Cairo, and as a Shi'ite, was opposed to the 'Abbasid caliph, as well as the Seljuq Turks, who were their closest neighbors. Thus, the ideological, military, and political situation between the Muslim groups in the area made the idea of unified action against the Crusaders unlikely. *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 33-6.

⁴ Peter Lock, *The Routledge Companion to The Crusades* (London: Routledge, 2006) 21.

⁵ Ibn al-Athīr, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-'Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil- fī'l ta'rīkh*, Part 1 Tran. D.S. Richards (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006. 14.

⁶ Andrew Jotischky, *Crusading and the Crusader States* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2004) ix.

⁷ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 82.

⁸ Ibid. 82.

⁹ Muslim historians of the period closest to the First Crusade have tended to blame Fatimid Egypt for what was perceived as a lackluster response. In fact, it has even been proposed in some quarters that the Fatimids wanted a buffer between themselves and the neighboring Seljuqs, with whom they had been locked in a fierce territorial struggle, and appearance of the Crusaders met this need. *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l ta'rīkh*, 13-14.

¹⁰ H.A.R. Gibb, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades: Extracted and Translated from the Chronicle of Ibn al-Qalānīsī* (London: Luzac & Co., 1932) 111.

¹¹ On one occasion, the Seljuq prince of Aleppo, Ridwān, went so far as to shut the gates of the city to the gathered Seljuq forces from the East (Ibid. 115). Another reason for the failure of the undertakings was the fact that they were not, in fact, a high priority for the most powerful Seljuq sultan of

the period of the First Crusade, Muhammad, who chose not to accompany his forces to Syria on any of the occasions in which they were sent to help their Levantine coreligionists. Such a display would have demonstrated a real dedication on his part, and might have provided the type of effective leadership needed for a successful military intervention. Cf. *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 80-81.

¹² Hans Eberhard Mayer, *The Crusades, Second Edition*, trans. John Gillingham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) 68.

¹³ Nadia Maria El-Cheikh, "Byzantium through the Islamic Prism from the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century, Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh, eds., *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001) 53.

¹⁴ *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, 43.

¹⁵ The chroniclers are referred to as "Muslim" rather than "Arab" because many of them were, much like the local Seljuq rulers of the Levant, not Arab.

¹⁶ "Byzantium through the Islamic Prism from the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century," 56.

¹⁷ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 50, 286-8.

¹⁸ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History, Second Edition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) 2.

¹⁹ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 51-4.

²⁰ Ibn al-Athīr, 'Izz al-Dīn and Carl Johan Tornberg, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh* (Bāyūrūt: Dar Sāder, 1965). See also D.S. Richards, trans., *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006) vii.

²¹ *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr*, 13. "Ifriqiya" refers to the eastern portion of Morocco (n. 3).

²² "Byzantium through the Islamic Prism from the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century," 56.

²³ One of the most famous examples is that of Richard I, who, according to Ambroise, was criticized for being too familiar of terms with members of Salāh al-Dīn's court. Ambroise, *The Crusade of Richard Lion-Heart*, ll. 7,429-43.

²⁴ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxviii. While the citizenry and the lower levels of leadership at the local level were largely composed of Syrian Arabs, the leadership of the Muslim Counter-Crusade was Turkish, with the exception of Salāh al-Dīn and the Ayyubid dynasty he founded, which was Kurdish.

²⁵ Usāmah ibn Munqidh, and Philip Khuri Hitti, *Kitāb al-i'tibār* (al-Wilāyāt al-Muttahidah: Matba'at Jāmi'at Prinston, 1930). See also George Richard Potter, trans., *The Autobiography of Ousāma* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929) x. This translation follows the French format for transliteration, and thus, the spelling of names in the excerpted passages presented here will differ from what is found in the chapter as a whole.

²⁶ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxviii.

²⁷ *The Autobiography of Ousāma*, xi. Further references to this account will be by page number and given parenthetically in the text.

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- ²⁸ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 348.
- ²⁹ Ibid. 348.
- ³⁰ This was Fulk of Anjou, the fourth king of Jerusalem. *The Autobiography of Ousāma*, 293.
- ³¹ “What they specially admire about a knight is his thinness and tallness.” Ibid. 87.
- ³² Fulk of Anjou. Ibid. 295.
- ³³ The amīr describes the physical contest in these terms: “The exchange of blows was so violent that the rivals, who remained standing, seemed to make up one pillar of blood.” Ibid. 182.
- ³⁴ The reference is to the “Neapolis story” at the beginning of this section.
- ³⁵ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxix.
- ³⁶ There is also a description of Frankish women who participated in some of the battles, disguising themselves as men, in a later portion of the passage, which does not appear here. While ‘Imād al-Dīn seems surprised by this, the phenomenon of women’s occasional participation in military encounters was not exclusive to the Crusaders, as Usāma ibn Munqidh himself relates several instances of Muslim women taking part in battles (e.g. *The Autobiography of Ousāma*, 157-170). Moreover, there is a tradition in the Arabian epics, or *sira*, of heroic women who distinguished themselves in battle.
- ³⁷ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 204-5.
- ³⁸ Ibid. xxx.
- ³⁹ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 350.
- ⁴⁰ However, in the case of the “Assassins”, politics, and the politically-motivated assassinations they were famous for carrying out, played a more important role.
- ⁴¹ Consider Ibn al-‘Athīr’s account of the Byzantine emperor’s demands upon the soldiers of the First Crusade upon their arrival in Constantinople, and the motives that lay behind them: “After they had decided to march to Syria, they went to Constantinople to cross the straits into Muslim lands, to travel by land, for that would be easier for them. When they arrived, the Byzantine emperor refused them passage through his territory. He said, ‘I will not allow you to cross into the lands of Islam until you swear to me that you will surrender Antioch to me.’ His aim was to urge them to move into Islamic lands, assuming that Turks would not spare a single one of them, because he had seen how fierce they were and their control of the lands.”
The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al Kāmil fī l-ta’rīkh, 14.
- ⁴² While there were other instances of Western European and Byzantine Christians living in close proximity prior to and during the period of the Crusades (most notably in southern Italy and Sicily), this was the first time that such a large contingent of armed forces from Western Europe was stationed close to the heart of the Byzantine Empire for an extended period of time.
- ⁴³ A generation before the arrival of the Crusaders (1071), Alp Arslān had led the Seljuq Turks to victory over the Byzantines in the battle of Manzikert, which had commenced the gradual process by which Turks from the eastern portion of the Seljuq empire began settling on Byzantine and Armenian territory. However, the Byzantines were not resigned to this eventuality, and continued to be a military presence in the Levant, with the objective of reclaiming the lost territory. *The Crusades: A History*, 2.

