


The 'Muslim Other' in (Late) Medieval Latin Pilgrimage Reports

Origins, Differences, and Functions

Abstract The chapter studies the encounter with the Muslim 'Other' in Latin pilgrimage reports from the 13th to the 15th centuries. It reflects upon the meaning and function of statements about Muslims and Islam and shows how late medieval reports, which increasingly devoted space to describing the faith and cultural practices of other religious groups, became an important medium for conveying 'knowledge' of Islam, adopted from various anti-Islamic writings, to a broader readership. Authors transmitted these negative images of Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad with the aim of strengthening Christian identities. They actively constructed the 'Muslim Other' to outline an idealized image of the 'Christian Self', to prove the superiority of Christianity, and to fashion themselves as pious Christian pilgrims overcoming the obstacles posed by a religious enemy. However, as a result of the reciprocal relationship between the 'Self' and the 'Other', positive images of the 'Muslim Other' were also used to make the reader aware of their own, or their society's, transgressions and lack of faith. Conversely, some encounters between 'Self' and 'Other' reveal glimpses of pragmatic tolerance between Muslims and Christian pilgrims beyond dogmatic cultural borders.

Zusammenfassung Das Kapitel untersucht die Begegnung mit dem muslimischen ‚Anderen‘ in lateinischen Pilgerberichten des 13. bis 15. Jahrhunderts. Es betrachtet die Bedeutung und Funktion von Äußerungen über Muslime und den Islam und zeigt, wie spätmittelalterliche Pilgertexte zu einem wichtigen Medium der Vermittlung von ‚Wissen‘ über den Islam für ein breiteres Publikum wurden, indem

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sie Material aus verschiedenen islampolemischen Schriften übernahmen und der Beschreibung von Glaubensinhalten und kulturellen Praktiken anderer Religionsgruppen immer mehr Raum gaben. Die Autoren vermittelten negative Bilder von Muslimen und dem Propheten Mohammed vorrangig mit dem Ziel, christliche Identitäten zu stärken. Sie konstruierten das ‚muslimische Andere‘ bewusst, um ein idealisiertes Bild des ‚christlichen Selbst‘ zu skizzieren, die Überlegenheit des Christentums zu beweisen und sich als fromme christliche Pilger zu profilieren, die alle Hindernisse des religiösen Feindes überwinden. Im Rahmen der wechselseitigen Beziehung zwischen dem ‚Selbst‘ und dem ‚Anderen‘ wurden jedoch auch positive Bilder des ‚muslimischen Anderen‘ eingesetzt, um den Rezipienten die eigene oder gesamtgesellschaftliche Sündhaftigkeit und Glaubensschwäche bewusst zu machen. Andererseits offenbaren manche Begegnungen zwischen dem ‚Selbst‘ und dem ‚Anderen‘ Einblicke in eine pragmatische Toleranz zwischen Muslimen und christlichen Pilgern über dogmatische Kulturgrenzen hinweg.

1 Introduction

On 1 November of the year 1483, the pilgrim Felix Fabri (1437/38–1502) observed the Muslim festivities on the last day of Ramadan in the city of Alexandria. He reported that the ‘Saracens’ were in high spirits and celebrated the day throughout the city. He himself, however, felt appalled in particular by the seductive dancing of some young women. He thought their movements so obscene and unrestrained that no man could have watched without being overcome by lustful thoughts. According to Fabri, the dancers imitated with their lascivious gestures the brutish habits of their parents. Usually, this should have been an embarrassment to the parents, but instead, the dancers expected to be complimented. It seemed to him that if the dancers managed to arouse the viewers, the dancers’ performance would be worthy of praise similar to – or rather worse than – actors in public plays who performed nefarious acts about gods and humans, as Augustine states in his ‘De civitate Dei’.¹

1 Felix Fabri, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem*, 3 vols., ed. by Konrad Dietrich HASSLER, Stuttgart 1843–1849, vol. 3, pp. 202–203. For (partial) translations of his report into English, French and German, see Felix Fabri (circa 1480–1483 A.D.), [Wanderings in the Holy Land], ed. and trans. by Aubrey STEWART, 2 vols., 4 parts (Palestine Pilgrims’ Text Society vols. 7–10), London 1887–1897. References are made to STEWART’s numbering; e.g. ‘vol. 1,1’ refers to volume I, part i of STEWART’s edition (= PPTS vol. 7); Felix Fabri, *Les*

This is a typical example of describing the 'Muslim Other' in Fabri's 'Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem', the most detailed and extensive late medieval pilgrimage report that we know of. Fabri acted as a general preacher in the Dominican convent of Ulm and wrote the text, which is based on his two journeys to the Holy Land, primarily to enable his fellow brothers to gain a deeper understanding of the Bible. He made extensive use of the available literature and gave an extraordinarily broad picture of the Holy Land and the Near East. His account is also exceptional because Fabri frequently enforced or corrected cultural values through statements that – at first glance – seem to be personal and authentic impressions made during the journey.²

With his description of the dancing women in Alexandria, Fabri sought to prove how Islam had corrupted the Muslims and this had led to abominable practices. Already the term 'Saracens', used by most pilgrims to refer to Muslims, had a demeaning connotation. As Fabri explained in a different passage,³ the 'Saracens' fraudulently claimed the term to hide their descent from Hagar, Abraham's second wife, who was a handmaid and thus of inferior social status in comparison to Sarah (Gen. 16). He was thus in line with many medieval Christian authors who, according to Geraldine HENG, attributed the name "to the enemy, as a sly act of self-naming by the enemy, [which] is thus not only a brilliant lie, but one that brilliantly names the enemy as liars in the very act of naming them as enemies."⁴ Characterizing, moreover, the celebrations and the nightly eating and drinking during Ramadan as immoral practices that serve only the pleasures of the flesh, Fabri intended not only to express his aversion, but also to evoke emotions in his readers and to encourage them to take up a similarly scornful stance towards the Muslims. Fabri's portrayal accentuated the alleged different norms between Christians and Muslims by pointing out that while the Muslims pursued their scandalous festivities, his pilgrim group spent the day (that according to the Christian calendar was also All Saints Day) in appropriate humility, mourning their

errances de Frère Félix, pèlerin en Terre sainte, en Arabie et en Égypte, 1480–1483, ed. by Nicole CHAREYRON and Jean MEYERS (Textes littéraires du Moyen Âge), 9 vols., Montpellier 2000–2021; Felix Fabri, Galeere und Karawane. Pilgerreise ins Heilige Land, zum Sinai und nach Ägypten 1483, ed. by Herbert WIEGANDT, Stuttgart 1996.

- 2 For Fabri's life and works, see Kathryn BEEBE, *Pilgrim & Preacher. The Audiences and Observant Spirituality of Friar Felix Fabri (1437/8–1502)*, Oxford 2014; Stefan SCHRÖDER, *Zwischen Christentum und Islam. Kulturelle Grenzen in den spätmittelalterlichen Pilgerberichten des Felix Fabri*, Berlin 2009; Folker REICHERT and Alexander ROSENSTOCK (eds.), *Die Welt des Frater Felix Fabri*, Weißhorn 2018.
- 3 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 94–95.
- 4 Geraldine HENG, *War / Empire: Race Figures in the International Contest: The Islamic 'Saracen'*, in: EAD., *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2018, pp. 110–180, here p. 112. For the etymology of the term see Ekkehart ROTTER, *Sarazenen*, in: *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, vol. 26 (2004), pp. 461–465; John V. TOLAN, *Saracens. Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York 2002, pp. 10–12. For a critical and fitting assessment of the use of the term in research literature see Shokoofeh RAJABZADEH, *The Depoliticized Saracen and Muslim Erasure*, in: *Literature Compass* 16,9–10 (2019), pp. 1–8.

most high-ranking fellow, who died the night before.⁵ The description of the death and burial of Count John of Solms and of the pilgrims' grief increases the sharp contrast between the pious Christian pilgrims and the unrestrained rejoicing Muslims. Fabri, moreover, alluded to the norms of his Christian faith, where the period of fasting was supposed to serve inner purification and catharsis. According to Fabri, the Muslims, in contrast, perverted this season into its total opposite. In this way, Fabri took up a familiar stereotype of the 'Muslim Other' outlined in numerous polemical writings by medieval Christian authors.⁶

It was only through such vivid comparisons with Fabri's own and commonly held Christian beliefs that the described practices of the Muslims were defined as 'Other' – and in this case were vehemently dismissed. By accentuating that he was an eyewitness to the celebrations, he sought to verify this stereotype and thus contributed to building or to strengthening a cultural border between Christians and infidels. The debauchery of the 'Muslim Other' is juxtaposed to the 'Christian Self', since Fabri depicts himself as unshaken by the temptations of the foreign and exotic surroundings. His description transmits the message that, as a devout pilgrim, Fabri acted ideally and fulfilled the expectation of behaving according to his own cultural norms. Last but not least, by referring to Augustine he displays his learnedness and finds support for the disapproval of public plays, or at least of the pagan theatrical compositions described by Augustine's 'City of God'.⁷ The scene observed in Alexandria can therefore also be seen as a moral reminder to the readers of Fabri's report to amend comparable wrongdoings in the Christian world.

One might still wonder, however, why Fabri devoted so much space to describing the customs of the Muslims in the first place? What role do such passages have in a travelogue to the Holy Land that should focus foremost on the description of the sacred places visited during the journey? And are Fabri's descriptions representative of the genre of the pilgrimage report as a whole? The aim of this chapter is to analytically study the encounter with the 'Muslim Other' in the genre of Latin pilgrimage reports to the Holy Land and to reflect upon the meaning of statements on Muslims and their faith.

This will be done by introducing the reciprocal relationship between the 'Other' and the 'Self' (section 2), before focusing on the 'Muslim Other' and providing a rough

5 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 203.

6 The literature on medieval images of the 'Muslim Other' is vast. For further references, see TOLAN (note 4); ID., *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European eyes in the Middle Ages*, Gainesville 2013; Norman DANIEL, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, Edinburgh 1960; Michelina DI CESARE, *The Pseudo-Historical Image of the Prophet Muhammad in Medieval Latin Literature: A Repertory*, Berlin 2012.

7 Fabri referred to chapter 32 of the first book, but what actually comes closer to his rendering is chapter 4 of the second book. See Saint Augustine, *City of God. Books I–VII* (Writings of Saint Augustine 6), Washington 2008, pp. 68–69 and 79–80. For Augustine's context see Jennifer HERDT, *The Theater of the Virtues: Augustine's Critique of Pagan Mimesis*, in: James WETZEL (ed.), *Augustine's City of God. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge 2012, pp. 111–129.

overview of the parallels and dissimilarities in the reports and of how material on Islam and the Muslims from further sources was utilized and elaborated over time (section 3). The relation of Latin pilgrimage reports to accounts written in the vernacular, moreover, shows that the writers adjusted the texts to the audiences they wanted to address (section 4). Largely based on Fabri's 'Evagatorium', I then outline the different functions of the 'Muslim Other' that range from depicting the Muslims as a hostile and mortal enemy, as misguided and backward people, or as a tool sent by God to punish the Christians for their sins, to the noble 'Muslim Other' mirroring the failures of the 'Christian Self' at home and to a people living in an alluring, exotic environment (section 5). Employing the 'Muslim Other' for these different purposes has the overall intention of informing and educating the reader, providing the intended audiences with travel instructions, moral guidelines, and entertaining tales. The travel reports, however, also include statements that cannot be reduced to one specific objective with regard to the communication circuits between the authors of a pilgrimage report and its intended readership. They might give a glimpse of the relations between the pilgrims and the Muslims in 'real life' and thus point to a cultural encounter that, similar to contact systems of trade and diplomacy, is less defined by religious differences (section 6).

2 The 'Other' and the 'Self' in Pilgrimage Reports

According to the definition of J.-F. STASZAK, "[O]therness is the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group ('Us', the 'Self') constructs one or many dominated out-groups ('Them', the 'Other') by stigmatizing a difference – real or imagined – presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination."⁸ The initial in-group in our case is the author⁹ of a pilgrimage report and the readers, the intended audiences that he wished to address. The out-groups consist of, first, all the persons a pilgrim encountered on his journey or, more precisely, all the persons the author transforming the traveller's experiences into a written travelogue considered and referred to as somehow different. These include fellow travellers and other Catholic Christians the pilgrims met for instance in Venice (usually the starting point for the passage to the Holy Land in late medieval times),¹⁰ followers of other

8 Jean-François STASZAK, *Other / Otherness*, in: *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, vol. 8 (2009), pp. 43–47, here p. 42.

9 The author does not necessarily have to be the traveller. In other cases, one has to differentiate between the author of a report and scribes who not only copied but also redacted and/or translated the text, leading sometimes to considerable changes. In the following, the male form of the personal pronoun is used for the author, even though a few women are known (such as Margery Kempe) who at least participated in the process of writing a pilgrimage report.

10 For Venice and the depiction of the Venetians in the reports, see Andrea DENKE, *Venedig als Station und Erlebnis auf den Reisen der Jerusalempilger im späten Mittelalter* (Historegio 4), Remshalden 2001; SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 104–125 and 205–225.

Christian denominations such as Greek Orthodox Christians and several miaphysitic Christians (e.g. Syrian Orthodox, Ethiopian, and Coptic Christians), as well as Jews and Muslims. It includes persons of different social rank as well as ethnic groups, ranging from people coming from other European regions to nomadic Bedouins, black-skinned people from Africa, and Mongols.

In order to describe the encounters in a comprehensible way for the recipients of his text, the author of a pilgrimage report had to use the 'Self' as a starting point. He compared the physical appearances, languages, religious customs, and social practices experienced on the way with his own culture.¹¹ And in order to explain the cultural encounters, the author relied on textual conventions, metaphors, and analogies that had to be familiar to the readers. As Michael HARBSMEIER has pointed out, travelogues are always to be read as a cultural self-portrait of the narrator.¹² The experiences of 'Otherness' displayed in pilgrimage reports and travel reports in general are, therefore, filtered by the conditions, attitudes, values, and learning of the native culture of the authors.¹³ They directed the view both of the traveller during his journey and of the writer who, after the return, composed a narrative of the journey with an intended audience in mind. In this discursive and reciprocal process of outlining parallels and differences, the 'Self' and the 'Other' are defined. The author inevitably generated cultural borders between what was regarded as familiar and ordinary and what has been classified as unknown, different, or even abnormal. Constructing and using the 'Other' based on the conceptual framework of the 'Self' means, however, that the author was seldom able to see the 'Other' as an autonomous object that is based on its own distinctive principles.

How the 'Self' and the 'Other' were displayed in the reports was shaped by various further factors. On the one hand, it depended on the settings in which a cultural

11 For a seminal theoretical framework of the reciprocal relation between the 'Other' and the 'Self' in pre-modern historiographical sources, see François HARTOG, *The Mirror of Herodotus. The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History* (The New Historicism 5), Berkeley 1988.

12 Michael HARBSMEIER, *Reisebeschreibungen als mentalitätsgeschichtliche Quellen. Überlegungen zu einer historisch-anthropologischen Untersuchung frühneuzeitlicher deutscher Reisebeschreibungen*, in: Antoni MAĆZAK and Hans Jürgen TEUTEBERG (eds.), *Reiseberichte als Quellen europäischer Kulturgeschichte. Aufgaben und Möglichkeiten der historischen Reiseforschung* (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 21), Wolfenbüttel 1982, pp. 1–31, here pp. 6–7.

