

# Behold the Franks: Amin Maalouf's *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* Revisited<sup>❖</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

In 1983 the francophone Lebanese author Amin Maalouf published *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* (original French title: *Les croisades vues par les Arabes*), a critically acclaimed and best-selling retelling of the Crusades from the Muslim point. Using a variety of contemporary Arab sources, Maalouf aimed to offer a corrective to traditional Western views of the Crusades and concluded that the traumatic events of the Crusades profoundly influenced the Arab perception of the West and its conception of modernity. Yet, while *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* was generally praised for its effort to represent the Muslim point of view on the medieval clash of civilizations, the present study will argue that Maalouf availed himself generously of a whole range of French and more generally Western literary and cultural constructs to make his material accessible and interesting to francophone and other European readers. In doing so, some aspects of his work may have unexpectedly reinforced some entrenched consumptions of Islamic civilization among the Western reading public.

**KEY WORDS:** Crusades, cross-cultural encounters, exile, diaspora, francophone literature.

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<sup>❖</sup> The title refers to the statement by the Muslim hero Saladin which Maalouf uses at the beginning of his book: "Behold the Franks: see with what fury they fight for their religion, while we, the Muslims, show no ardor for waging holy war."

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# 看哪！法蘭克人： 阿明莫洛夫的「阿拉伯人眼中的 十字軍東征」再探<sup>✧</sup>

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## 摘 要

1983 年法語黎巴嫩作者阿明莫洛夫筆下的暢銷著作「阿拉伯人眼中的十字軍東征」（法文原文標題：Les croisades vues par les Arabes），藉由穆斯林教徒的觀點重新審視十字軍東征。作者透過許多當代阿拉伯世界的資源，企圖扭轉過去長久以來由西方人眼中陳述的十字軍東征事件，該書指出，十字軍東征所造成的傷痛，深深影響阿拉伯人對於西方國家及其現代化社會的觀感。然而，正當該書因由從穆斯林的角度呈現中世紀各文明間的衝突而廣受好評，本研究旨在爭論，阿明莫洛夫也仗著身份的優勢，便利取得大量法國及西方國家的文學、文化史料，以討好法語系國家以及歐洲讀眾的文筆寫出此書，此舉不啻使該書某種程度上消費了伊斯蘭文明，同時也加深了西方讀者對於回教文化深根深蒂固的成見。

**關鍵詞：**十字軍東征、跨文化接觸、流放、散居、法語系文學

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<sup>✧</sup>本文主題套用 阿明莫洛夫在他書中的穆斯林英雄撒拉丁（Saladin）所說的一句話：「看哪！法蘭克人：看看是怎樣的一股怒火讓他們為他們的宗教而戰！至於我們穆斯林，一點也沒有為聖戰所發出熱情！」

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In 1983 the francophone Lebanese author Amin Maalouf published his first book, *Les croisades vues par les Arabes* (*The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*). Using a variety of contemporary Arab sources, he set out to retell the story of the crusades from the Muslim point of view and presented an engrossing and richly detailed narrative about this medieval clash of civilizations. His main objective, as explained in the prologue, was to offer a corrective to the Eurocentric views of the crusades embedded in most Western scholarship on the subject and demonstrate how the traumatic events of that time influenced the Arab perception of the West and its conception of modernity. He noted, moreover, that the Arabs never used the word “crusade”; for them, these events have always been known as “the Frankish wars or invasions” (xi), a black chapter in their history when Muslim lands were laid waste by savage hordes. Nor were the European knights ever described as “crusaders”; they were “the Franks” in view of the dominance of French crusaders during the early period of the wars. Maalouf also quotes Saladin, the Arab hero of the reconquest of Jerusalem, at the beginning of his book to indicate the initial impact of the coming of the Europeans: “Behold the Franks: see with what fury they fight for their religion, while we, the Muslims, show no ardor for waging holy war.” (1) [“Regardez les Franj: voyez avec quel acharnement ils se battent pour leur religion, alors que nous, les musulmans, nous ne montrons aucune ardeur a mener la guerre sainte.” (13)] All of this made interesting reading and the book sold well in France and was soon translated into English, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch and other languages, thus bringing the author considerable international acclaim.