⁴⁴ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 304-5.

⁴⁵ “At the top of the cupola of the Dome of the Rock there was a great gilded cross. When the Muslims entered the city on the Friday, some of them climbed to the top of the cupola to take down the cross. When they reached the top a great cry went up from the city and from outside the walls, the Muslims crying the *Allāh akbar* in their joy, the Franks groaning in consternation and grief. So loud and piercing was the cry that the earth shook.”
Arab Historians of the Crusades, 144.

⁴⁶ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 136-7.

⁴⁷ These hostages were later executed at the behest of Richard I, and would become both a blemish on the record of the English king’s actions in the Levant, and a pretext for the Mamlūk Sultan al-Ashraf’s execution of his Christian hostages after the fall of Acre in 1291.

⁴⁸ In Arabic, the word *qiyāma* signifies “resurrection” and the word *kanīsa* signifies “church”; thus the Church of the Resurrection/ Holy Sepulchre was referred to as *Kanīsat al-Qiyāma* by the indigenous Christians of the area. However, in Arabic the word *qumāma* signifies “garbage” or “refuse”. Hence, a way in which to belittle Christians for some Muslims was to refer to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (*Kanīsat al-Qiyāma*) as the “Church of Refuse” (*Kanīsat al-Qumāma*). Cf. *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 148, n.1; and also *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, s.v. *qumāma*, *qiyāma*, *kanīsa*.

⁴⁹ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 148. ‘Imād al-Dīn goes on to include an interesting account of Christian doctrine in describing the Church itself (pp. 148-9).

⁵⁰ Both Ibn al-‘Athīr and ‘Imād al-Dīn provide examples of this desperation on the part of the Crusaders in their accounts of the negotiations between the Crusaders and Muslims leading up to the surrender of the city. *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 141-2; 156-7.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 174-5.

⁵² *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al Kāmil fī l-ta’rīkh*, 16-17, n. 24. Of course, Muslim chroniclers also attributed the defeat to ineptitude on the part of the Muslim leaders of the offensive.

⁵³ Bahā’ al-Dīn, *al-Nawādir al-sultānīyah wa-al-mahāsin al-yūsufīyah, aw Sīrat Salāh al-Dīn* (al-Qāhirah: al-Mu’assasah al-Misrīyah al-‘Ammah, 1964). Translation provided in *Saladin or What Befell Sultan Yūsuf*, (Lahore, Pakistan: Islamic Book Service, 1988) 116. Further references to this account will be by page number and given parenthetically in the text.

⁵⁴ The term “qadi” is generally translated as “judge”; however, during this time, religious questions and/or disputes would also have fallen under the jurisdiction of the qadi as well. *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 904. For Bahā’ al-Dīn’s service to Salāh al-Dīn, see *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxix.

⁵⁵ The “besiegers” in question are the Crusaders who were engaged in a siege of Acre.

⁵⁶ Both Bahā’ al-Dīn and Ambroise mention defections from the Crusader camp due to hunger.

⁵⁷ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxx.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 214-15.

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- ⁵⁹ M.C. Seymour, *Mandeville's Travels*, 100-1.
- ⁶⁰ In particular, Ambroise is harsh in his criticism of the Crusaders' lack of unity during the Third Crusade. *The Crusade of Richard Lion-Heart*, ll. 8,479-8,518.
- ⁶¹ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 147.
- ⁶² *The Autobiography of Ousāma*, 294.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.* 177.
- ⁶⁴ *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, 17, n. 24.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 16-17.
- ⁶⁶ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxxii.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 62-3.
- ⁶⁸ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 334.
- ⁶⁹ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 138.
- ⁷⁰ The individual in question was Roger des Moulins. *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 117, n. 1.
- ⁷¹ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 293. For Ibn Wasil see *ibid.*, xxxi.
- ⁷² Mamlūks were non-African slave-soldiers, generally from Central Asia or Europe, employed by the various potentates of the Eastern Mediterranean kingdoms. In this instance, the designation "Bahrite" refers to a specific corps of mamlūks. See also *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 1083.
- ⁷³ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 294. Emphasis added.
- ⁷⁴ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 222.
- ⁷⁵ Issues of allegiance to specific Muslim leaders and the influence it exerted on the accounts was every bit the problem for Muslim chroniclers as it was for their Christian counterparts during the Crusades. Writers such as Bahā' al-Dīn and 'Imād al-Dīn were attached to, and fiercely loyal to, Salāh al-Dīn and the Ayyubid dynasty which he founded, while Ibn al-'Athīr, perhaps the greatest historian of the Crusades on the Muslim side, was a partisan of the Zangid dynasty ('Imād al-Dīn Zangī, Nūr al-Dīn, and his successors), and his accounts occasionally reveal his loyalties in the form of sharp criticism of Salāh al-Dīn, whose rise to power came at the expense of the Zangid dynasty. However, this set of circumstances, rather than being the exception, is generally the rule in the Muslim sources, and Nūr al-Dīn, who is the prototype of the just ruler courageous in battle in the accounts of Ibn al-'Athīr, fares far differently in the estimation of the Damascene chronicler Ibn al-Qalānisi, who, apart from being the earliest Muslim historian to focus on the Crusades, was also a partisan of the local Damascene sovereign, who stood against the expansion of Zangid power. *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, xxvi-xxvii.
- ⁷⁶ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 123.
- ⁷⁷ *What Befell Sultan Yūsuf*, 42.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 42. n.1.