13 Hans Erich BÖDEKER, Arnd BAUERKÄMPER and Bernhard STRUCK, *Einleitung. Reisen als kulturelle Praxis*, in: Arnd BAUERKÄMPER, Hans Erich BÖDEKER and Bernhard STRUCK (eds.), *Die Welt erfahren. Reisen als kulturelle Begegnung von 1780 bis heute*, Frankfurt a. M., New York 2004, pp. 9–30, here p. 15; Peter J. BRENNER, *Die Erfahrung der Fremde. Zur Entwicklung einer Wahrnehmungsform in der Geschichte des Reiseberichts*, in: ID. (ed.), *Der Reisebericht. Die Entwicklung einer Gattung in der deutschen Literatur*, Frankfurt a. M. 1989, pp. 14–49, here p. 15. See also Jürgen OSTERHAMMEL, *Distanzerfahrung. Darstellungsweisen des Fremden im 18. Jahrhundert*, in: Hans-Joachim KÖNIG (ed.), *Der europäische Beobachter außereuropäischer Kulturen. Zur Problematik der Wirklichkeitswahrnehmung* (Zeitschrift für historische Forschung. Beiheft 7), Berlin 1989, pp. 9–42, here p. 31: "Repräsentationen des Fremden [sind] nie photographisch exakte ‚Bilder‘, sondern immer durch vorgängige Wahrnehmungsraaster gebrochene Konstrukte."

encounter took place. Given that most of the late medieval pilgrims who visited the sacred places stayed only briefly in the Holy Land, travelled in groups, and were guided by Franciscan monks and escorted by Mamluks, few contact situations with the local population occurred in the first place. And if there was cultural contact, it often took place in an atmosphere of mutual distrust that sometimes led to insults, harassments, and violent attacks on both sides.¹⁴ The Franciscan guardians, moreover, warned against and/or prohibited the pilgrims from actively engaging with the locals, particularly non-Christians, and played an important role in shaping the pilgrims' views about the 'Other' both by accompanying the pilgrims to the sacred places (often now controlled by Muslims) and by giving them access to their library that included authoritative works on Islam and further religious communities living in the Holy Land.¹⁵ On the other hand, the definition of the 'Self' and the 'Other' depended on the narrator's individual education, his knowledge, and the capacity to express in written form what he had experienced. He described what he had seen and heard on the way by taking into account available texts by other travellers and scholars that offered additional material on the 'Other'. In purely practical ways, it also depended on whether the traveller was able to make notes during the voyage that could be used as a foundation for writing a report even several years after the actual pilgrimage.

In addition, the motives for writing as well as the expectations of the intended readers had an effect on shaping the travelogue and, consequently, the images of the 'Self' and the 'Other'. When Felix Fabri, for instance, promoted the idea that his text should be copied and made available for friars at other monasteries (including Franciscan convents),¹⁶ he wrote in a more personal style and included some intimate details of his journey. Therefore, he shared his supposed feelings, ranging from fear and awe to joy and wonder, with his readers, turning himself into a protagonist of the journey who could be used as a role model of a pilgrim who accomplished the task of reaching the Holy Land, but who was on numerous occasions tested on his way, struggling and sometimes failing with regard to the moral and spiritual dimension of a pilgrimage. Bernhard of Breidenbach (c. 1434/40–1497), in contrast, decided from the start to publish his 'Peregrinatio in Terra Sanctam' in print.¹⁷ Addressing much broader reading circles, he left out most of his personal cultural encounters and

14 Poignantly characterized by Folker REICHERT as "eine Art Kleinkrieg mit ‚schmutzigen Riten“". See Folker REICHERT, *Pilger und Muslime im Heiligen Land. Formen des Kulturkonflikts im späten Mittelalter*, in: Burckhard DÜCKER and Rolf KLOEPFER (eds.), *Kritik und Geschichte der Intoleranz*, Heidelberg 2000, pp. 3–21, here p. 12.

15 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, pp. 213–214; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, pp. 249–250. For the role of the Franciscans, see also Michele CAMPOPIANO, *Islam, Jews and Eastern Christianity in Late Medieval Pilgrims' Guidebooks: Some Examples from the Franciscan Convent of Mount Zion*, in: *Al-Masāq* 24,1 (2012), pp. 75–89.

16 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 5.

17 Bernhard of Breidenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam*, Mainz 1486; Id., *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam. Frühneuhochdeutscher Text und Übersetzung*, ed. by Isolde MOZER, Berlin, New York 2010.

established a more official tone to his text, probably to corroborate the status of his report as an authoritative overview of the Holy Land. In addition, he combined his travelogue with a call for reforms and for a new Crusade.¹⁸ Accordingly, the cultural encounter with the 'Other' was displayed differently and dissimilarities with the 'Self' were sometimes even fabricated in order to influence the reader's understanding and expectations in particular ways.¹⁹

As a result of the various factors, the author of a pilgrimage report was flexible in defining the in- and out-groups and in drawing cultural borders. The in-group could at times embrace 'Christianitas' as a whole, the people of a certain 'nation', region, or city, or just include the small 'imagined community' (Benedict ANDERSON) of the travel group.²⁰ Defining in- and out-groups involves simplifications and socially deep-anchored stereotypes often understood as fixed and inherent characteristics. They frequently include negative prejudices, presenting the out-groups as inferior, roguish, or hostile in order to create a positive identity for the in-group.²¹ Such extreme notions in particular make it obvious that the process of 'Othering' also contributes to the formation of 'emotional communities' (Barbara H. ROSENWEIN).²² The topics used in the process of 'Othering' the out-groups (e.g. clothing, eating habits, sexuality, gender roles, forms of worshipping) recurrently spark emotional reactions in the reader, and were deliberately intended to do so. Being appalled by the customs of the out-groups contributed to strengthening the identity of the 'Self'. At the same time, references to the in-groups and the native country could invoke delightful or nostalgic feelings.

18 For further references see Stefan SCHRÖDER, *Between Pilgrimage and Reform: Bernhard of Breidenbach's Travelogue to the Holy Land (1486) as Printed Paradigm, Mirror of Princes and Memory of the Crusades*, in: Teemu IMMONEN and Gabriele MÜLLER-OBERHÄUSER (eds.), *Golden Leaves and Burned Books: Religious Reform and Conflict in the Long European Reformation (Cultural History – Kulttuurihistoria 16)*, Turku 2020, pp. 219–263.

19 Friedrich WOLFZETTEL, *Zum Problem mythischer Strukturen im Reisebericht*, in: Xenja VON ERTZDORFF, Gerhard GIESEMANN and Rudolf SCHULZ (eds.), *Erkundung und Beschreibung der Welt. Zur Poetik der Reise- und Länderberichte (Chloe. Beihefte zum Daphnis 34)*, Amsterdam, New York 2003, pp. 3–30, here p. 4.

20 Benedict ANDERSON, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 1983. I use his term in a broader sense beyond his focus on the rise and use of nationalism in (early) modern times, hence arguing that there is always an imagined ideal community at the very beginning of the process to define its identity in order to unite a large group of people who do not know each other face to face.

21 For definitions of terms such as identity, stereotype and prejudice, see Alois HAHN, 'Partizipative' Identitäten, in: Herfried MÜNKLER and Bernd LADWIG (eds.), *Furcht und Faszination. Facetten der Fremdheit*, Berlin 1997, pp. 115–158; Klaus ROTH, 'Bilder in den Köpfen'. Stereotypen, Mythen, Identitäten aus ethnologischer Sicht, in: Valeria HEUBERGER, Arnold SUPPAN and Elisabeth VYSLONZIL (eds.), *Das Bild vom Anderen. Identitäten, Mentalitäten, Mythen und Stereotypen in multiethnischen europäischen Regionen*, Frankfurt a. M. et al. 1999, pp. 21–43.

22 Barbara H. ROSENWEIN, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, Ithaca NY 2006. See also VALTROVÁ in this volume.

As Jürgen OSTERHAMMEL has pointed out in the context of analysing early modern sources, various thematic areas or discourses can generally be utilized to draw cultural borders between the 'Self' and the 'Other': (1) ethnography, (2) theology, (3) law and politics, (4) history, and (5) biology and 'race'.²³ In regard to pilgrimage reports, the topic of religion is the most prominent one, but one can find examples for all other discourses as well. The dominance of drawing cultural differences along religious borders is not necessarily because most of the authors – with few exceptions – were clerics, but because their status as Christian pilgrims and their references to the places and events most essential for their faith required a discussion of the differences between Latin Christianity and all belief systems that have been classified as different. Nonetheless, the 'Other' and the 'Self' did not have to form a black-and-white dichotomy between positively connoted aspects of the 'Self' opposed to negative features of the 'Other'. Despite seeing and describing the out-groups usually as static and monolithic entities, the 'Other' always "remains ambiguous in value and meaning. It is both desired and denied. The 'Other' can be uncanny, terrifying, and fascinating" at the same time.²⁴ The context of the encounter and the different uses of the 'Other' did not necessarily result in creating antagonistic binaries. In addition, the pilgrims did not only contrast the 'Others' with the in-group, but also compared them with each other and sometimes ranked them in a hierarchical way according to their assigned level of cultural evolution and/or physical attributes (e.g. inferior or barbaric) and their religion (e.g. pagan or heretic).²⁵

The spatial distance between the living places of the in- and the out-groups is an important factor in assessing the 'Other'. Encountering the nomadic Bedouins for the first time, Fabri explicitly stated that "they were fierce, savage, and terrible to look upon" and concluded that in comparison to "our [sic] Moors and Saracens, whom hitherto we had thought to be scarce human, we regarded the latter as civilized, pious men, almost the same as ourselves".²⁶ Seeing a group of people he classified as Mongols being offered for sale at a slave market in Cairo, he determined that they were as ugly as beasts and the most repellent among all the people living in the East.²⁷

Based on the available 'knowledge' of the in-group, the encounter with out-groups can thus at times range from a 'minor' and 'medium' to a 'vast transcendence'

23 Jürgen OSTERHAMMEL, *Kulturelle Grenzen in der Expansion Europas*, in: *Saeculum* 46,1 (1995), pp. 101–138, here p. 136.

24 Pamela Sue ANDERSON, *The Other*, in: Nicholas ADAMS, George PATTISON and Graham WARD (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Theology and Modern European Thought*, Oxford 2013, pp. 83–104, here p. 96.

25 Steam bath: Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 218, and vol. 2, p. 368; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, p. 256, and vol. 2,2, pp. 437–438. On Muslims: Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 323; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,2, p. 384.

26 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 227; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, p. 268.

27 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 40.

of ‘Otherness’.²⁸ This assumed that the social order, lifestyle, and system of values of other Europeans was more familiar than the ‘Muslim Other’, and that the ‘Muslim Other’ after centuries of interaction was, in turn, more familiar than that of the ‘Mongol Other’ or even the ‘monstrous races’ located at the edges of the world. In following and outlining images developed in classic Greek and Roman sources, medieval geographic and cartographical works as well as reports of travel to the Far East frequently implied a more fundamental experience of ‘Otherness’ by describing these regions as being populated by ferocious beasts and exotic people that barely seemed human.²⁹ However, the increasing spatial distance between the native country of the travellers and the homelands of other cultures does not always indicate a cultural gap between the civilized ‘West’ and the barbaric and marvellous ‘East’. The ‘East’ was where the Christian kingdom of Prester John was located, who was believed to be coming to the aid of Christians fighting the infidels. The ‘East’ was also where China was situated, described for example by Marco Polo as a country of high culture and great wealth. The pilgrims occasionally referred to Asia and its inhabitants to place the Holy Land, as one particular region of this continent, in space and time. But it is the ‘Muslim Other’ that is given specific attention in several late medieval Latin reports.

3 The ‘Muslim Other’ in Latin Pilgrimage Reports: Topics, Sources, and Structure

Pilgrimage reports from the early and high medieval times often consist of just a description of holy places with little information about the actual journey, the conditions under which it took place, and the cultural encounters of the traveller. This, however, changed in later medieval times. While the meaning of the holy places and the indulgences to be achieved at these sites continue to form the core of the texts, some narrators started to include more detailed and vivid descriptions of all aspects of

28 Marina MÜNKLER and Werner RÖCKE, *Der ordo-Gedanke und die Hermeneutik des Fremden im Mittelalter. Die Auseinandersetzung mit den monströsen Völkern des Erdrandes*, in: Herfried MÜNKLER (ed.), *Die Herausforderung durch das Fremde (Interdisziplinäre Arbeitsgruppen, Forschungsberichte 5)*, Berlin 1998, pp. 701–766, here pp. 714–715.

29 This is the subject of numerous publications. See, with further references, Marina MÜNKLER, *Erfahrung des Fremden. Die Beschreibung Ostasiens in den Augenzeugenberichten des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 2000; EAD., *Experiencing Strangeness: Monstrous People on the Edge of the World as Depicted on Medieval *Mappae mundi**, in: *The Medieval History Journal* 5 (2002), pp. 195–222; Kim M. PHILLIPS, *Before Orientalism. Asian Peoples and Cultures in European Travel Writing, 1245–1510*, Philadelphia 2014; Folker REICHERT, *Begegnungen mit China. Die Entdeckung Ostasiens im Mittelalter (Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters 15)*, Sigmaringen 1992; Jean E. JOST, *The Exotic and Fabulous East in The Travels of Sir John Mandeville: Understated Authenticity*, in: Albrecht CLASSEN and Marilyn SANDIDGE (eds.), *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World*, Berlin 2013, pp. 575–594; Rudolf WITTKOWER, *Marvels of the East. A Study in the History of Monsters*, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), pp. 159–197.

the journey. This transformation reflects the changing motives for writing an account of the journey to the Holy Land as well as the changing expectations of the intended audiences. The reports still had to enable the reader to contemplate scripture and to envision Christ's deeds and passion. And many late medieval pilgrim texts relating to the journey to the Holy Land focus simply on the description of the sacred sites.³⁰ But there was also a demand to provide information on the Holy Land's geography, fauna and flora, history, and present state. The reports were expected to give helpful instructions to travellers who planned to embark on such an enterprise themselves. Through devoting more space to the actual travels, including obstacles and dangerous moments, the pilgrims intended to document the success of the journey and to prove their piety and bravery. Finally, the authors wanted to educate and entertain their audiences, whereas the latter expected both spiritual and moral guidance while also wanting to learn more about alien and exotic worlds abroad.

This move from 'Holy Geography' to 'Palestinography' or rather 'ethnography'³¹ led to considering the beliefs, demeanour, and customs of people living overseas. As the ruling and probably largest group of the population living in the Holy Land, Muslims were mentioned in many reports, since the encounter with them became an impacting factor that could define the outcome of the pilgrimage. Moreover, influenced by the extensive anti-Islamic literature outlined over the centuries and the crusading rhetoric that was vastly invigorated in the context of the expanding Ottoman Empire and specifically after the capture of Constantinople in 1453,³² some pilgrims felt the need to include elaborate descriptions of the followers of Islam and to depict the 'Muslim Other' as the most dangerous antagonist to the 'Christian Self'. Among the Latin pilgrimage reports at the end of the 13th and 14th centuries providing detailed information about the 'Muslim Other' are, for instance, the texts of Burchard of Mount Sion (travelling in the 1280s), Riccoldo of Monte Croce (c. 1288–1302), Symon Semeonis (1323), Jacobo of Verona (c. 1335), and the Vulgate Latin version of the famous 'Book' of the enigmatic John Mandeville. Of the 15th-century pilgrims to the Holy Land, the Latin reports of Jean Adorno (travelling in 1470), Alessandro Ariosto

30 For the great variety of the genre pilgrim texts and their narrative structures see Susanna FISCHER, *Erzählte Bewegung. Narrationsstrategien und Funktionsweisen lateinischer Pilgertexte (4.–15. Jahrhundert)* (Mittellateinische Studien und Texte 52), Leiden 2019.

31 See Aryeh GRABOIS, *Islam and Muslims as Seen by Christian Pilgrims in Palestine in the Thirteenth Century*, in: *Asian and African Studies* 20,3 (1986), pp. 309–327, here p. 312; Sylvia SCHEIN, *From 'Holy Geography' to 'Ethnography'. 'Otherness' in the Descriptions of the Holy Land in the Middle Ages*, in: Ilana ZINGUER (ed.), *Miroirs de l'altérité et voyages au Proche-Orient. Colloque International de l'Institut d'Histoire et de Civilisation Françaises de l'Université de Haïfa*, 1987, Geneva 1991, pp. 115–122, here p. 117.