Maalouf’s personal background had prepared him well for this East-West tale of cultures in conflict. He was born in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon in 1949 in a family belonging to the Melchite, i.e. Greek Catholic, community and was educated at a francophone school run by Jesuits. As his father before him, Maalouf became a journalist and was the director of a leading Beirut newspaper in the seventies, but moved to Paris in 1976 when civil war broke out among Lebanon’s Christian and Muslim communities. In France, he initially continued his career as a journalist and later achieved both critical and popular success as an essayist and novelist with *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* and historical novels such as *Leo Africanus* (1986), *Samarkand* (1989), *The Rock of Tanios* (winner of the prestigious Prix Goncourt in 1993), *Ports of Call* (1996) and *Balthasar’s Odyssey* (2000). In

1996 Maalouf commented in *Les identités meurtrières* (translated as *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong*) that the two major facts shaping his identity are his Christian upbringing and having Arabic as his mother tongue. His Christian upbringing nurtured a strong “religious and intellectual bond” with the Christian civilizations of the West, but as a native speaker of Arabic, the holy language of Islam, he also has a “linguistic and cultural” bond with Arabs and Muslims all over the world. (17) The collective and the particular, thus, coexist in an uneasy balance and always bring him back to vexed questions of identity: “when I think about either of these two components of my identity separately, I feel close either through language or through religion to a good half of the human race. But when I take the same two elements together, I find myself face to face with my own specificity.” (17)

As many others, I first read Maalouf’s so-called “roman vrai” (5), i.e. true-life novel, of the crusades as a student shortly following its publication and was captivated. Here, in these pages, one visited the other camp in this intercultural encounter and met Muslim scholars and other witnesses who had been absent from the accounts one had grown up with. Textbooks, children’s literature, historical novels, comics and even scholarly publications had long promoted a Eurocentric perspective on the crusades and, as recently as 2005, Godfrey of Bouillon (1059-1100), the first crusader king of Jerusalem, was chosen by TV viewers in Belgium as number 17 in a “The Greatest Belgian” poll organized by RTBF, the francophone Belgian broadcasting service. Moreover, in an age when postmodernism, gender studies, and other approaches were transforming the Academy; medieval studies seemed rather unresponsive. New approaches developed slowly and it took until 2000 for a team of medievalists led by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen to claim the existence of a postcolonial Middle Ages in a volume of essays entitled *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*. Under those circumstances, Maalouf’s *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* presented a welcome respite from the restrictive cognitive framework of mainstream European narratives.

However, certain troubling ambiguities or even deficiencies in Maalouf’s “true-life novel” approach to the Arab historians escaped me at that time. I now believe that Maalouf, while aiming to trace a non-Western civilization’s archaeology of dislocation and diaspora stretching back nine hundred years, repeatedly acculturates his sources by means of French

novelistic devices and cultural commonplaces that detract from their authenticity. Maalouf's wise emirs, skillful physicians, stout defenders of the faith, and other medieval Arabs frequently act like modern Frenchmen on their best behavior. They are rational, well mannered, observant, urbane, culturally refined and possessed of a good sense of humor and firm grasp of the ridiculous when confronted with the French knights. The latter, meanwhile, behave like uncouth Gauls from France's Celtic age or early-medieval Germanic barbarians or pagan Romans or some other local or internal French / European other. Thus, while Maalouf's professed objective is Arab self-representation, the reader cannot help but wonder at times whether he is viewing a true other or traversing a European hall of mirrors. Yet, these questions would only be revealed to me years later as I reread *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* and familiarized myself with some of Maalouf's later works, as well as studied new historical scholarship on the crusades.