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- ⁷⁹ This version can be found in Ibn al-‘Athīr’s account in *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (p. 124).
- ⁸⁰ This version can be found in ‘Imād al-Dīn’s account in *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (p. 134), and in Bahā’ al-Dīn’s account, which is forthcoming.
- ⁸¹ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 124.
- ⁸² Ibid. 114.
- ⁸³ “A certain number of Franks followed his example [allying with Salāh al-Dīn], which led to discord and disunity and was one of the chief reasons why their towns were reconquered and Jerusalem fell to the Muslims, as we shall narrate.” Ibid. 115.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid. 117-18.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid. 122.
- ⁸⁶ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 124.
- ⁸⁷ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 342.
- ⁸⁸ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 56.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid. 61-2.
- ⁹⁰ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 336-41.
- ⁹¹ Ibid. 337-8.
- ⁹² This information is found in the account of Ibn Wasil (*Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 268).
- ⁹³ This claim is made in Sibṭ Ibn al-Jauzī’s account (*Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 275).
- ⁹⁴ This information is found in the account of Ibn Wasil (*Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 277-80).
- ⁹⁵ This information can be found in Ta’rīkh Mansūrī’s account (*Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 280-3).
- ⁹⁶ This report comes via Ibn Wasil’s account (*Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 277).
- ⁹⁷ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 277.
- ⁹⁸ *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 336.
- ⁹⁹ *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī’l ta’rīkh*, 79.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 267-73.
- ¹⁰¹ For Western versions of the massacre, refer to *The Crusade of Richard Lion-Heart*, ll. 5,487-5,542; see also *The Itinerary of Richard I*, 220, 222, in which Salāh al-Dīn is accused of negotiating in bad faith.

¹⁰² After the capture of Acre on June 17, 1291, the Sultan, al-Ashraf, ordered the decapitation of the Frankish prisoners outside of the city walls. This was a direct violation of the assurances of safety that the Sultan had given the Crusaders prior to the eventual capture of the city. The chroniclers Abu l-Fida' and Abu l-Mahasin both mention the massacre, but only the latter historian acknowledges the fact that the Sultan had reneged on a promise he had made to the captured men. Both writers draw comparisons to the fall of Acre in 1191 to the Crusaders and the subsequent massacre of the Muslim prisoners, but only Abu l-Mahasin points to the parallels between Richard I's violation of his promise of safety to the Muslim prisoners and al-Ashraf's similar actions one century later. *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 346, n. 1; 349.

¹⁰³ "Great and good God! I should have thought he could not have taken Jaffa in two months, and yet he made himself master of it in two days!" Ibid. 372.

¹⁰⁴ In particular, the fortress of Ascalon lay at the center of a vigorous debate between the two parties. Ascalon had been destroyed at Salāh al-Dīn's behest, to prevent it's falling into the Crusaders' hands, only to see Richard I rebuild the fortress at great personal expense. As a result, the Muslims demanded the demolition of the fortress, while the Crusaders sought to preserve it. However, as the time for Richard I's departure drew near, the Crusaders, anticipating a Muslim resurgence in the wake of the king's absence, began to worry that the rebuilt fortress, in Muslim hands, would serve as an instrument of their discomfiture. Thus, by the conclusion of the negotiations, both sides were eager to see the demolition of the fortress. *What Befell Sultan Yūsuf*, 358, 372, 380, 386-7.

¹⁰⁵ Bahā' al-Dīn is drawing attention to the friendship that had developed between al-Malik al-ʿĀdil (Sayf al-Dīn) and Richard I through the course of the negotiations. Ibid. 320.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 380. In an earlier message to the Sultan, the king is quoted as saying: "It is my wish that you should divide (the land) in a way that your brother shall be acquitted of all blame by the Moslems, and that I shall incur no reproach from the Franks" (p. 323).

Conclusion

In the end, the peoples of the Muslim world of the medieval Eastern Mediterranean and the Christian world of Western Europe were separated by culture, history and religion, but were inextricably linked by similarities in their respective worldviews and by a common reaction to external entities that appeared to challenge their conceptions of the world and their places in it. In both the medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Western Europe an ethno/religio-centric position was espoused, at both the academic and popular level, which, conceptually, placed the “home” at the center of the world, and relegated the remainder of the world’s inhabitants to the periphery.

However, these similarities in world view notwithstanding, the perspectives of Mediterranean Muslims and European Christians were the products of each society’s unique cultural, historical and religious context, the products of an internal dialogue through which concepts of the normal and the deviant were articulated and ensconced, explicitly and implicitly, within the popular consciousness. Consequently, the discourse relating to otherness and its symbols and points of reference was self-contained, informed by considerations and conditions within, rather than outside the “home” society.

Just as the Mediterranean Muslim and European Christian world view was the product of a conversation that took place within each respective society, so too was the reaction which each generated towards cultural, racial and religious difference. By exploring works produced in the learned communities and in subsequent popular works,

one discovers a reaction to difference and an articulation and portrayal of otherness that functioned primarily as a means of engaging and understanding the outside world. The concept of an Other, whether in the Mediterranean Muslim world or the European Christian world, is not the sole property of one of the two societies to be used to limit or control the other. Rather, it is a construct that is employed by both societies to define and delineate the parameters of Otherness. In this exercise, the normative “home” community is both the author and audience, as it imagines, describes, and ultimately gives voice to the “Othered,” recreating this Other nearer in order to categorize and characterize it, even while simultaneously rejecting it and confining it to the periphery of humanity for its difference. For both medieval Mediterranean Muslims and European Christians, the concept of Otherness is neither an attempt to engage difference in a constructive manner nor a reaction to being “Othered” by the “foreign” society; it is rather an attempt to exert control over the Other as an integral part of the articulation of the “home” society’s own perspective of the outside world and its place within it, of its status as the normative.

The unique, internally generated nature of the two perspectives notwithstanding, the response of both Muslim and Western Christian chroniclers was similar in a number of ways, with both cultures attempting to negate the basic humanity of the other through both subtle and overt assertion of the inherent superiority of itself and the corresponding inferiority of the other. Muslim and Christian historians are scandalized by each others’ religious beliefs, and at the time of the Crusades are horrified by the treatment of their revered places at the hands of the enemy. Each finds satisfaction in the recovery of religiously significant places (the side to which the chroniclers belong must always *recover* an area after the enemy has *conquered* it) and the subsequent purification of such

sacred spaces.¹ Muslim and Christian chroniclers equally magnify their own victories and minimize their own defeats, praise individual leaders (generally, individuals to whom they are attached in some manner) in ways that are at odds with the historical record, and attempt to find some sign of a greater Plan at work in every occurrence.