32 For the manifold literature on the Turkish Fear and the demonization of the Turk see with further references Almut HÖFERT, *Turcica*, in: David THOMAS and John CHESWORTH (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. 7: *Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America (1500–1600)*, Leiden, Boston 2015, pp. 516–531; Paul SRODECKI, *Antemurale Christianitatis. Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Historische Studien 508), Husum 2015.

(c. 1475–1478), Paul Walther of Guglingen (1481), Felix Fabri (1480 and 1483), and Bernhard of Breidenbach (1483) stand out for including whole chapters on Islam and Muslims. Further Latin reports such as those by William of Boldensele (c. 1334), Ludolf of Sudheim (c. 1336), and William Tzewers (1478) mention Muslims and their beliefs briefly in some passages.³³ Frequently, there are intertextual relations between these reports, with authors shaping their texts by copying parts, taking up and expanding topics, or by just alluding to images and ideas.

The earliest report known that offered a more detailed image of the ‘Muslim Other’ was written by Thietmar, a German monk, who travelled to the Holy Land around 1217. With his references to Ramadan fasts, the Hajj, Mecca and the tomb of Muhammad, daily prayers and washing rituals, the veiling of women in public, Muslims’ hidden consumption of wine, polygamy and images of paradise, Thietmar’s account already comprised many aspects recurrently discussed in the later reports.³⁴ Subsequent pilgrims also included pseudo-biographical descriptions of the Prophet’s life and death and thus told about the origin and history of Islam. Moreover, they discussed the Qur’an and Islamic law, the shape of mosques and minarets, as well as the call to prayer, the Arabic language and/or alphabet, the Muslims’ ‘nature’, their clothing and eating habits (e.g. halal butchering, prohibition on eating pork, readymade food kitchens), and the custom of circumcision. In addition, they differentiated between separate groups of Muslims. The term ‘Saracens’ was used not only to refer to all Muslims, but also to separate the settled population living within or around urban centres from the ‘Arabs’ as the nomadic Bedouins, the ‘Mamluks’ as the ruling elite in Egypt and the Holy Land, and the ‘Turks’ or ‘Turkomans’ as the subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Sometimes, the pilgrims also showed some understanding of the distinct religious groups and movements of Islam (e.g. Sunnis and Shiites, Sufis) and included detailed descriptions of political, economic, and social structures (e.g. on the Sultan and his court, the strength and training of the Mamluk army, trade with spices and exotic animals, marriage and divorce, inheritance law).

The pilgrims based their descriptions on observations made during their journey and by referring to oral sources (e.g. local Franciscans, merchants, translators, guides, and Mamluks from European countries who converted to Islam).³⁵ But written texts that shaped the image of the ‘Muslim Other’ had a considerable impact on

33 With a systematic search, more reports dealing with the ‘Muslim Other’ written by authors from further geographic regions could be added to the list. Given the loss of sources over time and the state of current research on pilgrim texts, the focus on sources from Italian and German speaking areas does not reflect a more or lesser interest in the ‘Muslim Other’ in other parts of Europe.

34 Thietmar, *Peregrinatio: ad fidem codicis Hamburgensis*, ed. by J. C. M. LAURENT, Hamburg 1857; Thietmar, *Peregrinatio. Pilgerreise nach Palästina und auf den Sinai den Jahren 1217/1218*, ed. by U. KOPPITZ, in: *Concilium medii aevi* 14 (2011), pp. 121–221; DI CESARE (note 6), pp. 206–208.

35 Kristian BOSSELMANN-CYRAN, *Dolmetscher und Dragomane in Palästina und Ägypten. Über sprachkundige Galeerenklaven, Renegaten und Mamluken im ausgehenden Mittelalter*, in: *Das Mittelalter* 2,1 (1997), pp. 47–65.

the pilgrims' writings as well, forming another dimension of inter-, para-, hyper-, and meta-textual references within the corpus of pilgrim texts. In general, these sources comprise Crusade chronicles, calls for a Crusade, religious treatises, and the *chansons de geste* that describe the cultural encounter with the Muslims in the context of chivalric and courtly values. Thietmar was influenced, for instance, by Burchard of Strasbourg's (d. after 1194) 'Itinerarium' describing a diplomatic mission to Egypt in 1175.³⁶ Burchard of Mount Sion might have been aware of Thietmar but instead followed – like many later pilgrims – the popular 'Historia Orientalis' of Jacques de Vitry (d. 1240).³⁷ He stated that he also studied the Qur'an, but in fact it is unlikely he could read Arabic, in contrast to Riccoldo, who learned the language properly during his stay in Baghdad and was able to study the holy book in its original language.³⁸ Like Symon Semeonis, Burchard might have relied on the first Latin translation commissioned by Petrus Venerabilis in the first half of the 12th century.³⁹

The exhaustive sections dealing with Islam and the Muslims in Breidenbach's 'Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam' were based on multiple sources and were probably not written by Breidenbach himself, but by the Dominican Martin Rath.⁴⁰ One main source for them was the pilgrimage report of Paul Walther of Guglingen, whose pseudo-biographical description of Muhammad's life shares similarities with the version of Breidenbach/Rath.⁴¹ Yet ultimately, both reports were also based on the

36 On Thietmar's depiction of the Muslims, see Philip BOOTH, *Thietmar. Person, Place and Text in Thirteenth-Century Holy Land Pilgrimage*, Ph.D. Diss. University of Lancaster, 2017, pp. 224–236.

37 For Burchard's report and his sources, see Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, ed. by John R. BARTLETT, Oxford, New York 2019, pp. cxxvi–cxxxv; Jonathan RUBIN, *Burchard of Mount Sion's Descriptio Terrae Sanctae: A Newly Discovered Extended Version*, in: *Crusades* (2014), pp. 173–190; *Id.*, *A Missing Link in European Travel Literature: Burchard of Mount Sion's Description of Egypt*, in: *Mediterranea. International Journal on the Transfer of Knowledge* 3 (2018), pp. 55–90.

38 Riccoldo of Monte Croce, *Pérégrination en Terre Sainte et au Proche Orient: Texte latin et traduction. Lettres sur la chute de Saint-Jean d'Acre*. Traduction, ed. and tr. by René KAPPLER (*Textes et traductions des classiques français du Moyen Âge* 4), Paris 1997; Rita GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq. Riccoldo da Montecroce's Encounter with Islam* (*Medieval Voyaging* 1), Turnhout 2012. For his language abilities see Thomas E. BURMAN, *How an Italian Friar Read his Arabic Qur'an*, in: *Dante Studies* 125 (2007), pp. 89–105; *Id.*, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1140–1560*, Philadelphia 2007.

39 Symon Semeonis, *Itinerarium Symonis Semeonis ab Hybernia ad Terram Sanctam*, ed. by Mario ESPOSITO, Dublin 1960, p. 12.

40 Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio', ed. MOZER (note 17). The information is given by Felix Fabri, who suggested that Breidenbach's whole travelogue was written by Rath. Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, pp. 347, 353.

41 For the standard edition of the report see Paul Walther of Guglingen, *Fratris Pauli Waltheri Guglingensis Itinerarium in Terram Sanctam et ad Sanctam Catharinam*, ed. by Matthias SOLLWECK (*Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart* 192), Tübingen 1892. However, SOLLWECK omitted Paul Walther of Guglingen's statements on Islam (see p. 293) as given in the sole known manuscript Neuburg an der Donau, Staatliche Bibliothek, 04/Hs. INR 10, pp. 281–303.

‘Speculum maius’ of Vincent of Beauvais (d. c. 1264) and the ‘Legenda aurea’ of Jacobus of Voragine (d. 1298) who, in turn, extracted their chapters on the Prophet’s life from the Jewish convert Petrus Alfonsi’s (11/12th cent.) ‘Dialogus contra Iudaeus’. This extremely influential dialogue between his former ‘Jewish Self’ Moses and his ‘Christian Self’ Petrus includes a chapter in which Moses asks Petrus why he did not convert to Islam rather than Christianity. This is the starting point for Petrus to give a negative assessment of Muhammad’s life followed by a detailed discussion of the theological differences between the two faiths.⁴² Breidenbach/Rath went beyond Guglingen and other authors of pilgrimage reports by making stronger use of this latter part as well. They transformed Petrus Alfonsi’s dialogue into a scholastic treatise in which they systematically rebutted the doctrines of the Qur’an in 12 lengthy subchapters.

As the case of Breidenbach/Rath shows, most authors collected their sources and wrote up their experiences after they returned from the Holy Land. However, some pilgrims, like Paul Walther of Guglingen and Alessandro Ariosto a few years earlier, might have already gathered material during the journey while exploring the Franciscan library in Jerusalem.⁴³ In addition, Ariosto probably relied on a Latin redaction of ‘The Book of John Mandeville’.⁴⁴ Ariosto’s second major work, a geographical and historical description of the Holy Land (‘Topographia Terrae Promissionis’) became a main source for William Tzewers’s report.⁴⁵ Felix Fabri, finally, had knowledge of all seminal works on the topic, including Breidenbach’s report, Petrus Alfonsi’s ‘Dialogus’, the treatise of George of Hungary on the Turks, and Alphonso de Spina’s (d. c. 1491) ‘Fortalitium fidei’. Moreover, having written the ‘Evagatorium’, Fabri came across the ‘Cibratio alcorano’ of Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1461) and worked in additional information on the Qur’an in the margins of his manuscript.⁴⁶ The pilgrims certainly utilized even more anti-Islamic texts circulating at the time, but that must be examined case by case in a thorough comparison.

However, the writers of the pilgrimage reports did not follow their sources closely at all times. In contrast, they were quite creative in extracting and reconfiguring the information they found in written sources with their experiences.

42 Petrus Alfonsi, *Dialogus*, ed. by Carmen CARDELLE DE HARTMANN, Darko SENKOVIV and Thomas ZIEGLER, Florence 2019. For more on this work see John V. TOLAN, Petrus Alfonsi, in: David THOMAS and Alex MALLETT (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 3 (1050–1200), Leiden, Boston 2011, pp. 356–362.

43 For the Franciscan library in Jerusalem, see Michele CAMPOPIANO, St. Francis and the Sultan. The Franciscans and the Holy Land (14th–17th centuries), in: *The Muslim World* 109,1/2 (2019), pp. 79–89.

44 Alessandro Ariosto, *Itinerarium* (1476–1479), ed. by Fabio ULIANA (Oltramare 12), Alessandria 2007. Fabio ULIANA, *Sulle fonti dell’ ‘Itinerarium’ di Alessandro Ariosto*, in: *Levia Gravia* 4 (2002), pp. 55–65, here pp. 62–64.

45 William Tzewers, *Itinerarius terre sancte*, ed. and trans. by Gritje HARTMANN (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 33), Wiesbaden 2004.

46 For references, see SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 281–282.

Nonetheless, by incorporating such 'knowledge' the pilgrims contributed to popularizing the images of the 'Muslim Other' given in these sources. Since some of the reports were widely copied as well, they became an important starting place for readers interested in the topic. Thietmar's report, for instance, is extant in 11 manuscripts; Burchard's 'Descriptio' in the long version that includes the statements on the 'Muslim Other' is preserved in more than 60 copies and was printed several times up to the 17th century. It influenced many later pilgrims, including Felix Fabri, who claims that he took Burchard's text with him when travelling to the Holy Land.⁴⁷ Bernhard of Breidenbach's report was published in print in 1486, followed by a German translation some months later, a Dutch version in 1488 and several later editions including translations into French and Spanish.⁴⁸ Not all reports, of course, were widely received. Riccoldo's 'Liber peregrinationis' is known in seven manuscripts, which can be interpreted as a notable distribution. But it was his 'Liber contra legem sarracenorum', known from 28 manuscripts, that was more significant in the end. According to Thomas E. BURMAN, it was "probably the most influential Latin treatise against Islam in the later Middle Ages", being printed several times and translated into different languages, among them a German translation by Martin Luther.⁴⁹ The text of Jacobo of Verona, in contrast, seems to have been largely unknown, since it survives in only two copies and a German translation preserved in two manuscripts from the 15th century.⁵⁰ The 'Itinerarium' of Ariosto equally survived in three copies, Jean Adorno's report in two.⁵¹ Only a single and partly fragmented manuscript each is known of the reports of Symon Semeonis and Paul Walther of Guglingen.

Looking at the reports more closely reveals differences in the images of the 'Muslim Other' that result not only from the factors outlined above and the particular sources that have been used. They also differ in terms of structure and emphasis. Thietmar's and Symon Semeonis's references to Muhammad, Islam, and Muslims are largely part of chapters in which they referred to their stays at Damascus (Thietmar) and at Alexandria and Cairo (Symon Semeonis).⁵² Burchard of Mount

47 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 382–383; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,2, pp. 477–478.

48 Hugh William DAVIES, Bernhard von Breydenbach and his Journey to the Holy Land, 1483–4: A Bibliography, London 1911.

49 Thomas E. BURMAN, Riccoldo da Monte di Croce, in: David THOMAS and Alex MALLETT (eds.), Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, vol. 4 (1200–1350), Leiden, Boston 2012, pp. 678–691, here p. 689.

50 Jacobo of Verona, Liber peregrinationis, ed. by Ugo MONNERET DE VILLARD (Nuovo Ramusio 1), Rome 1950.

51 Jean Adorno, Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471), ed. by Jacques HEERS and Georgette DE GROËR (Sources d'histoire médiévale), Paris 1978, pp. 18–20.

52 Thietmar, 'Peregrinatio', ed. LAURENT (note 34), pp. 11–13 and 49–50 (description of Egypt and the regions beyond in which Thietmar mentioned Muhammad's tomb in Mecca); Symon Semeonis, 'Itinerarium', ed. ESPOSITO (note 39), pp. 50–55, 58–65, and 90–93. Generally, descriptions of cities in travelogues are frequently a starting point for authors to reflect on foreign and alien

Sion, Riccoldo of Monte Croce, and most of the later pilgrims of the 15th century, in contrast, chose another way. In addition to mentioning Muslims here and there, they incorporated separate chapters in which they systematically described the different nations that dwell in the Holy Land and/or in the East. This also applies to Ariosto's 'Itinerarium', which is less an itinerary than a dialogue between him and his cousin in which they, among other things, discuss the differences between Islam and Christianity.⁵³

The idea of a more systematic approach might be related to the way of mentioning and briefly describing the Christian denominations that preside over altars in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.⁵⁴ Burchard's chapter, moreover, is in line with the systematic organization of his whole report, in which he divides the Holy Land into seven parts in order to give an encyclopaedic overview of its geography, biota, and inhabitants. His chapter 'De habitatoribus Terre Sancte' (or 'De variis religionibus Terre Sancte' according to other manuscripts) follows the geographical overview and includes short paragraphs on Latin Christians, Muslims, Syrians, Greek Orthodox, and other Eastern Christians as well as Bedouins, Turks, and Assassins.⁵⁵ Many similar groups are part of Riccoldo of Monte Croce's 'Liber peregrinationis'. They echo his vast travels beyond the Holy Land and his overall motive to missionize among the infidels that compelled him to gather information on the religious differences to argue against their beliefs.⁵⁶ In comparison to Burchard, he devoted far more space to the Muslims. Splitting the section into a first part that praises the Muslim works of perfection and a second that condemns their mendacious laws, Riccoldo gave an almost complete image of Islamic doctrines and customs.⁵⁷

Some writers of the 15th century shared this systematic approach. Jean Adorno provided a detailed description of the Muslims and the Bedouins.⁵⁸ Even more extensive is Breidenbach/Rath's segment on the "customs, rituals and errors" of the

cultures. They occasionally structured their portrayal similar to the genre of *laudes urbium* in which information on the population, economy, government, main buildings, fortifications, etc. are given in a systematic way. See SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 101–102.