To be sure, for anyone trying to understand the Arab point of view without the benefit of direct access to the Islamic sources, this book makes for engrossing reading. While the picture which Maalouf sketches is not one-sided and there are occasional references to the courage, administrative skills, and other positive characteristics of the blond warriors from Europe; the overall impression which emerges is damning. Maalouf systematically gathers from his sources stories about senseless acts of violence and cruelty, mass executions, the slaughter of innocents, treachery, rape, pillage, the destruction of libraries and other cultural institutions, and cannibalism. On pp. 128-133 (pp. 153-158 in the French edition), e.g., he quotes at length the observations of the Arab historian Usamah Ibn Munqidh who repeatedly visited the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem from 1138-1140. Usamah comments critically on European religious fanaticism, vulgarity, belief in trial by ordeal, primitive medical science, lax morality, and other "barbaric" traits. When at one point the crusader king Fulk of Anjou declares his willingness to take Usamah's son to Europe to have him initiated in the ways of chivalry, Usamah "politely declined the invitation, muttering under his breath that he would prefer that his son go 'to prison rather than to the land of the Franj.'" (133) ["décline poliment l'invitation, se disant tout bas qu'il préférerait que son fils aille 'en prison plutôt qu'au pays des Franj.'" (158)]

Maalouf later quotes an anecdote which illustrates the Europeans' extraordinary ignorance regarding the local climate and terrain. When

Amalric of Anjou, second son of Fulk of Anjou, rashly intrudes into Egypt in 1163 and lays siege to the town of Bilbeys, the town's defenders were "dumbfounded and amused" (161; "stupéfaits et amusés," 187) because Bilbeys was located on the Nile and, as this was the beginning of September and the river was beginning to swell, all they had to do was breach a few dikes and watch the crusaders hurriedly abandon their siege and flee to safer shores. Another amusing vignette is offered when Arab eyewitnesses in Jerusalem are quoted as providing the following description of the German Emperor Frederick Hohenstaufen: he "was covered with red hair, bald, and myopic. Had he been a slave, he would not have fetched 200 dirhams." (230) ["était de poil roux, chauve et myope; s'il avait été un esclave, il n'aurait pas valu deux cents dirhams." (264)] The French King Louis IX similarly suffered such slight regard. When he was captured and then ransomed, the Egyptian officials who oversaw his release presented him with the following parting lecture: "How could a sensible, wise, and intelligent man like you embark on a sea voyage to a land peopled by countless Muslims? According to our law, a man who crosses the sea in this way cannot testify in court. And why not? asked the king. Because, came the reply, it is assumed that he is not in possession of all his faculties." (241) [Comment un homme de bon sens, sage et intelligent comme toi, peut-il s'embarquer ainsi sur un navire pour venir dans une contrée peuplée d'innombrables musulmans? Selon notre loi, un homme qui traverse ainsi la mer ne peut témoigner en justice. – Et pourquoi donc? Interroge le roi. – Parce qu'on estime qu'il n'est pas en possession de toutes ses facultés. (274)] These hilarious anecdotes and incisive observations from Arab sources which Maalouf quotes time and again seem to take one to the heart of the intercultural dynamic and redirect the European's gaze upon himself. The result is chastening and the European views himself as an uncouth, ignorant, violent, laughable barbarian.

Yet, while Maalouf is culling these choice passages from his sources, he is also adroitly recasting them in terms that appeal specifically to a French readership. When King Luis was admonished by his Egyptian captors, e.g., they appealed to him ironically in very French terms as a man of good sense ("bon sens"), wisdom ("sagesse") and intelligence, thus making it easy for the readers to align themselves on the side of the Egyptians. Elsewhere, the historian Usamah, already referred to above, is not impressed when presented with a crude Crusader entertainment which consisted of having two infirm old

women race one another as the knights stood by and jeered them on. Maalouf summarizes Usamah's response to this distasteful spectacle as follows: "An emir as well-educated and refined as Usamah was unable to appreciate this burlesque Gallic humour." (130) The original French text nails down the concept more succinctly: "Un émir aussi lettré et raffiné qu'Oussama ne peut apprécier ses gauloiseries." (155) While the concept "gauloiseries" is relevant to the extent that some of the so-called "Franks" may have been of Gallic rather than Germanic descent, it also has a well-defined place in French culture in that it stands for a kind of broad and racy humor associated with the Gallic tribes which inhabited France in antiquity and later applied to François Rabelais and his bawdy tales.