In addition, Muslim and Christian historians consistently attempt to dehumanize the enemy at both the individual and collective level. For Muslim writers, the cultural and religious practices of the Crusaders and Western settlers are evidence of the inferiority of the “Franks,” and writers such as ‘Imād al-Dīn, and in particular Usāma ibn Munqidh, relish the opportunities to regale readers with accounts of Western barbarity, blasphemy and social impropriety. While Western chroniclers often did not have the same degree of familiarity with all levels of the indigenous Muslim society, and thus do not produce the types of wide-ranging accounts describing the enemy as do their Muslim counterparts, they nevertheless remind their audiences unceasingly that the enemy is pagan and perfidious. Furthermore, although the Western chroniclers do not lampoon the cultural and social institutions of the Muslim Levant to the same degree as do their Muslim counterparts in their appraisal of Crusader culture, it is important to note that many of the medieval romances that became popular throughout Western Europe after the fall of the last crusader stronghold in Acre² set about caricaturing Muslim culture, faith and society. Thus despite the divergent cultural and religious perspectives that the Muslim and

¹ Ironically, one of the consequences of the conquest/recovery of an area is often the defiling of religious places and/or symbols, which in turn elicits the general opprobrium of the chroniclers of the aggrieved side, and ensures that the side in question will respond in a similar fashion when presented with the opportunity.

² Technically, the last crusader stronghold was located in Cyprus. However, because of its strategic value to the greater crusading mission, the fall of Acre in 1291 is generally identified as the official end of the period of the Crusades.

Western, Christian chroniclers brought to their individual accounts, they nevertheless shared approaches in narrating the events of the Crusades and in portraying the enemy, approaches which were consistent across both racial and religious divides.

The question of medieval Muslim and European perceptions of another across these divides in the centuries preceding the Crusades, during the Crusades, and in the years immediately following their conclusion is in many respects a question that is relevant with respect to many divisions of culture, race and religion: how do groups engage in the process of defining themselves, and how do they respond to those whom they perceive as different? It is a question of how contradictory cultural, historical and religious perspectives are reconciled, and of the role of conflict, and the extent to which conflict influences the formation of concepts of, and discourse relating to, the foreign or Other. Such questions are equally relevant to the dialogue concerning European expansion in the Americas in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, and in Africa and Asia three centuries later, as they were for the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean Muslim world and Western Europe during the centuries surrounding and including the Crusades.

ذِكْرُ الْإِفْرَنْجَةِ وَالْجَلَالِقَةِ وَمُلُوكِهَا وَمَا يَتَّصِلُ بِذَلِكَ

نَسَبُهُمْ وَصِفَاتُهُمْ

الإفرنجة والصقالبة والنوكبرد والأشبان ويأجوج ومأجوج والترك والخزر وبرجان والآن والجلالقة وغير ذلك ممن ذكرنا ممن حل الجدي، وهو الشمال... لا خلاف بين أهل البحث والنظر من الشرعيين أن جميع من ذكرنا من هؤلاء الأمم من ولد يافث بن نوح، وهو الأصغر من ولد نوح.

فالإفرنجة أشد هؤلاء الأجناس بأساً، وأمنعهم هيبة، وأكثرهم عدة، وأوسعهم ملكاً، وأكثرهم مدناً، وأحسنهم نظاماً وانقياداً للملوكة، وأكثرهم طاعة... إلا أن الجلالقة أشد من الإفرنجة بأساً، وأعظم منهم نكاية. والرجل من الجلالقة يقاوم عدة من الإفرنجة.

وكلمة الإفرنجة متفقة على ملك واحد، لا تنازع بينهم في ذلك، ولا تحزب، واسم دار مملكتهم في وقتنا هذا بويرة، وهي مدينة عظيمة. ولهم من المدن نحو من خمسين ومائة مدينة غير العماير والكور.

مَسَاكِينُهُمْ

وكان أوائل بلاد الإفرنجة قبل ظهور الإسلام في البحر جزيرة رودس، وهي الجزيرة التي ذكرنا أنها مقابلة للإسكندرية، وأن فيها دار صناعة المراكب في وقتنا هذا للروم. ثم جزيرة إقريطش، وقد كانت للإفرنجة أيضاً ففتحها المسلمون ونزلوها إلى هذه الغاية. ثمهم عدداً، وأشدهم بأساً.

¹ The following is the Arabic original of the pages cited in Chapter 3 of the dissertation from al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma'ādin al-Jawhar*; the pages in this Appendix correspond to pages 36-9 of the *Murūj*.

ملوك الإفرنجة

قال المسعودي: ووجدت في كتاب وقع إلي بفسطاط مصر سنة ست وثلاثين وثلثمائة أهداه عرماز الأسقف بمدينة جريدة من مدن الإفرنجة في سنة ثمانى وعشرين وثلثمائة إلى الحكم بن عبد الرحمن بن محمد بن عبد الله بن محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن الحكم بن هشام بن عبد الرحمن بن معاوية بن هشام بن عبد الملك بن مروان بن الحكم ولي عهد أبيه عبد الرحمن صاحب الأندلس في هذا الوقت في عهده:

« يا أمير المؤمنين، إن أول ملوك إفرنجة قلوذية، وكان مجوسياً فنصرته امرأته وكان اسمها غرطلة. ثم ملك بعده ابنه لذريق، ثم ولي بعد لذريق ابنه دقشرت، ثم ولي بعده ابنه لذريق، ثم ولي بعده قرطان بن دقشرت، ثم بعده ابنه قارله، ثم ولي بعده ابنه تبين.

» ثم ولي بعده قارله بن تبين، وكانت ولايته ستاً وعشرين سنة، وكان في أيام الحكم صاحب الأندلس.

« وقد تدافع أولاده بعده ووقع الاختلاف بينهم حتى تفانت الإفرنجة بسببهم، وصار لذريق بن قارله صاحب ملكهم، فملك ثمانيا وعشرين سنة وستة أشهر، وهو الذي أقبل إلى طرطوشة فحاصرها.

» ثم ولي بعده ابنه قارله بن لذريق، وهو الذي تهادن مع محمد بن عبد الرحمن بن الحكم بن هشام بن عبد الرحمن بن معاوية بن هشام بن عبد الملك بن مروان. وكان محمد يخاطب بالامام. وكانت ولايته تسعاً وثلاثين سنة وستة أشهر.