- 53 Ariosto, 'Itinerarium', ed. Fabio ULIANA (note 44), esp. chapters XIV and LIX–LXX, pp. 64–71 and 237–278.
- 54 Fabri provided one of the most detailed descriptions of the various Christian communities in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre: Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, pp. 347–353; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,2, pp. 430–439.
- 55 Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 37), pp. 190–199; Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, in: *Peregrinatores medii aevi quatuor*, ed. by Johann C.M. LAURENT, 2nd ed., Leipzig 1873, pp. 1–94, here pp. 88–94.
- 56 See also GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ (note 38), pp. 31–34. For further references regarding the Dominican and Franciscan missionary efforts see Anne MÜLLER, *Bettelmönche in islamischer Fremde: institutionelle Rahmenbedingungen franziskanischer und dominikanischer Mission in muslimischen Räumen des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Münster 2002.
- 57 Riccoldo of Monte Croce, 'Peregrinatio', ed. KAPPLER (note 38), pp. 154–201; GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ (note 38), pp. 210–227.
- 58 Adorno, 'Itinerarium', ed. HEERS and DE GROËR (note 51), pp. 66–97.

different people living in the Holy Land at the end of the first part of the travelogue that comprises the pilgrimage to the Holy Land (the second part deals with the journey to Mount Sinai). The quite polemical and insulting description of Muslims at the beginning of this section is more than twice as long as the chapters on the other communities (Jews, as well as Greek Orthodox, Eastern, and Latin Christians).⁵⁹ It is followed by further lamentations on the desolate state of the East and Charles III's vision of hell ('*Visio Karoli Grossi*') in order to show the dramatic and dangerous situation that would need immediate efforts to reform 'Christianitas' and to liberate the Holy Land.⁶⁰ The chapters on the people living in the Holy Land are each introduced by a woodcut produced by Erhard Reuwich, a professional painter engaged by Breidenbach to generate visual evidence of the journey. The woodcut showing a group of three men and two women in 'oriental' clothing, possibly inspired by sketches of Muslims that Reuwich encountered in Venice,⁶¹ is an impressive example of the efforts within the genre of pilgrimage reports that produced 'Otherness' by using a visual medium (Fig. 1).

Felix Fabri included a systematic chapter on the people that dwell in Jerusalem (*Haec gentes hodie habitant in Ierusalem*) as well. Like Breidenbach/Rath, Fabri placed this chapter at the end of his report on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He stated that he used the reports of Burchard of Mount Sion and Bernhard of Breidenbach in addition to Vincent of Beauvais and the 'Chronicon' of Antonius of Florence. Fabri's chapter is shorter than that of Breidenbach/Rath, but extending the list he differentiated between 16 communities (several Islamic groups, Greek Orthodox and Eastern Christians, Jews, and Latin Christians).⁶² Moreover, he incorporated descriptions of his cultural encounters with the 'Muslim Other' as well as additional fundamental information on Muslims, Muhammad, and Islam in numerous further passages. Fabri reported his travel experiences as day-to-day events which are frequently enlarged to discuss particular issues – which explains Fabri's decision to entitle his report 'Evagatorium' (from *evagare* = to digress/deviate).⁶³

59 Bernhard of Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio' (note 17), fol. 56r–75r (Muslims), 75v–89r (Jews, Greeks, etc.). Bernhard of Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio', ed. MOZER (note 17), pp. 284–409 (Muslims), 410–451 (Jews, Greeks, etc.).

60 SCHRÖDER (note 18), pp. 249–252.

61 Frederike TIMM, *Der Palästina-Pilgerbericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach und die Holzschnitte Erhard Reuwichs. Die 'Peregrinatio in terram sanctam' (1486) als Propagandainstrument im Mantel der gelehrten Pilgerschrift*, Stuttgart 2006, esp. pp. 195–200. See also Elizabeth ROSS, *Picturing Experience in the Early Printed Book. Breydenbach's 'Peregrinatio' from Venice to Jerusalem*, Pennsylvania 2014, pp. 74–75, 83–85, who argues that Reuwich's woodcut was used as model by the famous Venetian painters Vittore Carpaccio and Giovanni and Gentile Bellini.

62 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, pp. 323–328. STEWART (note 1), vol. 2, pp. 384–392. Regarding the Islamic groups, he differentiated between Muslims, Turks, Bedouins, Mamluks, Assassins, and 'Mahometans', characterizing the latter as an obscure group following a secret law very different from that of the Muslims.

63 See, for instance, Fabri's chapters on the prohibition of wine and of Islamic 'clerics' as part of his description of Egypt. Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 83–105.

sunden oder zu eyner vbring des cristenlichen volcks vñ sinften die sel
 ken gottes vnd yr vnynde zu bestritten. Aber ich yn disem allem nichts
 freuentlichen vßsprechende verlaß diese matery den gelehrten. diß hyn zu
 gesagt nach dauids sentenz. das die vrteyl gottes ein großer abgrund
 syen vñnd als eyn ander propheet spricht. Wer weyß den willen gottes
 oder wer ist syn rade gewesen zc. beschlyessende also mit sancto paulo. D
 hoh der richum gortlicher weyßheit vñ kunst. wie vnbegrifflich syn die
 syne vrteyl vnd vnforschlich syne werck. da mit sy gnug gesaget von
 den sarracenen.



Die sarraceni brauchen arabisch zung vnd litter. welche
 litter hie vñden steet yn rechter form getrucket.

Dal	Dal	Kah	hah	Gym	Tah	Te	Be	Aleph
ا	د	ك	ح	ج	ت	ث	ب	أ
Aln	Dads	Ta	adadua	Sad	Sahm	Gym	harm	Pa
ع	ب	د	و	و	ل	ل	د	س
halse	Män	Mym	lam	lam	capz	hahb	ffea	Gym
و	ل	ع	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا
schaulo m. post	ye	lamahy	Wau					
Alnd	ا	ا	و					

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Fig. 1 | Illustration of a group of female and male Muslims and table of the Arabic alphabet in Bernhard of Breidenbach, Eyn vorred yn diß nachgende werck der fart vber mer zu de[m] heiligen grab vnsers herren ihesu cristi gen Jerusalem, Mainz: Erhard Reuwich 1486, fol. 90r. (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 2 Inc. c.a. 1727, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

4 Modifications in Latin Reports and Relation to Vernacular Travelogues

Before further elaborating on the image and functions of the 'Muslim Other' in particular pilgrimage reports, it is important to take into account modifications and variants within the manuscript tradition. As the result of changes, additions, or omissions made by the author himself or by scribes while copying the report or preparing it for print, the descriptions of Muslims can vary within a single author's work, sometimes resulting in conflicting images of the 'Muslim Other'. One example is the text of Burchard of Mount Sion.⁶⁴ According to the recent edition of his report, the beginning of the paragraph on the Muslims reads that they claim:

*Dominum nostrum Ihesum Christum maximum prophetarum dicunt, et eum de Spiritu Sancto conceptum, de uirgine natum fatentur; passum et mortuum non negant, sed quando eis placet dicunt eum ascendisse in celum, et ad dextram Patris sedere, quia filium eum Dei confitentur. Machometum uero sedere ad sinistram dei et **nuntium dei ad eos tantum missum** dicunt.*

that the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest of the prophets, and confess that he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin. They do *not* deny, however, that he suffered and died, but, when it pleases them, they say that he ascended to heaven, and sits at the Father's right hand, because they confess that he is the Son of God. But they say that Muhammad sits at God's left hand *and that he is God's messenger sent only to them.*⁶⁵

According to the copies on which the 19th-century edition by Johann C. M. LAURENT is based, however, the very same passage has a slightly different reading. Here, the Muslims:

*Dominum nostrum Ihesum Christum maximum prophetarum dicunt, et eundem, Spiritu Sancto conceptum, de uirgine natum fatentur. **Negant tamen passum et mortuum**, sed quando eis placet dicunt cum ascendisse celum, ad dextram Patris sedere, quia Filium Dei cum confitentur. Machometum uero contendunt sedere ad sinistram eius.*

call our Lord Jesus Christ the greatest of the prophets, and confess that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. *But they deny that He suffered and was buried*, but choose to say that He ascended into heaven, and sitteth upon the right hand of the Father, because they

⁶⁴ See also the contributions of RUBIN as well as FERRO and SCHONHARDT in this volume.

⁶⁵ Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 37), pp. 192–193 (emphasis added).

admit Him to be the Son of God. But they declare that Muhammad sits on His left hand.⁶⁶

In the first citation, the impression is given that there are almost no fundamental differences between the religions apart from the belief that God sent Muhammad exclusively to the Muslims and that he has a somewhat equal status as a prophet to Jesus. Admitting the conception by the Holy Ghost, the virgin birth, and, at times, the death and resurrection of Jesus means that according to Burchard they agree on some of the core doctrines of Christianity. The statement is not totally wrong, since the Qur'an indeed affirms the virgin birth of Jesus (Sura 19:17–21). However, some Christian conceptions (idea of the Trinity, Jesus as God's son, crucifixion of Jesus) were rejected early on by Islamic authors in their argumentations against Christian theology with the aim of differentiating between the community of 'believers' and the 'people of the book'.⁶⁷ Christian authors in their anti-Islamic writings, in turn, used the deviant opinion of Muslims on Jesus's status and on his death as proof of the heretical character of Islam. The same applies to most pilgrimage reports.⁶⁸

The second citation, in contrast, not only omits the idea that Muhammad was a prophet specifically sent to the Muslims, but also says more clearly that the Muslims reject that Jesus died and was buried, therefore also implying that he did not rise from the dead. This rendering, which indeed resembles the Islamic belief that Jesus was replaced by somebody else and ascended into heaven without dying at the cross (Sura 4:157–158), introduces a completely different meaning. It could be explained by different redactions of the text, by changes of particular scribes copying Burchard's text with the aim of either correcting or rigging the statement, and evokes the question of which version represents the wording in the lost archetype.⁶⁹ Looking at a very

66 Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. LAURENT (note 55), p. 89 (emphasis added).

67 Stephen R. BURGE, *The Theological Dynamics of Medieval Christian–Muslim Relations*, in: David THOMAS (ed.), *Routledge Handbook on Christian–Muslim Relations*, New York 2017, pp. 207–215; Ian R. NETTON, *Theology and Christian–Muslim Relations*, in: David THOMAS (ed.), *Routledge Handbook on Christian–Muslim Relations*, New York 2017, pp. 311–319; Fred M. DONNER, *Early Muslims and the Peoples of the Book*, in: Herbert BERG (ed.), *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam*, London 2017, pp. 177–193.

68 Jacobo of Verona, for instance, explicitly stated that while the Muslims admit that Christ is the son of the Virgin Mary (which is a correct assessment), they disprove that Christ is God's son and that he died on the cross. See Jacobo of Verona, ed. MONNERET DE VILLARD (note 50), p. 103. As in Mandeville's Vulgate Latin version, Jacobo stated that the Muslims believe that at the moment of Judas's treason and Christ's captivity, they miraculously switched their images, and Judas was crucified instead of Christ. John Mandeville, *The Book of John Mandeville with Related Texts*, ed. by Ian Macleod HIGGINS, Indianapolis 2011, p. 213.

69 According to Jonathan RUBIN, *The Manuscript Tradition of Burchard of Mount Sion's Descriptio Terre Sancte*, in: *The Journal of Mediaeval Latin* 30 (2020), pp. 257–286, the manuscripts on which BARTLETT (note 37) based his edition are not close to the archetype. For further criticism on the edition see Ingrid BAUMGÄRTNER and Eva FERRO, *The Holy Land Geography as Emotional Experience. Burchard of Mount Sion's Text and the Movable Map* in: Christoph MAUNTEL (ed.),

similar, but less noticeable passage of Burchard's report, I tend to believe that the second citation might be closer to the friar's original version even when the majority of the preserved copies should support the first citation. In the context of describing the birthplace of St John the Baptist and its veneration by Muslims, the text outlines the differences between the religions by equally asserting that the Muslims "say that Christ is indeed the Word of God, but they deny that he is God".⁷⁰

It is worth mentioning that most of the many 16th-century Latin and German prints of the text transmit the second citation's reading that thus had a more substantial impact in later times. This includes Lucas Brandis's 'Rudimentum novitiorum' of 1475, which interpolates Burchard's long version and is therefore seen as the *editio princeps*. It also includes the Venetian edition of 1519 and the popular collection of travelogues by Simon Grynaeus printed in 1532 and reprinted 12 times until the 18th century.⁷¹ Based on these editions, Sigmund Feyerabend and Michael Herr followed this reading as well. Translating Burchard's text into German, the passage reads that the Muslims "will not affirm that [Jesus] had died and suffered" and "will not affirm that [Jesus] had died and was buried".⁷² This example shows that even small changes can have an impact on the image of the 'Muslim Other' and offers glimpses of how the reports were approached and received by later readers/duplicators.

Interventions in the text that led to a different image of the 'Muslim Other' can also be observed in Ludolf of Sudheim's report. His 'De itinere Terre Sancte liber', dedicated to the Bishop of Paderborn, Balduin of Steinfurt, is less a report of his personal experiences of his travels to the East in the 1330s, but rather a description of all regions of the Eastern Mediterranean. Around 30 Latin and ten German manuscripts are preserved in total, and it was actually the first pilgrimage report ever to be published in print in 1468.⁷³ Like the text of William of Boldensele, another popular

Geography and Religious Knowledge in the Premodern World (Das Mittelalter. Beihefte 14), Berlin 2021, pp. 247–272, here p. 253. See also the contribution of RUBIN in this volume.

- 70 Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 37), pp. 82–83; Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. LAURENT (note 55), p. 53. According to BARTLETT, this passage is significantly modified in a further manuscript. See Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 37), p. 82, fn. 315.
- 71 Anonymous, *Rudimentum Novitiorum*, Lübeck 1476, fol. 197ra; Burchard of Mount Sion, *Veridica terre sanctae [...] descriptio*, Venice 1519, s. p.; Simon Grynaeus, *Novus Orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum [...]*, Basel 1532, p. 324.
- 72 Burchard of Mount Sion, *Eigentliche vnd warhaffte Beschreibung [...]*, in: Sigmund Feyerabend (ed.), *Reyßbuch deß heyligen Lands [...]*, Frankfurt a. M. 1584, fol. 464v: *Diese erkennen Christum auch vor einen grossen Propheten / vnd daß er vom heyligen Geist empfangen / vnd von der Jungfrauen Marien geboren sey / woellen aber nicht daß er gestorben oder gelitten hab [...]*. Grynaeus, Simon, *Die New Welt der Landschaften [...]*, trans. by Michael Herr, Straßburg 1534, fol. 101v: *Die erkennen Christum als ein grossen Propheten / vom heiligen geist empfangen / vnd von der jungfraw Maria geborn / aber sie gestond nit / das er gestorben vnd begraben sey worden*.
- 73 Ludolf of Sudheim, *De itinere Terrae Sanctae liber*, ed. by Ferdinand DEYCKS (Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart 25), Stuttgart 1851. On Ludolf, see Jacob KLINGNER, *Ludolf von Sudheim*, in: *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon. Das Mittelalter*, vol. 3: *Reiseberichte und Geschichtsdichtung* (2012), pp. 383–387.

14th-century report that was the main source for Ludolf, he has very little to say about Muslims and almost nothing on Islam.⁷⁴ This, however, changes in a possibly later redaction sometimes referred to in research as the “short version” of Ludolf’s report that is known in four manuscripts.⁷⁵ This redaction, which might have been produced by Ludolf himself or by the Cistercian monk Nicolaus of Huda, omits some information on the territories that Ludolf travelled through, yet now comprises chapters that provided the reader with an overview of Muslims’ customs and the deeds of, in his words, the “cunning, filthy and impure” Muhammad.⁷⁶ The sources of this description have yet to be examined more closely. However, some information on the Muslims given in Ludolf’s “short version” is probably borrowed from an anonymous German travel report from the mid-14th century entitled in research ‘Niederrheinischer Orientbericht’ (report on the Orient from the Lower Rhine area), as that also became a principal source for the ‘*Historia trium regum*’ of John of Hildesheim.⁷⁷ Regardless of how we assess this particular case, it adds to the complex interrelations between Latin and vernacular reports across time and language barriers, making us aware that the Latin text was not always produced first and has to be regarded as the basis for a junior vernacular version.