These examples indicate that a process of acculturation is at work in Maalouf's treatment of his subject and this process occasionally results in the intrusion of typically French cultural constructs into what aims to be the discourse of the other. In those cases, questions arise as to the authenticity of the civilizational discourse. A striking example of this occurs in Maalouf's discussion of the conflict between two Christian knights, viz. Count Baldwin of Edessa and Tancred of Antioch, which took place in 1107. While referring to the Arab historian Ibn-al-Athir as his source regarding this episode, he narrates the beginning of the conflict in his own words and explains that, while Baldwin had been captured by Jawali, the governor of Mosul, Tancred had taken advantage of this opportunity to seize Baldwin's fiefdom of Edessa in Turkey. After some time, Baldwin agreed to an alliance with his captor and was released. At that point in the story, Maalouf turns to his source and quotes at length from the Arab historian to explain what happened when Baldwin speedily traveled to Antioch to reclaim his fiefdom from Tancred.

Tancred offered him thirty thousand dinars, horses, arms, clothing, and many other things, but refused to restore the city to him. When Baldwin left Antioch in a fury, Tancred tried to follow him to prevent him from uniting with his ally Jawali. There were a number of clashes between them, but after each battle they came together again to eat and chat! (73)

[Tancredi lui offrit trente mille dinars, des chevaux, des armes, des vêtements et bien d'autres choses, mais il refusa de lui rendre la ville. Et lorsque Baudouin, furieux, quitta Antioche, Tancredi essaya de le suivre pour l'empêcher de faire sa

jonction avec son allié Jawali. Il y eut quelques accrochages entre eux, mais après chaque combat ils se réunissaient pour manger ensemble et bavarder! (93)]

Immediately following this quotation from the source, Maalouf offers a comment: “These Franj are crazy, the Mosul historian seems to be saying.” (93) While this may well have been what Ibn-al-Athir was implying, Maalouf’s French phrase--“Ils sont fous, ces Franj, semble dire l’historien de Mossoul.” (93)--is even more striking as it is literally copied from a famous joke in the popular *Asterix and Obelix* comics familiar to and beloved by French people of all stripes. In this comics series by Goscinny, Asterix and Obelix, the two invincible champions of the last remaining Gallic village holding out against the legions of the Roman Empire, time and again observe the strange behavior of their Roman enemies and comment: “Ils sont fous, ces Romains.” (“They are crazy, those Romans.”) This use by Maalouf of one of the most famous running gags in French popular culture in the context of the Christian-Islamic encounter constitutes a curious displacement. The *Asterix and Obelix* comics are often viewed as an iconic expression of twentieth century French notions of France’s unique identity (“la différence française”) according to which the Roman legionnaires threatening the Gallic way of life stand for contemporary Anglo-American globalizers. In Maalouf’s treatment, though, the phrase is projected onto a very different intercultural encounter with the French taking the place of the Romans and the Muslims that of the French.

This is not the only place where Maalouf avails himself of such pat phrases of the French cultural legacy. In his Epilogue, e.g., he reflects on the historical processes of marginalization which Muslim peoples have felt themselves subjected to and which they often trace back to the crusades and he sums up this feeling that progress and modernity escaped the Muslim world as follows: “Le progrès, c’est désormais l’autre. Le modernisme, c’est l’autre.” (303) The English translation--“Henceforth progress was the embodiment of ‘the other.’ Modernism became alien.” (264)--does not hew close enough to the original French text and obscures the fact that Maalouf is leaning here on Jean-Paul Sartre’s famous phrase “l’enfer, c’est les autres” (“hell, that is the others”) from his play *Huis Clos* (*No Exit*) from 1944. Sartre’s *Huis Clos* is one of the founding texts of existentialism and centers around three characters who are locked up in a windowless room representing



the afterlife. No one else ever joins them and, when offered a chance to leave, they choose to remain. Thus, in using Sartre's phrase, Maalouf clarifies his analysis with a textual tag familiar even to French school kids. Yet, to juxtapose a Muslim historical trauma with mid-twentieth century European existential anxieties is also a reductionist gesture which does not do justice to the complex, heterogeneous forces that shaped the historical events discussed here. Maalouf's aim, it is to be remembered, is to create the "true-life novel" of the crusades and this, then, may be an example of the shortcuts one takes when historical discourse has to entertain as if it were historical fiction. Maalouf, moreover, was fully conscious of the kind of reader he was seeking and comments in the section on notes and bibliographic references at the end of the book that it is "meant for a public which is not necessarily a specialist public." ["destiné à un public non nécessairement spécialisé" (310)] This latter phrase, incidentally, was omitted from the English translation.