» ثم ولي بعده ابنه لذريق ستة أعوام، ثم وثب عليه قائد الإفرنجة المسمى نوسة، وملك إفرنجة، وأقام في ملكه ثمانى سنين. وهو الذي صالح المجوس على بلده سبع سنين بستمائة رطل ذهب وستمائة رطل فضة يؤديها صاحب الإفرنجة إليهم.

» ثم ولي بعده قارله بن تقويرة أربع سنين.

» ثم ملك بعده قارله آخر، ومكث إحدى وثلاثين سنة وثلاثة أشهر.

« ثم ولي بعده لذريق بن قارله وهو ملك افرنجة إلى هذا الوقت (وهو سنة اثنتين وثلاثين وثلثمائة)، وقد استوفى في مملكته عشر سنين إلى هذا التاريخ على حسب ما نفي إلينا من خبره.

بَيْنَ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ وَالْجَلَالَةِ

قال المسعودي: وأشد ما على الأندلس من الأمم المحاربة لهم الجلالقة، كما أن الإفرنجة حرب لهم، غير أن الجلالقة أشد بأساً.

وقد كان لعبد الرحمن بن محمد صاحب الأندلس في هذا الوقت وزير من ولد أمية يقال له أحمد بن إسحاق فقبض عليه عبد الرحمن لأمر كان منه استحق عليه في الشريعة العقوبة، فقتله عبد الرحمن.

وكان للوزير أخ يقال له أمية في مدينة من ثغور الأندلس، يقال لها شنترين. فلما نفي إليه ما فعل بأخيه عصى على عبد الرحمن فصار في حيز رذمير ملك الجلالقة، فأعانه على المسلمين، ودله على عوراتهم^(١).

ثم خرج أمية في بعض الأيام من المدينة يتصيد في بعض متنزهاتها، فغلب على المدينة بعض غلمانه ومنعوه من الدخول إليها، وكتبوا إلى عبد الرحمن.

ومضى أمية بن إسحاق أخو الوزير المقتول إلى رذمير، فاصطفاه، واستوزره، وصيره في جلته.

وغزا عبد الرحمن صاحب الأندلس سمورة، مملكة الجلالقة المتقدمة صفة بنيانها وأسوارها في باب جل الأخبار عن البحار وما فيها وما حولها من العجائب والأمم ومراتب الملوك وأخبار الأندلس وغير ذلك.

وكان عبد الرحمن في مائة ألف أو يزيدون، فكانت الواقعة بينه وبين رذمير ملك الجلالقة في شوال سنة سبع وعشرين وثلثمائة بعد الكسوف الذي كان في هذا الشهر بثلاثة أيام. وكانت للمسلمين عليهم، ثم أنابوا بعد أن حوصروا وأولجوا إلى المدينة

فقتلوا من المسلمين - بعد عبورهم الخندق - خسين ألفا .

وقيل إن الذي منع رذمير من طلب من نجا من المسلمين أمية بن اسحق وخوفه الكمين، ورغبه فيما كان في معسكر المسلمين من الأموال والعدد والخزائن، ولولا ذلك لأتى على جميع المسلمين .

ثم أن أمية بعد ذلك استأمن إلى عبد الرحمن، وتخلص من رذمير، فقبله عبد الرحمن أحسن قبول. وقد كان عبد الرحمن صاحب الأندلس بعد هذه الواقعة جهز عساكره مع عدة من قواده إلى الجلالة، وكانت لهم معهم حروب هلك فيها من الجلالة ضعف ما قتل من المسلمين في الواقعة الأولى، وكانت للمسلمين عليهم إلى هذه الغاية .

ورذمير ملك الجلالة إلى هذا الوقت (وهو سنة اثنتين وثلاثين وثلاثمائة)، وكان قبله على الملك أردون، وكان قبل أردون أذبوشن. والجلالة والافرنجة تدين بدين النصرانية على رأي الملكية .

Appendix B: Al-Idrīsī¹

وفي هذا الجزء أيضا بلاد كثيرة من ساحل بحر الروم فيها أربونة ومنت بشلير وسنجيلي وإيرش وبنقلة وسفونة وجنوة وبيشة ولكة ولونة وفيه جمل من بلاد دسقانية وما جاورها من أطراف بلاد أنكبدة وما اتصل بها من أرض البنادقة والإفرنجيين وما يتلو ذلك في جهة الغرب من بلاد أنبردية مثل طرون وساوسة وإيبورية وغامنديو ومديلان وبابية ومنتو وفرارة وبلونية وفيه بعض بلاد قلورية وما اتصل بها من ملف وسرننة وبنبت وستنجلو. وكل هذه البلاد والأقاليم التي ذكرناها يجب علينا أن نرسم حدودها ونصف معالمها وطرقاتها ومجهول جهاتها وجملا من أوصافها ومحاسنها حسب ما سبق لنا من ذلك.

فنعول إن مدينة طلوثة التي في إقليم بربنصة هي مدينة حسنة نبيلة لها قرى ومزارع وأقاليم جملة ومن طلوثة إلى مدينة أربونة الساحلية سبعون ميلا ومن طلوثة أيضا إلى قرقشونة مع الجبل الحاجز المسمى جبل البرتات ستون ميلا ومن طلوثة إلى مدينة بزارش شرقا مع شمال ثمانون ميلا ومدينة بزارش مدينة حسنة ذات سور حصين وزراعات كثيرة وقرى وهي من إقليم بربنصة.

وكذلك من طلوثة إلى بوي مائتا ميل وثلثون ميلا وبوي مدينة صالحة المقدار كثيرة الديار عامرة الأقطار كثيرة المزارع والغلات وهي من إقليم

¹ The following are excerpts of the Arabic original of al-Idrīsī's *Kitāb Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fī' Khtirāq al-Āfāq*, including the pages cited in Chapter 3 of the dissertation; the pages which are cited in the dissertation are pages 588-90, 734, 739, 742 and 874 of *Nuzhat al-Mushtāq*.