In the case of Breidenbach/Rath, the chapters on the Muslims have been published without major changes in the German and Dutch prints of Breidenbach’s ‘*Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*’ and thus transmitted the particular negative image of the ‘Muslim Other’ to broader reading circles. This report greatly influenced the chapters on Muslims in later pilgrim texts such as in Ambrosius Zeebout’s Middle Dutch report of the travels of Joos van Ghistele. However, Zeebout did not always adopt the polemical and aggressive attitude of Breidenbach/Rath’s writing and added information from further sources.⁷⁸ The same applies for Fabri’s ‘*Evagatorium*’, despite

74 William provided only a very brief condemnation of Muhammad and Islam when describing Egypt and Cairo. See Guillaume de Boldensele sur la Terre Sainte et l’Égypte (1336). *Liber de quibusdam ultramarinis partibus et praecipue de Terra Sancta*. Suivi de la trad. de Jean le Long. Présentation et commentaire par Christiane DELUZ (Sources d’histoire médiévale 44), Paris 2018, p. 81.

75 Previous research has controversially discussed whether the ‘short version’ had been produced before the ‘long version’ edited by DEYCKS, but it seems more probable to assume that it is a later redaction. See FISCHER (note 30), pp. 266–267.

76 Ludolf of Sudheim, *De itinere Terre Sancte*, ed. by G. A. NEUMANN, in: *Archives de l’Orient Latin* 2 (1884), pp. 305–377, here pp. 369–376.

77 Reinhold RÖHRICHT and Heinrich MEISNER, *Ein niederrheinischer Bericht über den Orient*, in: *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 19 (1887), pp. 8–86; Helmut BRALL-TUCHEL (ed.), *Von Christen, Juden und von Heiden. Der Niederrheinische Orientbericht*, Göttingen 2019. See also Bernhard JAHN, *Niederrheinischer Orientbericht*, in: *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon. Das Mittelalter*, vol. 3: *Reiseberichte und Geschichtsdichtung* (2012), pp. 370–371. The anonymous description of the Muslims and the life of Muhammad is more elaborate and the content structured differently in comparison to Ludolf’s ‘short version’.

78 Alexia LAGAST, *A Pleasant Plain: A Comparative Study of the Stylistic Aspects of the Late Fifteenth-Century Travel Account of Joos van Ghistele*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Antwerp, 2018, pp. 260–276; Stefan SCHRÖDER, *The Encounter with Islam Between Doctrinal Image*

some particularly vilifying attacks on Muhammad.⁷⁹ For instance, the overview of the Prophet's life and misdeeds found in Breidenbach's 'Peregrinatio' is missing. What is more, Fabri did not include most of his comprehensive descriptions of the Muslims' customs and beliefs in his German versions. These comprise a report dedicated to the noblemen that financed his second pilgrimage in 1483 (referred to in research as 'Eigentliche Beschreibung' or 'Pilgerbüchlein'), the pilgrimage guide written to enable nuns to embark on a spiritual journey ('Sionpilger'), and a short prose version of his first pilgrimage in 1480 ('gereimtes Pilgerbüchlein'). Overall, the image of a hostile 'Muslim Other' that intends to deceive the pilgrims and to overthrow Christianity is also formed in these texts, but little is said on the religious differences, on history, and often also on concrete encounters with Muslims. Possibly this is the result of the audiences that Fabri addressed here, whose expectations and education differed from his fellow brethren in the monastery. The noblemen were more interested in the documentation of the events of the journey and places visited than in theology and in the fact that the nuns' contemplation should not be distracted by descriptions of the Muslims' customs that are based on heretical beliefs. His friendly relations with individual Muslims described in the 'Evagatorium' are also still part of his 'Eigentliche Beschreibung'. However, with the Mamluks portrayed in a more positive way in the Latin than in the German text despite being regarded as apostates, there are occasionally instances that show different impressions of the 'Muslim Other' resulting from the ways in which Fabri made his travels conform to the expectations of the particular reader.⁸⁰

The vernacular reports of Konrad Grünemberg and Arnold of Harff are further examples that Breidenbach/Rath's description of the Muslims was not necessarily followed. Even when both authors used Breidenbach's 'Peregrinatio', their descriptions of the Muslims and Islam show substantial differences. Rather than repeating Breidenbach's polemic, they imitated the more neutral tone or less judgemental approach of 'The Book of John Mandeville'.⁸¹ Originally written in French, but swiftly translated into almost all European languages, this well-known text, one of the most popular travelogues of the Middle Ages, was considerably less disparaging about Muslims (despite still conveying various stereotypical and degrading

and Life Writing. Ambrosius Zeebout's Report of Joos van Ghistele's Travels to the East 1481–1485, in: Jonathan ADAMS and Cordelia HESS (eds.), *Fear and Loathing in the North. Muslims and Jews in Medieval Scandinavia and the Baltic Region*, Berlin, New York 2015, pp. 83–106.

⁷⁹ See, for example, his rant on Muhammad describing the origins of Islam. Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 242; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 274. Cited by Ursula GANZ-BLÄTTLER, *Andacht und Abenteuer. Berichte europäischer Jerusalem- und Santiago-Pilger (1320–1520)* (Jakobus-Studien 4), Tübingen 1990, p. 204.

⁸⁰ SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 246–248. This is not to say that Fabri always deliberately intended to give this different impression. It might also be the consequence of omitting details.

⁸¹ Mandeville, ed. HIGGINS (note 68). See, with further references, Iain Macleod HIGGINS, *John Mandeville*, in: Alexander MALLETT and David THOMAS (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 5 (1350–1500), Leiden, Boston 2013, pp. 147–164.

allusions, especially regarding Jews).⁸² It was a precise mix of pilgrimage and Grand Tour through exotic, bizarre, and wondrous regions, a combination of fact and fiction, that made his text so popular. However, not all contemporaries appreciated the representation of Muslims and Islam in Mandeville's vernacular version. In the so-called Vulgate Latin adaptation of the 'Book', the most widely distributed of in total five separate Latin translations, the segments on the 'Muslim Other' and further religious communities are significantly changed. Rosemary TZANAKI even concluded that the Vulgate Latin version "works almost completely against the spirit of the *Book's* basis of belief, tolerance and human unity under God. Instead, it stresses the differences between religions, usually describing other faiths in insulting and intolerant language."⁸³

It would be improper, however, to deduce from this short overview that one can distinguish a more negative image of the 'Muslim Other' in Latin reports versus a more positive one in vernacular reports. As the example of Burchard of Mount Sion given above has shown, religious differences could also be stated without adding a degrading comment in Latin reports.⁸⁴ Plus, Antonio da Crema's enumeration of 30 errors that can be found in the Qur'an, and Francesco Suriano's specifically discriminatory description of the Muslims that ends with his conclusion that "if they could[,] they would walk backwards just to be different from us", are just prominent examples of debasing the 'Muslim Other' and their faith in vernacular reports.⁸⁵

82 Frank GRADY, 'Machomete' and Mandeville's Travels, in: John V. TOLAN (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays*, New York, London 1996, pp. 271–288; Fabienne L. MICHELET, Reading and Writing the East in 'Mandeville's Travels', in: Andreas SPEER and Lydia WEGENER (eds.), *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 33), Berlin, New York 2006, pp. 282–302.

83 Rosemary TZANAKI, *Mandeville's Medieval Audiences: A Study on the Reception of the Book of Sir John Mandeville (1371–1550)*, Aldershot, Burlington VT 2003, pp. 247–248. TZANAKI's pointed remark however might go too far given the fact that the term 'tolerance' evokes a rather modern conception. For an overview of the different versions, see Mandeville, ed. HIGGINS (note 68), p. xvii. A similar tendency can be observed in the Latin translation of Marco Polo's report produced by Francesco Pipino, himself the author of a short report of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1320. See Matthew CONEYS, *Travel Writing, Reception Theory and the History of Reading: Reconsidering the Late Middle Ages*, in: *Studies in Travel Writing* 22,4 (2018), pp. 353–370, here p. 357.

84 Referring to polygamy and homosexuality, Burchard's only polemical judgement relates to the Muslim's alleged sexual practices. See below note 141.

85 Antonio da Crema, *Itinerario al Santo Sepolcro 1486*, ed. by Gabriele NORI (Corpus peregrinationum Italicarum 3; Pellegrini d'Oltralpe e d'Oltremare a santuari d'Italia 1), Ospedaletto 1996, pp. 124–130; Francesco Suriano, *Il trattato di terra Santa e dell'Oriente*, ed. by Girolamo GOLUBOVICH, Milan 1900, pp. 199–200; Francesco Suriano, *Treatise on the Holy Land*, ed. and trans. by Theophilus BELLORINI and Eugene HOADE (Publications of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 8), Jerusalem 1949, pp. 203–204.

5 Functions of the 'Muslim Other'

The cultural encounter with the 'Muslim Other' is utilized in the reports in several ways. One objective was to inform the readers about the current conditions within the Holy Land now ruled by Muslims and to inform potential pilgrims of what to expect when travelling to Jerusalem. Describing the difficulties posed by encounters with non-Christians on such a journey, however, gave the author the possibility to emphasize the successful completion of the pilgrimage against all odds, proving one's Christian or knightly virtues. The more challenging and dramatic the journey was, the more appreciation the pilgrim would get when returning home. A more crucial objective was to confirm that Roman Catholicism was superior to all other beliefs, thus strengthening the identity of the writer's in-group by shaping and debasing the out-group. In this context, some travel writers also reflected on the broader Christian-Muslim history. However, the reciprocal relationship between the 'Self' and the 'Other' also enabled the writers to switch roles by criticizing the in-group through idealizing particular practices allegedly experienced abroad. Finally, travelling through far and unknown regions meant being confronted with new things that had to be explained to the reader. This included notions of the exotic and marvellous 'Other' that astonished the pilgrims and were used to entertain the reader.⁸⁶

5.1 Shaping and Ensuring One's Own Identity: The False Prophet and the Deceived Muslims

The most important factor to differentiate the 'Christian Self' from the 'Muslim Other' and to strengthen the identity of the in-group by debasing the out-group was religion. Understanding the Latin Church to be the one true faith left no room for compromise. It allowed only the binary opposition between righteous Catholic Christians and the Muslims, Jews, Pagans, and other Christian denominations that are electively characterized as erroneously, idolatrously heretical etc. To admit that the faith of the 'Muslim Other' had any kind of legitimacy would mean questioning one's own point of view. This was impossible for the pilgrims on their religious journey and for the writers narrating this journey to a Christian audience. Thus, some authors felt the need to unmask the wickedness of the Muslims' faith. This could be done, for instance, in a very concise fashion by explicitly stating one's disgust and therefore referring only to some specific aspects of Muhammad's illicit law,⁸⁷ or by providing some extra space to refute Islam step by step, as shown in Bernhard of Breidenbach's

⁸⁶ This is not an exhaustive list of all possible functions of the 'Other'.

⁸⁷ Jacobo of Verona, 'Liber peregrinationis', ed. MONNERET DE VILLARD (note 50), p. 101.

'Peregrinatio', in which Muhammad's life is portrayed as a continuous chain of sins, lies, crimes, and violence.⁸⁸

Mainly based on Petrus Alfonsi, Breidenbach/Rath described Islam as a heresy that was corrupt to the core. Muslims, moreover, were irrational subjects, who blindly followed impious doctrines and who persecuted, suppressed, and exterminated Christians in all places. Their description of Muhammad as a false prophet, a ruthless murderer and imposter, who used false miracles and was driven by his insatiable sexual desires, his death mirroring his inappropriate life, corresponded to the paradigmatic image of the "legendary Muhammad" developed in medieval anti-Islamic polemics.⁸⁹ Sergius, allegedly a heretical Christian monk, and the Jewish figures Audias and Cabalahar, are mentioned to have provided Muhammad with the necessary education to transform his rule, initially only based on violence, into a religious sect.⁹⁰ But in contrast to some other pseudo-biographical travesties of Muhammad and, for instance, to the redaction of Ludolf's 'De itinere Terre Sancte liber', Muhammad is not seen as an ill-bred and stupid person who was being used as a puppet by Sergius to gain revenge for his being expelled from the church.⁹¹

Fabri was no less pejorative when describing the Muslims and their Islamic doctrines: all Muslims follow Muhammad's foul laws, they are worse than other idolaters, their sect is the apex of all heresies, and so sophisticated in its maliciousness that all Church prayers for their salvation are in vain. Fabri judged the *Qur'an* to be a crude mixture of paganism and elements from the Old and New Testament; it was also the source of some good, albeit distorted, statements on Jesus and the Virgin Mary mingled with indefinite errors and nefarious things.⁹² He portrayed virtually all religious signs and principles of Islam as futile efforts to imitate Christianity that, in the end, only confirm the wickedness of the Muslim belief. One example, for instance, is Fabri's rebuke of the crescent as the symbol for Islam installed on the top of mosques and minarets. He saw it just as a mediocre copy of the Christian custom of adorning churches with crosses. Stating that the Muslims probably adopted the symbol from

88 Bernhard of Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio' (note 17), fol. 56r–75r.

89 Michelina DI CESARE, *The Prophet in the Book: Images of Muhammad in Western Medieval Book Culture*, in: Avinoam SHALEM (ed.), *Constructing the Image of Muhammad in Europe*, Berlin, Boston 2013, pp. 9–32, here p. 20.

90 Referring to sinister figures of heretical or Jewish provenience alone was a pointer to the reader that Islam could not be based on a true revelation that bears any legitimacy. The process of rewriting Sergius Bahira from, according to Arabic-Islamic sources, a honourable Christian eremite who recognized the divine nature of Muhammad (and thus proved from the Muslim point of view that Muhammad is a true prophet) to a wicked Christian heretic who, driven by the devil, was the real mastermind behind Muhammad's rise to power, was already started by Greek Orthodox authors. It was swiftly taken up and further evolved by Latin-Christian authors. See Barbara ROGGEMA, *The Legend of Sergius Bahirā. Eastern Christian Apologetics and Apocalyptic in Response to Islam*, Leiden 2009.

91 Ludolf of Sudheim, 'De itinere Terre Sancte', ed. NEUMANN (note 76), p. 371.

92 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 96–97. See also vol. 1, p. 366; vol. 2, pp. 130, 176; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,2, p. 456; vol. 2,1, pp. 134, 188.

the sinful cult of Diana and that they preferred the crescent, which according to Fabri seeks to shy away from the light (of truth), over the shining full moon was another proof for him of the Muslims' wicked intentions.⁹³ The Hajj, as one doctrine that Fabri described in more detail, was represented as an ill-advised voyage to worship the tomb of the devil's son, Muhammad. The tomb was placed in Mecca rather than Medina to be compared with the noble Christian pilgrimage to the empty tomb of Christ as a sign of his resurrection and of the salvation of humankind.⁹⁴ According to Fabri, the Christian doctrines are completely reversed in Islam, as he shows his reader when referring (once more) to the fasting season:

O monstrosum ieiunium et carnalibus hominibus et bestialibus aptum! Absit, absit a nobis talis praedicator ieiunii, post quod in die expletum sic omni libidini, ingluviei, crapulis et comessationibus per noctem operam impendere praecipit, ut non ob aliud ieiunium instituisse videatur, quam ut postea voluptuosius et appetentius omnium turpitudine libidinis exerceatur.

O what a strange unnatural fast, fit only for carnal and beastly men! Far, far from us be he that preaches such fasting as this, that after the fast has been fulfilled during the day he bids men spend their night in lust, gluttony, drunkenness, and revelling, so that he seems to have instituted this fast for no other purpose than that after it is over men may indulge all their basest desires with greater enjoyment and appetite.⁹⁵

With these and numerous more examples, the pilgrimage reports belittled Islam as a sect that has no true sacraments. It is represented as being based on a fabricated

93 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 74. Fabri added in the margins of his manuscript that it is even more likely that the Muslims chose the crescent since it (poorly) resembles the shape of a weathercock that is often found on churches as well, thus implying that they would have selected just any random object as symbol as long as it was used at the rooftops of Christian churches. That it is an addition that Fabri added at some later point is not specified in HASSLER's edition. It is found in Fabri's autograph Ulm, Stadtbibliothek, MS 19555-2, fol. 100v. For another discussion of the crescent see Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 219; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 244.