As for the current critical standing of *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, Carole Hillenbrand's assessment in her *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, a major academic study on the subject published in 1999, is representative. While deploring the lack of substantial publications about the Muslim view of the crusades throughout the twentieth century, she noted that *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* "came as a breath of fresh air into this field; it is lively and always popular with students. Moreover, the book lives up to its title. The drawbacks are that it is unashamedly general in its approach, is not comprehensive or academic, and furnishes little new information." (12) Maalouf, it is to be noted, never claimed to be an academic. Nor does Hillebrand's mixed assessment take away from the fact that almost thirty years since its publication *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* remains in print and was for decades the only easily accessible resource for many readers unfamiliar with the Muslim point of view regarding medieval Europe's encounter with the Middle East. In any event, her comments indicate the predicament. Numerous readers interested in the Islamic view of the crusades know the book and appreciate it for having offered something fresh and lively. Indeed, for many this may have been the first book on the subject they read. Yet, not being a scholarly work, it is not taken serious by historians, whereas literary critics consider it popular history and not suitable for literary analysis. My reading, however, is that the book does deserve and, indeed, calls for literary analysis as Maalouf himself invites such attention

when he highlights his novelistic agenda in his “Foreword”.

Hillenbrand credits *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* for bringing “a breath of fresh air” into the field. Yet, it was not the first publication to introduce an intercultural perspective on the crusades. In 1957, the Italian academic Francesco Gabrieli published a valuable collection of Arabic texts in Italian translation entitled *Storici Arabi delle Crociate* (*Arab Historians of the Crusades*). Unlike Maalouf, however, Gabrieli used a more scholarly approach and did not intersperse the historical excerpts with extensive personal commentaries or craft a sustained narrative from the raw materials. While this enhances the authenticity of the historical presentation, Gabrieli’s book lacks Maalouf’s novelistic touch and did not achieve the popular appeal which *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* would enjoy. Nor was a translation into English forthcoming until 1969. A second factor which contributed to Maalouf’s success and was not available to Gabrieli is the tremendous interest in the West in the history of the Muslim world following the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979, the assassination of President Anward El Sadat of Egypt in 1981, the civil war in Lebanon from 1975 to 1990, the attacks on the US and French embassies in Beirut in 1983, and other dramatic events of the last decades of the twentieth century that placed the Middle East at the top of the international agenda.

*The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* must also be read within the context of the intellectual climate of the seventies and eighties when comparative literature paradigms flourished and Cultural Studies and American Studies had not yet impacted literary scholarship to the extent that they would later in the century. Binary models prevailed and the work undertaken by the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (ISCSC) is a useful example of the intercultural approaches favored at that time. The ISCSC was very active throughout the eighties and brought together historians, comparative literature scholars, philosophers, linguists and other scholars who were deeply influenced by Arnold Toynbee’s views on world history and his emphasis on the rise and fall of civilizations. The ISCSC published a review, *Comparative Civilizations Review*, of which the special one-volume edition of issues 13 and 14 (Fall 1985 and Spring 1986), entitled *As Others See Us: Mutual Perceptions, East and West*, singularly demonstrates the comparative civilizational perspectives practiced by the ISCSC. *As Others See Us* contains studies by American, British, French, Arab, and other scholars on

topics such as “Muslim Perceptions of the West,” “Indian Perceptions of the West,” “The Responses of Tamils to Their Study by Westerners, 1608-1908,” “Reflections on the Question of ‘East’ and ‘West’ from the Point of View of Japan,” “China and the Islamic World,” etc. While acknowledging conceptual asymmetries and terminological problems in defining the concepts of “West” and “East”, all of these studies aimed to map the perceptions and attitudes of the East by the West and the West by the East as expressed in both primary historical (literary, religious, etc.) sources and scholarship in a variety of disciplines. Maalouf’s project, essentially, fits the “As Others See Us” paradigm. The title of the book and his statement in the Foreword that it is his aim “to tell the story of the crusades as they were seen, lived, and recorded on ‘the other side’—in other words, in the Arab camp” (xi) define the enterprise as one of mapping the East’s alternative understanding of historical events central to the West’s self-representation.