ومن إفراغة إلى مدينة طرطوشة خمسون ميلا ومدينة طرطوشة مدينة
حسنة على نهر إبره وبينها وبين البحر الشامي عشرون ميلا ولها قلعة حصينة
وينبت بجبالها من خشب الصنوبر ما ليس بعمور الأرض مثله صفة في حسن
دياجته وعظمه وطوله ويحمل منها إلى أقطار الأرض المتباعدة والمتقاربة ويتخذ
منه الأنقاض للملوك والخزائن وتعمل منه الصواري للمراكب السفرية والقرى 5
وأنواع الآلات الحربية مثل الأبراج والنهيسات والسلام ونحوها.

ومن مدينة طرطوشة إلى مدينة طركونة اليهود خمسة وأربعون ميلا
وطركونة مدينة على نحر البحر لها سور من رخام أسود وأبيض وقليل ما
يوجد مثله صفة وهذه المدينة في وقتنا هذا معمورة وكانت في قديم الزمان
خالية لأنها كانت فيما بين حد المسلمين والروم وهي مدينة حسنة والأحناش 10
بها مؤذية كثيرة ولها مرسى حسن ومياها موجودة.

ومنها إلى برشلونة خمسون ميلا ومدينة برشلونة على نحر البحر ومرساها
ترش لا تدخله المراكب إلا عن معرفة وترؤس على ركوب البحر وهي
مدينة لها ربض وعليها سور منيع والدخول إليها والخروج عنها إلى الأندلس على
باب في الجبل المسمى هيكل الزهرة وبالرومية البرنيو وبرشلونة يسكنها ملك 15
لإفرنجية وهي دار ملكهم وله مراكب تسافر وتغزو وللإفرنج شوكة لا ترد
وحملة لا تصد ويذكر أنهم من أبناء جفنة وبلاد برشلونة كثيرة الحنطة
والحبوب والعسول.

ومن برشلونة إلى قرقشونة أربعة أيام شمالا ومدينة قرقشونة مدينة حسنة

ومن بوي إلى إكلرمنت ستون ميلا وإكلرمنت مدينة جليلة عامرة كثيرة الخصب ومن مدينة بيانة إلى ليون ثلاثون ميلا ومن مدينة ليون إلى نيفارص مائة ميل وثلاثون ميلا وكذلك من ليون إلى مدينة بسنيس ثمانون ميلا وكذلك من مدينة إكلرمنت إلى قاورش ستون ميلا ومن إكلرمنت أيضا إلى مدينة نيفارش ثمانون ميلا ومن إكلرمنت أيضا إلى منت لشون شمالا ستون ميلا وهي مدينة صغيرة متحضرة فرجة الجهات كاملة الخيرات وهي من إقليم بري.

وكذلك من مدينة منت لشون إلى مدينة ليموجش غربا ستون ميلا ومدينة ليموجش قاعدة إقليم أنجو وتنسب أعمالها وقراها إليها وهو إقليم منفرد بذاته جنوبه أرض إكلرمنت وشماله أرض نيفارش وشرقيه بري وغربيه أرض برغش وليموجش مدينة حسنة حصينة ذات خيرات وافرة وقرى عامرة وزراعات طائلة وكروم كثيرة متصلة ومن نيفارش إلى ليموجش ستون ميلا وكذلك من منت لشون إلى برجش بري ثلاثون ميلا في الجنوب ومن منت لشون إلى نيفارص شرقا ثلاثون ميلا.

ومدينة برجش قاعدة أرض بري وإقليمها يسمى بري وليس بإقليم بري إلا مدينة برجش ومدينة منت لشون ولبري قرى عامرة وخيرات وافرة وحروث

وكروم وخير وخصب زائد وبرجش من أكبر بلاد الإفرنجيين وإقليم بري منفرد بذاته يحيط به من جنوبه أرض إكلرمنت وبشماله إقليم طرش ومن غربيه أرض بيتارش وبشرقيه أرض برغونية الإفرنجيين ومن مدينة برجش إلى نيفارص ثمانون ميلا.

14 ونيفارص مدينة جليلة نبيلة فيها رجال أنجاد وهي من غرر البلاد ذات قرى عامرة وجبايات وافرة ومنها إلى دجون شرقا ثلاثون ميلا وكذلك من نيفارص أيضا إلى لنكة ستون ميلا ومن نيفارص إلى إطرويش ستون ميلا ومن دجون إلى لنكة سبعون ميلا ومن مشكون إلى ليون تسعون ميلا ومشكون مدينة حسنة عامرة القطر كثيرة الخير متصلة الزراعات والكروم والجنات. 15 ومنها إلى مدينة بسنيس خمسة وأربعون ميلا وبسنيس مدينة متحضرة على طرف الباب القاطع في الجبل المسمى منت جون وهو باب عظيم طوله بين الجبلين ثمانون ميلا وقيل مائة ميل وعلى قم هذا الباب من جهة بلاد أنبردية مدينة إيبورية وهذا الجبل جبل عظيم حاجز بين بلاد برنصة وبرغونية الإفرنجيين وبرغونية اللمانيين وصوابة وقرنطارة وكل هذه الأقاليم من الجبل في الجهة الغربية وبين ما خلفه من جهة الشرق من بلاد أنبرضية وبلاد جنوة ويش ورومة وما اتصل بها من بلاد أنكبدة وفيه من الأبواب أربعة أبواب يدخل منها ويخرج عليها إلى بلاد الروم من كلتا الناحيتين وهو جبل عظيم جدا