94 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, pp. 539–542; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,2, pp. 665–670. See also Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 192; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, pp. 219–220. Fabri, moreover, referred to the popular legend of Muhammad's iron coffin that miraculously floated in the air due to some hidden magnetic stones. On the legend in Western sources and on similarities and differences between Fabri, Breidenbach and Ghistele/Zeebout, see Folker REICHERT, *Der eiserne Sarg des Propheten. Doppelte Grenzen im Islambild des Mittelalters*, in: Ulrich KNEFELKAMP (ed.), *Grenze und Grenzüberschreitung im Mittelalter*. 11. Symposium des Mediävistenverbandes vom 14.–17. März 2005 in Frankfurt on the Oder, Berlin 2007, pp. 453–469; Folker REICHERT, *Mohammed in Mekka. Doppelte Grenzen im Islambild des lateinischen Mittelalters*, in: *Saeculum* 56 (2005), pp. 17–31; SCHRÖDER (note 78), pp. 100–101.

95 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 517; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,2, p. 636.

revelation and on fake miracles and is devoted primarily to the worldly delights of bodily pleasures, wealth, and power. Christianity, in turn, is both implicitly and explicitly presented as the only true religion, based on real miracles and divine revelation. Reading about the wicked ‘Muslim Other’ therefore strengthens the identity of the ‘Christian Self’.

However, the harsh denunciation of the ‘Muslim Other’ generally raises two questions: can Muslims be saved by conversion from the fate of damnation and an afterlife in hell? And why does God allow this sect to exist in the first place? When addressed, the first question was given different answers by the pilgrims. Instead of ‘potential Christians’, Breidenbach/Rath portrayed the ‘Muslim Other’ as ravaging and mortal enemies who desire nothing else than to shed Christian blood.⁹⁶ Including in the report a summary of the recent conquests of Constantinople and further cities as well as of the recent siege of Rhodes in 1480, on every occasion emphasizing the atrocities committed by the Turks,⁹⁷ the impression is given that the sword seems to be the only choice that Christians have. Reuwich’s woodcut for this segment fittingly displays a group of approaching Turkish combatants, including some janissaries, on horses and equipped with music instruments celebrating their victories, while the image’s legend informs the reader that in times of war many would carry firearms instead (Fig. 2).⁹⁸ According to Fabri’s ‘Evagatorium’, it seems to be that at least the Mamluk renegades could be convinced to return to the Christian faith, whereas he appears to be more sceptical about Muslims as a result of the continuous deception of Islamic rulers and clerks as well as their stubbornness and simplicity.⁹⁹ Jean Adorno concluded likewise that the Muslims “have ears, but hear nothing; they are smart, but understand nothing. Misfortune on them until the end of days!”¹⁰⁰ In addition, he stated that Muslims were completely lulled into their faith by Muhammad and his successors, who had forbidden any discussion on religious matters to protect the Muslims from the irresistible attraction of Christianity.¹⁰¹

In contrast, Riccoldo of Monte Croce’s statement that the Muslims’ theological positions could be easily defeated through pointing to Muhammad’s wicked life as well as through “the holy books, the authority of Holy Scripture, the books of the

96 Bernhard of Breidenbach, ‘Peregrinatio’ (note 17), fol. 110r; ed. MOZER (note 17), pp. 511–513.

97 Bernhard of Breidenbach, ‘Peregrinatio’ (note 17), fol. 135r–147r; ed. MOZER (note 17), pp. 668–725.

98 For details on the image see TIMM (note 61), pp. 227–229.

99 Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 34–35 (personal encounters with Mamluks who admitted to having a poor position among the *secta Mahometi*); Ibid., vol. 1, p. 192; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1, pp. 219–220 (Muslims). See also the dragoman *Elphahallo*, who is portrayed by Fabri despite his praise as a stubborn Muslim. Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 32.

100 Adorno, ‘Itinerarium’, ed. HEERS and DE GROËR (note 51), p. 348: [...] *sed aures habent et non audiunt, intellectum habent et non intelligunt. Ve illis in fine dierum suorum*. Cited also by GANZ-BLÄTTLER (note 79), p. 202.

101 Adorno, ‘Itinerarium’, ed. HEERS and DE GROËR (note 51), p. 66 and 74.



Fig. 2 | Illustration of a group of Turkish combatants on horses in Bernhard of Breidenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*, Mainz: Erhard Reuwich 1486, fol. 136v. (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 2 Inc.c.a. 1725, CC BY-SA 4.0).

philosophers, and the path of reason”¹⁰² indicates that some pilgrims nonetheless saw potential for converting the ‘Muslim Other’, even though we do not know how successful his attempts to missionize in fact were. But this attitude is no surprise given his main motive for travelling to the East as well as the efforts of his order to spread the Gospel among non-Christians. A similar optimistic view is, however, given in Mandeville’s report, both in the French and in the Vulgate Latin versions. Relying on William of Tripoli’s ‘*De statu sarracenorum*’, the Mandeville author stated that since Muslims are so close to the Christian faith, they could easily be converted through preaching and explaining Christ’s laws in a clear way.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Riccoldo of Monte Croce, ‘*Peregrinatio*’, ed. KAPPLER (note 38), pp. 196–197; GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ (note 38), p. 224.

¹⁰³ Mandeville, ed. HIGGINS (note 68), pp. 84–85, 214. The Latin version is less enthusiastic though. For Mandeville’s source, see William of Tripoli, *Notitia de Machometo. De statu sarracenorum*,

The second question is even less discussed. By referring to Muhammad's life and the origin of Islam as in the case of Breidenbach/Rath, or by educating the readers with chapters on the crusading past as in the case of Fabri,¹⁰⁴ the 'Muslim Other' is seen from a Christianized historical viewpoint. In short, pilgrims like Fabri saw Muslims as an instrument sent by God to punish the Christians for their sins. Following interpretations inter alia shaped by popular and authoritative authors such as Jacques de Vitry, the Christian misdeeds were seen as the cause of the defeats that ultimately led to the shameful end of the crusading states in the East. They were interpreted as a sign that Christianity in general had lost the right path and that Christians increasingly preferred earthly delights over heavenly paradise. According to Fabri, every time there was a schism in the Christian world, the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was lost to the infidels.¹⁰⁵ The 'Muslim Other' was thus a challenging test for 'Christianitas' – a role that essentially has been given to every religious group labelled as heresy in Christian history. Conveyed by the pilgrims' references to how they were ill-treated, insulted, and attacked during their stay, of how they were denied access to some holy places now occupied by the Muslims, who, moreover, transformed holy places into sheds for animals or let them fall into ruin, the Holy Land and its sacred sites became both a military and ideological battleground.¹⁰⁶ By ensuring that the holiness of the places was still intact (e.g. confirming to have sensed a heavenly odour) despite all the efforts of the 'Muslim Other' to desecralize the holy places and to alter and to erase the Christian cultural memory, assurance was given to the readers that salvation history continued and that the Holy Land would be liberated at some point.¹⁰⁷ A more concrete time frame was, however, not given. Whereas Jacobo of Verona, who travelled roughly one generation after the loss of Acre in 1291, provided a list of castles in the Holy Land that should be reconquered

ed. by Peter ENGELS (*Corpus Islamo-Christianum: Series Latina 4*), Würzburg 1992. The view of the Mandeville author, who in the words of Macleod HIGGINS amplified and deliberately overwrote his sources on numerous occasion (Ian Macleod HIGGINS, *Writing East. The 'Travels' of Sir John Mandeville*, Philadelphia 1997, pp. 9, 12), was taken up by Arnold von Harff, who sometimes exaggerated Mandeville's positions even further. See Arnold von Harff, *Die Pilgerfahrt des Ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italien, Syrien, Aegypten, Arabien, Aethiopien, Nubien, Palästina, die Türkei, Frankreich und Spanien, wie er sie in den Jahren 1496 bis 1499 vollendet, beschrieben und durch Zeichnungen erläutert hat. Nach den ältesten Handschriften und mit deren 47 in Holzschnitt herausgegeben*, ed. by Ewald von GROOTE, Cologne 1860, repr. Hildesheim, New York 2004, pp. 105–106; *Id.*, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff in the Years 1496–1499*, ed. by Malcolm LETTS (*Hakluyt Society Second Series 94*), London 1946, pp. 122–123.

104 For more on this point, see Stefan SCHRÖDER, *To Follow the Deeds of Godfrey of Bouillon: The Remembrance of the Crusades and Crusading Ideas in Late Medieval Travel Reports to the Holy Land*, in: Magnus RESSEL (ed.), *Crusading Ideas and Fear of the Turks in Late Medieval and the Early Modern Europe* (*Série Croisades tardives 7*), Toulouse 2021, pp. 35–70.

105 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 238; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 269.

106 SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 266–271; REICHERT (note 14), pp. 9–12.

107 SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 146–150.

and therefore might have thought that a timely Crusade was inevitable,¹⁰⁸ pilgrims in the later 15th century were more sceptical as a result of the Ottoman expansion.

Breidenbach/Rath and Riccoldo of Monte Croce (not in his pilgrimage report, but in his epistles) expressed some bewilderment at why God had allowed the Muslims to crush and subjugate so many Christians and why the Islamic faith was, in comparison to previous sects, so persistent and showed no signs of decline even after so many centuries.¹⁰⁹ For Breidenbach/Rath this is the starting point for a lengthy theological chapter. They first presented three arguments of an unnamed scholarly doctor (presumably the Jewish convert Paul of Burgos [c. 1351–1435] with his 'Scrutinium scripturarum')¹¹⁰ as to why the 'Muslim Other' was different and more relentless than any other sect. According to Breidenbach/Rath, Paul considered that the success of Islam was because (1) they are not idolatrous, (2) they require the following of Islamic laws but not the abandonment of one's personal beliefs, and (3) they share some essential beliefs with Christians, before rejecting these arguments, stating that the doctor (Paul of Burgos) had praised "the shameful and accursed sect of the Saracens" too much (not naming him therefore should protect his honour). For Breidenbach/Rath, the law of Muhammad was even worse than idolatry. The crimes against Christians were beyond any scale and the desecration of churches everywhere would show that the Muslims did not tolerate Christianity at all. However, they declined to present their own explanations of the success of the 'Muslim Other'. They instead referred to Zechariah's Old Testament proto-apocalyptic prophecy that at the end of times, God will cut off and perish two thirds of the land, and the one third left alive will be refined and tested (Zechariah 13:8–9).¹¹¹ Allegorically reading the land as the Israelites that are in Breidenbach/Rath's understanding represented by (Latin) Christians, many (two thirds) will perish during this time of tribulation, whereas the upright ones (one third) will be refined by fire and eventually redeemed from their sins. Thus, they portrayed the Muslims as a sect that might be more evil than any other before, but it was still just another scourge of God sent to test and judge his flock. Even when quoting just this verse from the prophecy, Breidenbach/Rath probably assumed that their readers were also aware of its following last chapter (Zechariah 14). After further travails leading to the capture of Jerusalem, Zechariah foresaw that all gentile

108 Jacobo da Verona, 'Liber peregrinationis', ed. MONNERET DE VILLARD (note 50), p. 67.

109 See Riccoldo's 'Epistolae ad Ecclesiam triumphantem'. Riccoldo's doubts are triggered by the news of Acre's fall while in Baghdad. On the letters, largely unknown in medieval times, see Riccoldo of Monte Croce, 'Peregrinatio', ed. KAPPLER (note 38), pp. 210–252; GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ (note 38), pp. 34–39, 89–106; Dorothea WELTECKE, *Die Macht des Islam und die Niederlage der Kreuzfahrer: Zum Verständnis der Briefe an die himmlische Kurie des Riccoldo da Monte di Croce OP*, in: *Saeculum* 58 (2007), pp. 265–295. The most recent edition can be found in Martin M. BAUER, *Ricoldus de Monte Crucis: Epistole ad Ecclesiam triumphantem (Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters 24)*, Stuttgart 2021.

110 Philip KREY, *Nicholas of Lyra and Paul of Burgos on Islam*, in: John V. TOLAN (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays*, New York, London 1996, pp. 153–174.

111 Bernhard of Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio' (note 17), fol. 70v–75r; ed. MOZER (note 17), pp. 380–409.

nations fighting the Israelites/Christians will be stricken with plagues, forcing them to finally acknowledge that God is almighty and worship him. This eschatological indication conveyed the comforting message that regardless of how desolate the current situation might be, in the end Christianity will prevail and be universally acknowledged as the only true faith even by the Muslims.¹¹²

Exposing the errors of Islam and debasing the ‘Muslim Other’ for their wrong belief and immoral practices was of course not restricted to the theological discourse. Physiological differences and social customs following OSTERHAMMEL’s further categories to determine cultural borders were also used. Muslim bodies and clothing occasionally play an important role as well. Fabri made polemical use of this sort of rhetorical inversion when mocking Muslims for their “hermaphroditic” dresses as well as the “animal” sound of the Arabic language and their inability even to articulate one word in German.¹¹³ He also ridiculed Muslims for their superstitions and jeered at Muslim women for not being able to cook the simplest dishes.¹¹⁴ With such graphic examples, to which could be added additional ones by examining further Latin and vernacular reports, Fabri shaped a foreign reality with inverted norms and customs. He and further authors thus reassured their readers that their own bodies, habits, and values were normal (in fact set the norm) and their own culture was more advanced. Sometimes this is connected to medical or cosmological conceptions that, based on the bodily fluids or place of living, delineate a more elementary difference between the moderate, restrained, and rational temperament and lifestyle of the in-group versus the heated, emotional, and irrational character of the people in the East and South.¹¹⁵

In sum, comparisons of this kind show to us that the authors did not aim to give an objective representation of other cultures. The strict application of the Latin Christian authors’ religious and social standards meant there could be no discussion of whether the ‘Muslim Other’ could have a distinct social system based on its own values and customs that had an equal right to exist. The ‘Muslim Other’ is used to prove the superiority of Christian norms and thus the supremacy of the author’s

112 For sources that elaborate in more detail about the role of the ‘Muslim Other’ during the end of times see Bernard MCGINN, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, New York 1979, esp. pp. 149–157.

113 Clothing: Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 215; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, pp. 251–252; language: Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, pp. 194–195, 202; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, pp. 223–224, 234; Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 51, 449.

114 Superstition: Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 73–74; cooking: *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 113 and vol. 3, pp. 100–101; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 111. For these and more examples, see SCHRÖDER (note 2), pp. 252–266.

115 John Block FRIEDMANN, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, Cambridge MA, London 1981, pp. 51–55; Joseph ZIEGLER, *Text and Context: On the Rise of Physiognomic Thought in the Later Middle Ages*, in: Yitzhak HEN (ed.), *De Sion exhibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 1)*, Turnhout 2001, pp. 159–182.

culture. Muslims are framed as 'emotional beings'¹¹⁶ by outlining the follies of the Islamic religion and by referring to their irrational, stubborn, hot-tempered character. As such, the 'Muslim Other' is the negative counter image of the rational and enlightened 'Christian Self' and separated by strict cultural barriers.

5.2 Self-Understanding and Critical Reflection: the 'Muslim Other' as Role Model of the 'Christian Self'

As a result of the reciprocal interrelation between the 'Self' and the 'Other', a positive depiction of the 'Other' could also serve as a moral example for readers at home. The hospitality and generosity of Muslims, their devotion observed when praying, their purity noted in the context of their washing rituals before entering a mosque, and their mercifulness in the treatment of prisoners can be read as an implicit invitation to the readers to re-evaluate their own behaviour, even when it is said that the Muslims' practices are not proof of an honest, internalized piety. Once again, Felix Fabri used this method of functionalizing the 'Muslim Other' more often than other authors of Latin reports. The most obvious example is his contrasting of the very tidy Dome of the Rock to the very dirty church of the Holy Grave. He condemned the behaviour of the Christians, including his fellow pilgrims, who turned the Holy Church into a place for dumping trash and a noisy bazaar, whereas the Dome of the Rock was thoroughly cleaned by the Muslims on a daily basis.¹¹⁷ Both holy buildings stand as symbols of the reverence for God of the respective communities of Islam and Christendom.