Edward Said’s *Orientalism* of 1978 is another apropos marker for Maalouf’s civilizational project. Maalouf does not refer to the Comparative Literature professor Said, but his underlying critique of the West’s Orientalist agenda concurs with Said’s. Said’s *Orientalism*, though, has been interrogated as “a projection of [Said’s] own identity crisis” (Kopf 38) and the question then arises whether Maalouf, like Said an Arab exile in a Western land, is not engaged in a similar project to explore personal questions of identity and sketch an archaeology of dislocation and diaspora. L. P. Hartley once famously declared in his novel *The Go-Between* (1953): “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.” (3) Maalouf, in *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, suggests that it is during the Middle Ages when the past really started becoming foreign for Muslim peoples and the process of alienation and migration which brought Arabs to the lands of the Franks was initiated.

The most recent scholarship on the crusades, however, does not support the major historical premises upon Maalouf has built his narrative. Paul E. Chevedden, a leading historian of the Arab-Christian encounter in the Middle Ages, while fully agreeing that “it is time that Islamic sources for the crusades are taken seriously,” (188) dismisses the notion that Christians and Muslims had radically discordant views of the crusades. In his “The Islamic View and the Christian View of the Crusades: A New Synthesis,” Chevedden argues that “the self-view of the crusades presented by contemporary Muslim authors and

the self-view of the crusades presented by crusading popes are not in opposition to each other but in agreement with each other.” (199) Major Muslim scholars, as their counterparts in the Catholic Church, viewed the crusader wars as wars of religion (jihad; bellum iustum) and as the third and latest stage in a Mediterranean-wide conflict which had started with the eleventh century Norman conquest of the Muslim kingdom of Sicily and continued with the ongoing Christian reconquista of Muslim territories in Spain. Chevedden, therefore, rejects what he describes as the ‘Big Bang’ theory of the Crusades. According to this theory, Pope Urban II’s legendary speech at Clermont in 1095 launched an extraordinary mass movement which precipitated the creation of a host of crusading institutions and mechanisms and resulted in a sudden invasion of Muslim lands in the Middle East. Maalouf, however, subscribes to the ‘Big Bang’ theory and emphasizes the suddenness, irrationality and cataclysmic nature of the historical process.<sup>1</sup>

In closing, Maalouf’s dilemma may be summed up as follows. His professed aim is to tell the authentic story of the crusades as they were experienced in the Arab camp for the benefit of a French public ignorant of this other perspective. To achieve this goal and make the material accessible and interesting to this public, he availed himself generously of a whole range of French and more generally Western literary and cultural constructs. In doing so, Maalouf, a migrant from the francophone periphery, demonstrated his expertise in French culture, from the highbrow Sartre to the popular Obelix and Asterix, and achieved standing as a man of letters in his new homeland. The disadvantage of such a crossing of a cultural threshold, though, is that he compromised the heterogeneity of the original witness reports and undermined his own agenda. Paul Chevedden does not refer to Maalouf, but my critical assessment of the latter is in tune with his observation that in much contemporary Muslim scholarship about the crusades “self-interpretation is achieved, not through a direct understanding of the ‘self’, but by relying on the west’s understanding of the ‘self.’” When this happens, “historical consciousness becomes a borrowed consciousness” and “historiographical self-analysis becomes inseparable from

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<sup>1</sup> Chevedden’s *New History of the Crusades* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003) and “The Islamic Interpretation of the Crusade: A New (Old) Paradigm for Understanding the Crusades,” *Der Islam* 83 (2006): 90-136 further clarify the Islamic perspective on the crusades.

historiographical self-alienation.” (199) Maalouf’s self-analysis, I argue, verges on a similar ‘self-alienation’. Thus, while *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* served a useful purpose and opened the eyes of many Western readers to the Islamic historical tradition at a time when many were not even aware of the existence of this tradition, it is important to note that some aspects of Maalouf’s work may have unexpectedly reinforced some entrenched consumptions of Islamic civilization among the Western reading public.

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