صعب الارتقاء إلى ذروته عريض الجرم وتخرج منه أودية كثيرة وسنذكرها
بعد فراغنا من سائر البلاد التي في غربي الجبل على التوالي إن شاء الله.
فنقول إن إقليم برغونية الإفرنجيين يحيط به من جهة جنوبه جبل منت
جون ومن شرقيه برغونية اللمانيين ومن غربيه بري وبعض إقليم بربنصة
ومن شماله إقليم إفرنسية وفي برغونية الإفرنجيين من قواعد البلاد بسنيس
ومشكون ودجون ونيفارش وأشتيون وإطرويش ولنكة.
فأما مدينة بسنيس فقد سبق ذكرها ومنها شرقا إلى مدينة مشكون خمسة
وأربعون ميلا ومدينة مشكون رحبة الفناء واسعة الأرجاء ولها أسواق محدقة
ومعاش مرفقة وأسواقها متحركة ومزارعها وعماراتها مشتبكة ومن مشكون
إلى جنبرة أربعون ميلا وجنبرة مدينة على نهر رودنو وفي شرقيه وهي تناخم
بلاد برغونية اللمانيين ولها قرى عامرة وعمارات متكاثرة وكذلك من مشكون
إلى مدينة دجون ستون ميلا ومدينة دجون في وسط براح من الأرض حسنة
الرقعة مباركة البقعة ذات معاش وأرزاق كثيرة ومن مدينة دجون إلى مدينة
لنكة سبعون ميلا.
ومدينة لنكة مدينة رفيعة أقطارها واسعة ولها زراعات وكروم ومياه جارية
وخيرات طائلة ومن مدينة لنكة إلى مدينة إطرويش ستون ميلا وإطرويش
مدينة قائمة الذات فرجة الجهات جامعة لضروب من الخيرات وصنوف من
البركات ومن مدينة إطرويش إلى أرليان من بلاد إفرنسية ستون ميلا ومن

إطرويش أيضا إلى نيفارش المتقدم ذكرها ستون ميلا ومن نيفارش إلى لنكة ستون ميلا وكذلك من لنكة إلى بسنيس ثمانون ميلا ومن نيفارش إلى مدينة دجون خمسة وثلاثون ميلا وكذلك من مدينة مشكون إلى مدينة ليون من أرض بربنصة خمسة وثلاثون ميلا ومن نيفارش أيضا إلى أشتيون أربعون ميلا وكذلك من أشتيون إلى طرويش مثلها ومن أشتيون إلى أرض بري وقاعدتها برجش أربعون ميلا.

وأرض برغونية الإفرنجيين أرض كثيرة القرى والمنافع متصلة الكروم والمزارع وأهلها رجال حروب وأرباب همم وقلوب وأهلها صميم الإفرنج وسلاطينها أكبر السلاطين.

ويتصل بإقليم برغونية الإفرنجيين برغونية اللمانيين ومن بلادها أغشت وجنبرة ولزنة وبزنشون وبردون وهي من أخصب البلاد أرضا وأوسعها خيرا وأكثرها عامرا وملك اللمانيين يقيم بها ويتردد في بلادها ويحيط بها من جنوبها جبل منت جون ومن شرقها بلاد اللمانيين ومن غربها بلاد برغونية الإفرنجيين ومن شمالها إقليم لهرنكة.

فأما مدينة أغشت فهي مدينة في سفح الجبل المسمى منت جون وهي مطلة على أرضها بهجة بقعها كثيرة مرافقها ونفعها وبها مياه ناشئة وعمارات متسعة ومنها إلى جنبرة خمسة وأربعون ميلا ومدينة جنبرة مدينة عامرة الديار

ميلا وكذلك من مدينة فرميصة المتقدم ذكرها إلى مدينة بنصة سبعون ميلا شرقا ومدينة بنصة مدينة كبيرة عامرة خصيبة حصينة كثيرة الزرع والضرع وأهلها أنجاد في الحروب ولهم عدة واستعداد وهي دار مملكة اللمايين. وأرض شصونية وأرض بلونية وأرض بوانية وأرض قلنطارية وأرض أكلاية وأرض إرنصية وإقليم دسقانة وأرض إفريزية وأرض باير وأرض صوابة وأرض لهرنكة ولوبانية وأرض بربان وأرض هينو وأرض برغونية اللمايين جميعها تحت طاعة ملك اللمانية وهي خمسة عشر أرضا وأيضا فلان أرض إفلندريش وأرض إفرنسية وأرض برغونية الإفرنجيين وأرض نرمندية وأرض برطانية وأرض ماينة وأرض أنجو وأرض طرونية وأرض بري وأرض البرنية وأرض بيطو وغشكونية وبربنصة كل هذه الثلاث عشرة أرضا هي تحت طاعة ملك الإفرنج وبلاد الإفرنج أخصب من بلاد اللمايين وأنفع غلات وأحسن حالات وأغزر ثمارات.

فأما أرض قرنطارة فهي أرض صغيرة ومن بلادها المشهورة وقواعدها المذكورة إكريزا فأما مدينة إكريزا فهي تتأخم جبل منت جون وهي خلف نهر دروة وهي مدينة متوسطة متحضرة لها أسواق وفيها تجارات وبها خيرات وكروم ولها أغنام ومواش كثيرة وأرزاق وغللات ومنها في جهة الشمال إلى مدينة ألمة خمسون ميلا وألمة مدينة كبيرة متحضرة لها أسواق وفيها

تجارات وبها خيرات وافرة.

ومن مدينة لأكريزا إلى مدينة أسكنجة خمسة وثلاثون ميلا بين شمال وغرب
ومدينة أسكنجة مدينة كبيرة تتاخم طرف جبل منت جون ويخرج نهر دنو
بمقربة منها وعلى اثني عشر ميلا وذلك ما بين أسكنجة والجبل ومدينة
أسكنجة على ضفة النهر من الناحية الشرقية وهي حسنة البقعة فسيحة الرقعة
عامرة الديار زهرة البساتين كثيرة العيون والأنهار وهي من أرض قرنطارة
ونجاور أرض صوابة.

فأما أرض صوابة فن مدنها ألمة وأوزبرك وبزلة وإشيرة وهي أرض
صغيرة الطول والعرض لكنها أرض عامرة كثيرة الخصب ومن أسكنجة إلى
مدينة بزلة المتقدم ذكرها مائة ميل وبزلة يقال إنها من بلاد اللمانية كما
بيناه قبل هذا ومن مدينة ألمة إلى مدينة أوزبرك ثلاثون ميلا وهي مدينة
عامرة القطر كثيرة الخيرات متصلة الزراعات وهي على نهر دنو ومنها إلى
مدينة بتزوة وتروى بتصوة بالصاد ثمانون ميلا ومدينة بتصوة مدينة كبيرة
كثيرة العمارات فرجة الديارات ذات أسواق وصناعات ومياه جاريات
وغلات دائمة وتجارات قائمة ومن مدينة بتصوة إلى مدينة بنصة التي من بلاد
اللمانية مائة ميل وقد ذكرنا بنصة فيما صدر من الكلام وكذلك من مدينة