Fabri's point here is that to the shame of Christianity, the 'infidels' surpass the Christians at least with regard to their observable, outer piety. Categories like 'impure' or 'dirty' are not applied accidentally, but particularly highlight the contradiction with the Christian standards of order and are thus supposed to evoke disgust in the audience.¹¹⁸ However, this does not necessarily mean acceptance of or respect for the 'Other'. In projecting his ideals of good Christianity on foreign culture, Fabri tried to make his audience aware of how easily people can lose God's way and/or of conditions that endangered the social order at home. One further example is the description of a fistfight between two Muslims in Alexandria during which the opponents throw their knives away in order to avoid spilling blood. Whereas the noblemen of Fabri's pilgrims' party ridiculed this practice from their perspective as boyish and effeminate, Fabri felt that unnecessary spilling of blood and/or killing was a very wise decision. According to Fabri, the Muslims saw homicide as an outrageous crime and

116 Audrey CALEFAS-STREBELLE, Muslim 'Others', in: Susan BROOMHALL (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, London, New York 2017, pp. 300–303, here p. 303.

117 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 219 and vol. 2, pp. 223 and 229–230; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, p. 257 and vol. 2,1, pp. 249 and 257–258.

118 See in this context the seminal work of Mary DOUGLAS, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, New York 1966.

stated in a later passage of his ‘Evagatorium’ that they barely execute even the most roguish rascal because of the Muslims’ kind-hearted nature.¹¹⁹ Between the lines, Fabri expressed his reservation about the habit among the noble elite of turning to violence too easily.

Fabri thus aimed to educate the reader and remind him or her to uphold Christian norms and reflect upon his or her sins. In a similar manner, this rhetorical figure is used most prominently in Mandeville’s discussion with the Sultan in Egypt about the troubled situation within Christian societies. In both the vernacular and the Vulgate Latin versions, it is the highest-ranked leader of the ‘infidels’ who is given the role of holding up a mirror to the Christian reader. In the conversation, he reminded his visitor of the corruption and immoral state of Christian realms that weakened the Christians and caused their defeats against the Muslims. If the Christians revoked their sins and united again, the Sultan admitted, they would be far stronger and be able to easily reconquer all territories once under Christian rule.¹²⁰ It is not clear if this strategy of using a person that represents the out-group as an authority to judge the lifestyle of the in-group affected and impressed the reader, but it was certainly a common literary scheme.

5.3 The Proximate and Exotic ‘Muslim Other’ within the Diversity of the World

The functional use of the ‘Muslim Other’ discussed above sometimes clashed with cultural encounters *in situ*. The encyclopaedic approach of some authors provided the reader with a huge abundance of information on Muslim society that made it difficult to draw clear or fixed cultural boundaries between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’. Not everything regarded as different, moreover, was interpreted as a threat. When understood in the sense of ‘familiar’ versus ‘unfamiliar’, the concept and understanding of ‘Otherness’ is more varied, as selected examples from the fields of architecture, living conditions, and communication show.

Regarding architecture, the pilgrims were aware of the different architecture of buildings in Jerusalem or Cairo. According to Paul Walther of Guglingen and Felix Fabri, the houses mostly built from clay bricks differed fundamentally from the constructions at home due to the flat roofs and courtyards. Paul explained to his readers

119 Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 39–40 and 140–141.

120 Mandeville, ed. HIGGINS (note 68), pp. 86–87; John Mandeville, *Liber Ioannis Mandevil*, ed. Richard HAKLUYT, *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation*, London 1589, pp. 23–79, here pp. 44–45. For such interreligious discussions in travelogues, see Hannes KÄSTNER, *Das Gespräch des Orientreisenden mit dem heidnischen Herrscher. Zur Typik und zu den Funktionen einer interkulturellen Dialogszene in der Reiseliteratur des Spätmittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, in: Horst WENZEL (ed.), *Gespräche – Boten – Briefe. Körpergedächtnis und Schriftgedächtnis im Mittelalter* (Philologische Studien und Quellen 143), Berlin 1997, pp. 280–295; Christina HENS, *Fremde Räume, Religionen und Rituale in Mandevilles Reisen: Wahrnehmung und Darstellung religiöser und kultureller Alterität in den deutschsprachigen Übersetzungen*, Berlin, Boston 2018, pp. 246–263.

that without gabled roofs like the houses at home, they would look like ruins. This rendering, in effect, transmitted the image of a mediocre culture unable to properly construct houses. Fabri, in contrast, pointed to the very different climate in the Holy Land and Egypt (high heat, little rain) and concluded that the main function of these buildings was to protect the residents not from cold, rain or snow, but from burglars and the sun.¹²¹ According to Fabri, these buildings, which frequently included a wooden construction on top that he interpreted as an additional sun-protection shield,¹²² were the logical result of the specific living conditions abroad. He did not judge this construction style in a negative way.

A second example that drew the attention of the pilgrims were the installations to incubate chickens. Hatching thousands of eggs at the same time with the help of a heating system operated by manure was part of the 'exotic Other' and was already described in the 14th-century Latin reports of William of Boldensele and Ludolf of Sudheim.¹²³ For some pilgrims like Hans Tucher, it was too incredible to describe, potentially for fear of being called a 'travel liar'.¹²⁴ Assuring that they had seen the facilities and the procedures in person while visiting Cairo, Bernhard of Breidenbach and Felix Fabri showed their readers that there was no miracle behind it.¹²⁵ Fabri, moreover, referred to renowned ancient and medieval authors who provided evidence that this practice had been in use for a long time, showing that it was just an efficient and probably profitable way to provide food for the population.

121 Paul Walther von Guglingen, ed. SOLLWECK (note 41), p. 224; Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, pp. 82–83. Fabri, however, was not totally convinced of the stability of the clay construction when admitting that in the case of heavy rain, as is often the case in German territories, the whole city of Cairo would be converted into mud and dirt. Yet in his German version, he added to this point that the residents had no reason to worry, since it never rained in Egypt. Dessau, StB, Hs. Georg 238, fol. 190r.

122 The wooden construction is mentioned in other reports as well (Adorno, ed. HEERS and DE GROËR [note 51], p. 186), but only Francesco Suriano was able to explain that it was a specific device for sustaining some kind of ventilation system in the house (Suriano, ed. BELLORINI and HOADE [note 85], p. 191). Moreover, the way it was constructed included astronomical and religious aspects. See David A. KING, *Architecture and Astronomy: The Ventilators of Medieval Cairo and Their Secrets*, in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104,1 (1984), pp. 97–133; Stefano BIANCA, *Hofhaus und Paradiesgarten. Architektur und Lebensformen in der islamischen Welt*, Munich 2001, p. 221.

123 William of Boldensele, 'Liber', ed. DELUZ (note 74), p. 84; Ludolf of Sudheim, 'De itinere Terre Sancte', ed. DEYCKS (note 73), p. 51.

124 Hans Tucher, *Reise ins Gelobte Land*, ed. by Randall HERZ, in: *Die 'Reise ins Gelobte Land' Hans Tuchers des Älteren (1479–1480). Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung und kritische Edition eines spätmittelalterlichen Reiseberichts (Wissensliteratur im Mittelalter 38)*, Wiesbaden 2002, pp. 564–565.

125 Bernhard of Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio' (note 17), fol. 131r; ed. MOZER (note 17), pp. 606–607; Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), pp. 57–59. There are, however, some inconsistencies in their reports compared to Paul Walther that show how they used personal eye-witnessing to give their description more authority. See also Stefan SCHRÖDER, *Entertaining and Educating the Audience at Home: Eye-witnessing in Late Medieval Pilgrimage Reports*, in: Jenni KUULIALA and Jussi RANTALA (eds.), *Travel, Pilgrimage and Social Interaction from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, London, New York 2020, pp. 270–294.

The third case concerns the Arabic language. Despite frequent references (e.g. to the incomprehensible, animalistic sound of Arabic) aiming to attest and to enlarge the gap between the cultivated 'Self' and the barbaric and primitive 'Muslim Other', some authors included alphabets and partly also word lists and short sentences in their reports (Latin: Paul Walther of Guglingen, Bernhard of Breidenbach, Jean Adorno; vernacular: John Mandeville, Konrad Grünemberg, Arnold of Harff).¹²⁶ The insertion of alphabets and additional information was probably inspired by the (mainly fictitious) alphabets that are part of most vernacular versions of Mandeville's 'Book'.¹²⁷ It includes one alphabet that is supposed to represent the Muslims' letters at the end of the relevant chapter, though the lettering, in contrast to the alphabets in the later reports, did not refer to actual Arabic in any way. The main function of including alphabets was to show the author's erudition and to suggest that he picked up this knowledge when abroad. Moreover, the words and short sentences comprising first and foremost, but not exclusively, information regarding travelling (establishing contact, buying food and goods, numbers regarding monetary issues, etc.), could be used as valuable knowledge should the reader be planning a pilgrimage himself. However, by displaying letters, words, and short phrases, practically all authors incidentally admitted that the cultural gap between the 'Self' and 'Other' was not so large at all. The alphabets and foreign words visualized the 'Other' and were a sign of alterity (which includes Adorno's notion that the Muslims write from right to left). The strange look of the letters could be compared to the Latin letters in use at home and, for example in the reports of Mandeville, Breidenbach, and Harff, to further ones (e.g. Greek, 'Egyptian', Hebrew, Persian, Chaldean), enabling the reader to classify them on the basis of how outlandish they looked. But the Arabic alphabet and word lists also showed that the Muslims used an advanced literary language based on grammatical rules, thus affirming their civilized status (of course the pilgrims were not aware of

126 Bernhard of Breidenbach, 'Peregrinatio' (note 17), fol. 88r (alphabet) and 134r–134v (word list); ed. MOZER (note 17), pp. 408–409 and 664–667; Adorno, 'Itinerarium', ed. HEERS and DE GROËR (note 51), p. 92; Konrad Grünemberg, *Pilgerreise ins Heilige Land 1486*, ed. Andrea DENKE, Cologne, Vienna 2011, pp. 468–482 (he provided just a word list based on Breidenbach, but did not copy the Arabic alphabet); Arnold von Harff, ed. GROOTE (note 103), pp. 111–114. Paul Walther's alphabet and word list which were the templates for Breidenbach are not part of the edition of his report. For more, see Kristian BOSSELMANN-CYRAN, *Das arabische Vokabular des Paul Walther von Guglingen und seine Überlieferung im Reisebericht Bernhards von Breidenbach*, in: *Würzburger medizinhistorische Mitteilungen* 12 (1994), pp. 153–182.

127 The alphabets in Mandeville's 'Book' differ substantially from version to version and from manuscript to manuscript. They were derived from early medieval collections of alphabets that, in most cases, were not based on 'real' languages. See Elmar SEEBOLD, *Mandevilles Alphabete und die mittelalterlichen Alphabetsammlungen*, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 120 (1998), pp. 435–449; Martin PRZYBILSKI, *Die Zeichen des Anderen. Fremdsprachenalphabete in den 'Voyages' des Jean de Mandeville am Beispiel der deutschen Übersetzung Ottos von Diemeringen*, in: *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 37 (2002), pp. 295–320; Kara L. McSHANE, *Deciphering Identity in the Book of John Mandeville's Alphabets*, in: *Philological Quarterly* 97 (2018), pp. 27–53.

the paramount importance of Arabic for Islam).¹²⁸ In this context, one wonders if the omission of the Arabic alphabet in most manuscripts and early prints of the Vulgate Latin version of the 'Book' could have been a deliberate decision in order to present a consistent negative image of the supposedly 'backward' Muslims.¹²⁹

In contrast to the author's efforts to draw images of the non-intellectual, superstitious, and emotional 'Muslim Other' following a wicked and devilish faith, the three examples depict the Muslims as rational and skilled people who were capable of adapting to the specific challenges of the environment, were cunning in developing effective ways to sustain their society, and used a language system that involved logic. In this context, the 'Muslim Other' is displayed rather as the 'proximate Other'¹³⁰ that is different and seen as sometimes inferior, but also shares some essential principles and shows no huge cultural gap to the 'Christian Self'. This does not mean that the pilgrims acknowledged and/or respected the 'Muslim Other'. Instead, such examples were part of giving a more complete picture of the diversity of the world (or how diverse God created the world to be) that takes into account that things abroad were handled quite differently from home. In addition, they fed the reader's curiosity about how other people lived and organized their existence.

From there, it was no big step to the 'exotic Other' that conveys connotations of the exceptional, peculiar, enthralling, marvellous, or monstrous. In contrast to medieval images of Asia that involved constructions of bizarre, upside-down worlds, the Muslims offered less potential to generate a 'vast transcendence' of 'Otherness'. However, in describing the climate conditions and landscapes (e.g. the desert, annual inundation of the Nile, and its origin in earthly paradise) and mentioning wonderful plants (balsam), unfamiliar fruits (bananas, cantaloupes), outlandish animals (giraffes, ostriches, civet cats), and the savageness of the Bedouins, the authors of Latin pilgrimage reports frequently referred to the fascination with faraway places and placed the Muslims in a setting very different from home. The taste for exotica is, moreover, tangible in testimonials that the pilgrims bought fabrics, clothes, jewellery, and further luxury objects (Turkish carpets, parrots) on their journey.¹³¹

In the contexts of describing the Muslims and Islam, the alluring facet of the 'exotic Other' was primarily connected with their sexuality. Fabri's example at the beginning of this article¹³² gives evidence of the fact that a cultural encounter was once again used to generate a fundamental opposition between the 'Muslim Other' and

128 MICHELET (note 82), p. 297.

129 One exception is Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. lat. 4847, with the Arabic alphabet on fol. 42v–43r. For the manuscript, see PRZYBILSKI (note 127), p. 302.

130 MCSHANE (note 127), p. 40.

131 Stefan SCHRÖDER, *Reiseandenken aus Jerusalem. Funktionen sakraler und profaner Dinge nach spätmittelalterlichen Wallfahrtsberichten*, in: Philip BRACHER, Florian HERTWECK and Stefan SCHRÖDER (eds.), *Materialität auf Reisen. Zur kulturellen Transformation der Dinge* (Reiseliteratur und Kulturanthropologie 8), Münster 2006, pp. 87–113.

132 For a further example see Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 224, p. 264.

the ‘Christian Self’. Together with the references to the Prophet’s alleged insatiable lust, evidenced by his many wives and concubines, ‘Ā’isha bint Abi Bakr’s alleged adultery, the practice of polygamy, and the Muslims’ paradise as a garden of delights with numerous virgins, the pilgrims created an image of Islam as a “religion ‘of the lascivious’”.¹³³ Although Fabri and Adorno praised in one passage of their reports female Muslims for their shyness and modesty (at least in Fabri’s case again with the purpose of criticizing conditions at home),¹³⁴ condemning the Muslims for celebrating fleshly vices and excesses was the dominant practice. In this way (and accordingly to the function of shaping and defending the identity of the ‘Self’), Christian ethics that centred on monogamy and sexual modesty were highlighted to strengthen the Christian reader’s identity and reassure him that abstinence and restraint would be rewarded in the afterlife.