ومنها في شرقها جزيرة مالطة وهي جزيرة كبيرة وفيها مرسى مأمون
يفتح إلى الشرق وفيها مدينة وهي كثيرة المرعى والغنم والثمار والعسل الكثير
وبينها وبين أقرب بر من صقلية إلى موضع يقال له أكرنتة ثمانون ميلا وليس
بعد مالطة هذه إلى ناحية الشرق والغرب إلا جزيرة إقريطش.
وأما جزيرة لنبدوشة فبينها وبين أقرب بر من إفريقية حيث قبودية مجريان
وبها مرسى مأمون يكن من كل ربح ويحمل الأساطيل الكثيرة وهذا المرسى
منها في اللباج وليس في جزيرة لنبدوشة شيء من الثمار ولا من الحيوان.
ومنها في جهة الشمال جزيرة لطيفة تسمى جزيرة الكتاب وبينهما خمسة
أميال وهذه الجزيرة لطيفة جدا وهي من لنبدوشة مائلة إلى المغرب يسيرا.
ومن جزيرة الكتاب إلى نموشة في الشرق مع الشمال يسيرا ثلاثون ميلا
وليس بجزيرة نموشة مرسى ولا شعراء وفيها حرث والإرساء بها يكون مخاطرة.
وجزيرة غودش من جزيرة نموشة في الشرق وبينهما مجريان.
وقد ذكرنا هذه الجزائر بما يحتاج أن يذكر فيها من غير تطويل والحمد
لله كثيرا.

وبقي علينا بعد هذا أن نذكر جزيرة صقلية العليا ونذكر أقطارها تبيانا
ونصف بلادها مكانا مكانا ونعد مفاخرها وننشر فضائلها بالوجيز من القول
مع استقصاء المعاني بحول الله تعالى.

فنعول إن صقلية فريدة الزمان فضلا ومحاسن ووحيدة البلدان طيبا ومساكن
وقديما دخل إليها المتجولون من سائر الأقطار والمترددون بين المدن والأمصار
وكلهم أجمعوا على تفضيلها وشرف مقدارها وأعجبوا بزاهر حسنها ونطقوا

بفضائل ما بها وما جمعت من مفترق المحاسن وضمته من خيرات سائر المواطن ودول ملوكها أشرف الدول وصولتهم على من ناوهم أشد الصول فلوكلها أعظم الملوك قدرا وأكبرهم خطرا وأرفعهم همة وأشمخهم قدرا ورتبة.

ولما كان في سنة أربع مائة وثلاث وخمسين سنة من سني الهجرة افتتح غرر بلادها وقهر بمن معه طغاة ولاتها وأجنادها الملك الأجل والهمام الأفضل المعظم القدر السامي الفخر رجار بن تقرين خيرة ملوك الإفرنجيين ولم يزل يفرق جموع ولاتها ويقهر طغاة حماتها ويشن عليهم الغارات في الليل والنهار ويرميهم بصنوف من الختوف والبوار ويعمل فيهم ماضى السفار وعوامل القنا الخطار إلى أن استولى على جميعها غلبة وقهرا وفتحها قطرا فقطرا وملكلها ثغرا فتغرا وذلك في مدة ثلاثين عاما ولما صار أمرها إليه واستقر بها سرير ملكه نشر سيرة العدل في أهلها وأقرهم على أديانهم وشرائعهم وأمنهم في أموالهم وأنفسهم وأهلهم وذرائعهم.

ثم أقام على ذلك مدة أيام حياته إلى أن وافاه أجله المحتوم وتقضاه يومه المعلوم فتوفي في سنة أربع وتسعين وأربع مائة وهو ببعض بلاد قلورية بقلعة مليطو فدفن بها.

ثم ورث الملك بعده ابنه الملك المعظم المسمى باسمه المقتفي أثر سننه رجار الثاني فأقام الدولة وزين المملكة وشرف السلطنة وأعطى الأمور أقساطها من النظر الجلي والفعل المرضي مع نشور العدل وإقامة الأمان والفضل حتى انقادت الملوك إلى طاعته وأعلموا بشعار مشايعته ومتابعته وسلموا مقاليد بلادهم

إليه وتواردوا من كل الجهات عليه رغبة في التفيؤ بأفياء مملكته والسكنى تحت ظلال أمنه ورحمته وملكه لا يزيد على الأيام إلا رفعة وعلوا وشماعة وسموا إلى حين تأليفنا لكتابنا هذا.

فأما جزيرة صقلية المتقدم ذكرها فأقذارها خطيرة وأعمالها كبيرة وبلادها كثيرة ومحاسنها حمة ومناقبها ضخمة فإن نحن حاولنا إحصاء فضائلها عددا وذكرنا أحوالها بلدا بلدا عز في ذلك المطلب وضاق فيه المسلك لكننا نورد منه جملا يستدل بها ويحصل على الغرض المقصود فيها فنقول:

إن في هذه الجزيرة عند تأريخ هذا الكتاب لسلطانها الملك المعظم رجار مائة بلد وثلاثون بلدا بين مدينة وقلعة غير ما بها من الضياع والمنازل والبقاع ونحن نريد أن نذكر بلدان الجزيرة البحرية منها خاصة ونقتصر عليها ونكتفي بها عما سواها إلى أن نرجع من حيث بدأنا ثم نأخذ بعد ذلك في ذكر ما في حشو الجزيرة من البلاد والحصون والعمل الواسع المسكون مكانا مكانا وموضعا موضعا بحول الله تعالى.

فأول ذلك مدينة بلرم وهي المدينة السنية العظمى والمحلة البهية الكبرى والمنبر الأعظم الأعلى على بلاد الدنيا وإليها في المفاخر النهاية القصوى ذات المحاسن الشرائف ودار الملك في الزمن المؤتلف والسالف ومنها كانت الأساطيل والجيوش تغدو للغزو وتروح كما هي الآن عليه من ذلك وهي على ساحل البحر منها في شرقها والجبال الشواهد العظام محدقة بها وساحلها بهيج مشرق فرج ولها حسن المباني التي سارت الركبان بنشر محاسنها في بناءاتها ودقائق صناعاتها وبدائع مخترعاتها.

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