On occasion, however, writing on (Muslim) debauchery or the bodily appearance of women as objects of desire should evoke erotic associations on the part of the reader. This is reflected especially in the context of the *Chansons de geste* and further courtly literature, but could not be explicitly addressed in pilgrimage reports written by clerics.¹³⁵ Only Arnold of Harff in his vernacular travelogue, designed after the fashion of Mandeville’s ‘Book’ and chivalric romances, subtly played with this notion, stating for instance that the Sultan tried to lure him to convert to Islam by presenting beautiful women and including the sentence “Good women, let me sleep with you” in his Arabic word list.¹³⁶ The practice of female Muslims completely covering their faces with a veil made it difficult for the authors to evaluate women based on their beauty ideals. Nonetheless, the veil and the unusual headgear certainly attracted attention. Particular authors of vernacular reports expressed disappointment in “never being able to see a beautiful woman” or compared the women with devils coming straight from hell.¹³⁷ Arnold of Harff again used the opportunity to create an image of female

133 Dominique IOGNA-PRAT, *The Creation of a Christian Armory Against Islam*, in: Constance Hoffman BERMAN (ed.), *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, New York, London 2005, pp. 300–319, here p. 315.

134 Adorno, ‘Itinerarium’, ed. HEERS and DE GROËR (note 51), p. 72; Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 104. At least in the case of Fabri it might be seen as another effort to criticize certain conditions at home, whereas Adorno noted that they would use the veil to prevent getting impregnated – a legend that he declared was irrational.

135 Jeffrey Jerome COHEN, *On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England*, in: *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31,1 (2001), pp. 113–146; Jerold C. FRAKES, *Discourses of the Muslim Other*, in: Id., *Vernacular and Latin Literary Discourses of the Muslim Other in Medieval Germany*, New York 2011, pp. 11–46, esp. p. 34.

136 Arnold of Harff, ed. GROOTE (note 103), pp. 97–98 and 112. In total, the sentence is included in five word lists: Slavonic, Basque, Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic. Occasionally, he also listed translations for terms such as “fornication” or “beautiful virgin”.

137 Pietro Casola, *Viaggio a Gerusalemme*, ed. by Anna PAOLETTI, Alessandria 2001, p. 201; Pietro Casola, *Canon Pietro Casola’s Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the year 1494*, ed. by Mary Margaret NEWETT, Manchester 1907, p. 257; Santo Brasca, *Viaggio in Terrasanta di Santo Brasca 1480 con l’Itinerario di Gabriele Capodilista 1458*, ed. by Anna Laura MOMIGLIANO LEPSCHY (I cento viaggi 4), Milan 1966, p. 69; Antonio da Crema, ‘Itinerario’, ed. NORI (note 85), p. 109.

Muslim wantonness by presenting the veil as a perfect disguise that allowed the women to visit other men to enjoy pleasures or further rogueries unrecognized by their husbands.¹³⁸ The Latin reports mostly did not cover the issue, possibly because of the fear of being seen as too curious about mundane matters, or of being interested in matters that did not serve to glorify God's might.¹³⁹ The exception is once more Fabri's 'Evagatorium', where the Dominican stated that he and his fellow pilgrims were eager to catch a glimpse behind the veils and finally convinced a group of noble female heathens and their servants to briefly lift their veils. It allowed them to determine that the appearance of the noblewomen corresponded to the pilgrims' ideal of an attractive Christian woman. Moreover, the incident enabled Fabri to play with the reciprocal images of 'Otherness' when stating that the pilgrims just pretended to react with disdain and awe at the moment when the black-skinned female servants lifted their veils. In that way, he attributed to the noble female Muslims the belief that European travellers had probably never seen a black person before in order to communicate to his readers the self-assertion of being a well-experienced and learned traveller for whom the existence of black-skinned people was nothing special.¹⁴⁰

6 Encountering the 'Muslim Other' in Everyday Life

Fabri's description of encountering female Muslims differs from the examples given so far. Even though he relied in his narrative on stereotypical images and depicted the pilgrims as more experienced and more cultured, the gathering apparently took place in a peaceful atmosphere. The emphasis is laid more on the mutual interest in learning more about each other than on confirming cultural boundaries.

Other pilgrimage reports provide some further accounts of casual everyday encounters that point in the same direction. One early example of that kind is Burchard of Mount Sion's last part of his paragraph on the Muslims. After outlining the theological parallels and differences, and condemning the Muslims' sexuality as abnormal, he somewhat surprisingly concludes: "Yet they are very hospitable, courteous, and generous. I have experienced many kindnesses among them and if you serve them in a small way they repay abundantly."¹⁴¹ Another example is Riccoldo of Monte Croce's amazement at the beauty of Baghdad and his praise for Muslim cultural

138 Arnold of Harff, ed. GROOTE (note 103), p. 106.

139 Regarding the discourse of curiosity in the Middle Ages, see the classic works of Lorraine DASTON and Katherine PARK, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750*, New York 1998; Christian K. ZACHER, *Curiosity and Pilgrimage: The Literature of Discovery in Fourteenth-Century England*, Baltimore, London 1976.

140 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 373; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,2, p. 444. Cited also by GANZ-BLÄTTLER (note 79), pp. 187–188.

141 Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 37), pp. 192–193. With the last sentence missing in LAURENT's edition, there are once again modifications in the manuscript tradition that have an impact on the image of the 'Muslim Other'.

achievements, their studiousness, and friendliness. This cannot be explained just as criticism of the alleged depraved state at home. Moreover, it does not override his scathing denigration of Islam.¹⁴² Fabri's 'Evagatorium', finally, provided its readers with quite a few episodes of friendly interactions. These range from a shared meal in a pleasant atmosphere with a Mamluk, a 'Saracen', and two Jews,¹⁴³ and the gracious exchange of food with a Muslim during a stopover,¹⁴⁴ to the swift help of a "heathen gentile Moor" who "showed [Fabri] as much kindness in [his] trouble as the most tender-hearted Christian could have done" after the Dominican fell from his mule.¹⁴⁵ There was also the incident of how Bernhard of Breidenbach's lost purse was found in the desert sand and restored as a matter of course by an Arab when the pilgrims suspected their Muslim aides of robbery and were about to attack them.¹⁴⁶ In addition, Fabri praised his donkey driver Cassa in an extraordinary way and described a mutual, friendly relation that bewildered his Christian companions.¹⁴⁷ He stated without restraint that the pilgrims dispersed in tears when they left Elphahallo, the dragoman, and Calinus *minor*, who escorted them through Sinai and Egypt, and who according to Fabri cared for the pilgrims like a father.¹⁴⁸

Such episodes are not easy to interpret. To some extent, they relate to the author's intention to highlight other aspects of 'Otherness' or to take into account what could arouse the curiosity of the reader. Reporting even small and random incidents, bodily sensations, and tiny details, could be used as a technique to increase the authenticity of the report as a whole.¹⁴⁹ In addition, they have to be seen in their intertextual context and allegorical meaning. Burchard's statement on the benevolent Muslim might be deliberately placed to emphasize his preceding negative verdict of the sinful Latin Christians living in the Holy Land and the increasing shallowness of Christianity in general.¹⁵⁰ For Fabri's readers, the Arab who unexpectedly came to assist Fabri after

142 Riccoldo of Monte Croce, 'Peregrinatio', ed. KAPPLER (note 38), pp. 158–172; GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ (note 38), pp. 211–216.

143 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 129; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 132.

144 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 189; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 205; Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 208; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, p. 242.

145 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, pp. 177–178; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, p. 190.

146 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, pp. 543–545; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,2, pp. 671–674.

147 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 1, p. 208; STEWART (note 1), vol. 1,1, p. 242.

148 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 32. Cited by GANZ-BLÄTTLER (note 79), p. 212.

149 William STEWART, *Die Reisebeschreibung und ihre Theorie im Deutschland des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Literatur und Wirklichkeit 20), Bonn 1978.

150 Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 37), pp. 190–193. Burchard relied here on Jacques de Vitry and picked up the image of the moral depravity of Christians that was developed in the 12th century to explain the multiple setbacks and military defeats of the Crusaders. For an interpretation, see John V. TOLAN, Burchard of Mount Sion, in: Alexander MALLETT and David THOMAS (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. 4 (1200–1350), Leiden, Boston 2012, pp. 613–616.

his fall from a donkey during a trip in the area of Jerusalem would certainly have evoked the biblical story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). Fabri's depiction of Elphahallo corresponded to images of the simple but upright 'noble heathen' that contrast with the mischiefs of *Tanquardinus*, the *Calinus maior* at Cairo, who is described as a former Jew who converted to Christianity and Islam for opportunistic reasons and who, like a wolf in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15), insidiously tried to extort more money from the pilgrims.¹⁵¹

However, these examples cannot sufficiently be explained solely through textual strategies that transform the travelogue into a narrative for the intended audiences. They point to the fact that the pilgrims could not have travelled through the Holy Land mainly controlled by Muslims without getting support from the local population and from the authorities. There is a good chance that Burchard indeed experienced some friendly encounters and was willing to let his readers know about them.¹⁵² These episodes provide glimpses of encounters in everyday life that show a "pragmatic tolerance"¹⁵³ between pilgrims and Muslims and that the travellers' encounters did not always fit a clear dichotomy between the righteous 'Christian Self' and the evil 'Muslim Other'. According to this view, Islam had to be condemned and its followers had to be seen as doomed, but it was nevertheless possible to single out individual Muslims and ascribe positive attitudes to them. These episodes, moreover, mirror the versatility, flexibility, and peaceful side of medieval Muslim–Christian relations that can also be traced back to areas such as transcultural trade connections, transmission of knowledge, and shared sacred sites in the Holy Land.¹⁵⁴

In a chapter that praises the way the sea connects all parts of the world, Fabri used the form of a rhetorical question to express his astonishment.

151 Fabri, 'Evagatorium', ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 2, p. 143 and vol. 3, pp. 20–21, 106–107; STEWART (note 1), vol. 2,1, pp. 147–148. *Tanquardinus* is a malapropism of Taḡrī Berdī Ibn 'Abdullah, who acted in various positions at the Mamluk court in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. For more on him, see BOSSELMANN-CYRAN (note 35), pp. 57–64; John WANSBROUGH, A Mamluk Ambassador to Venice in 913/1507, in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26 (1963), pp. 503–530.

152 Since the last sentence is missing in some manuscripts (Burchard of Mount Sion, 'Peregrinatio', ed. LAURENT [note 55], p. 89), one could speculate if this can be explained by a slip of the pen and lack of space or if a scribe deliberately decided to skip this statement because of its positive message.

153 REICHERT (note 14), p. 17.

154 For further references, see NIKOLAS JASPERS, Austausch-, Transfer- und Abgrenzungsprozesse. Der Mittelmeerraum, in: THOMAS ERTL and MICHAEL LIMBERGER (eds.), *Die Welt 1250–1500 (Globalgeschichte. Die Welt 1000–2000)*, Vienna 2009, pp. 138–174; ANDREAS SPEER and LYDIA WEGENER (eds.), *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 33)*, Berlin, New York 2006; ORA LIMOR, *Sharing Sacred Space: Holy Places in Jerusalem Between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam*, in: IRIS SHAGRIR, RONNIE ELLENBLUM and JONATHAN RILEY-SMITH (eds.), *In laudem hierosolymitani. Studies in Crusades and Medieval Culture in Honour of Benjamin Z. Kedar*, Aldershot 2007, pp. 219–231.

Quis quaeso umquam F.F.F. credidisset futurum socium infidelium, et familiarem fieri irrenatorum, cui etiam necesse factum est applaudere Turco et confidere et connivere Sarraceno, concordare Tartaro, obtemperare Arabi et Aegyptio, reverentiam exhibere Mahometo, timorem ostendere barbaro? Hoc totum mare conglutinat.

Who could have possibly believed, I beg to ask, that Frater Felix Fabri once would have been a companion of infidels, a family friend of unchristened people, that he applauded a Turk, comfortably sat together with a ‘Saracen’ for dining, befriended a Mongol, followed orders of Arabs and Egyptians, bestowed Muhammad reverence and showed fear in front of barbarians? All that is the result of the connectivity of the sea.¹⁵⁵

Looking at such a nearly conciliatory statement, one is inclined to argue that the peaceful encounter with the ‘Muslim Other’ at times led to some kind of “de-illusion” followed by a “rearranging in the internal self-dialogue”,¹⁵⁶ that the traveller’s subjective experiences on the way (*Beobachtungswissen*) resulted in re-thinking or even in changing established knowledge systems (*Toposwissen*).¹⁵⁷ Taking into account his whole travelogue, however, and stressing again that the process of writing and communicating between author and reader along culturally established patterns makes it difficult, if ever possible, to be confident what the traveller thought and felt when travelling, it is highly unlikely that the journey to the Holy Land fundamentally changed Fabri’s and other pilgrims’ attitudes regarding the ‘Muslim Other’.

7 Conclusion

The analysis of the pilgrimage reports has shown that almost everything and everyone encountered on the journey could be used for various purposes in order to influence the reader and to direct his attention to specific aspects: from religion and social customs to language, race, sex, space, and time. Regarding the ‘Muslim Other’, however,

155 Fabri, ‘Evagatorium’, ed. HASSLER (note 1), vol. 3, p. 439; WIEGANDT (note 1), p. 306.

156 Livia MATHIAS SIMÃO, Otherness, in: *Encyclopedia of Global Studies* (2009), pp. 1279–1281, here p. 1281.

157 For these terms see Friederike HASSAUER, *Volkssprachige Reiseliteratur: Faszination des Reisens und räumlicher ordo*, in: Hans-Ulrich GUMBRECHT, Ursula LINK-HEER and Peter-Michael SPANGENBERG (eds.), *La Litterature Historiographique de Origines a 1500 (Grundriß der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters XI)*, Heidelberg 1986, vol. 1, pp. 259–283. For a critical assessment of this concept see Marina MÜNKLER, *Erfahrung des Fremden. Die Beschreibung Ostasiens in den Augenzeugenberichten des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 2000, pp. 231 and 284; Bernhard JAHN, *Raumkonzepte in der Frühen Neuzeit. Zur Konstruktion von Wirklichkeit in Pilgerberichten, Amerikareisebeschreibungen und Prosaerzählungen (Mikrokosmos. Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft und Bedeutungsforschung 34)*, Frankfurt a. M. 1993, pp. 20 and 80.

Islam was the decisive topic to construct and shape the negative image of the hostile, sometimes bloodthirsty and hot-tempered, sometimes naïve and misguided Muslims. In most cases, the in-group (Latin Christians) and out-group (Muslims) were defined as distinct entities with God-given and unchangeable qualities and associated with unambiguous positive or negative connotations. The demeaning and xenophobic descriptions of the 'Muslim Other' by Breidenbach/Rath, written with the purpose to call for a Crusade against the Ottomans, might be the most candid example among the Latin reports of manufacturing an extremely belligerent and merciless 'Muslim Other'. Yet despite the impact of anti-Islamic polemics, despite many offensive and violent incidents between pilgrims and Muslims that could be and have been used to confirm stereotypes, the reports occasionally also include descriptions of encounters that were not overshadowed by religious boundaries. In contrast, they exploited the 'Muslim Other' to also criticize the 'Christian Self', to promote societal reform, and to remind the intended audiences to pursue Christian virtues and ideals. Sometimes, they even portrayed individual Muslims in a very positive way.

The reports reveal that characterizations of the in- and out-groups were situational attributions that could be flexibly adjusted when necessary. When and how the 'Muslim Other' was used to constitute strict or more permeable cultural borders was dependent on the context of the encounter, the intentions of writing both the report and the particular passage, as well as the intended expectations of the audience. As shown, this resulted in quite different ways of dealing with the Muslims and their beliefs. The common aim of all authors was to unveil the 'true' nature of Islam as heresy and to outline the copious misdemeanours of the Muslims in following Muhammad's wicked doctrines. Though relying heavily on authoritative Christian writings on Islam as well as on previous travelogues, and using skilled literary styles, the authors often came up with original viewpoints to describe and interpret the 'Muslim Other'. The modifications within the processes of copying, translating, or using the reports as sources for one's own writings have however shown the impact of the readers, who, as in the case of Burchard of Mount Sion, were able to further change the image of the 'Muslim Other' maybe beyond the original intentions of the author, or who, as in the case of Breidenbach, did not adopt the solely negative description of the 'Muslim Other'.

In sum, it has to be stated that the authors did not make full use of the asymmetric relation between the 'Self' and the 'Other' in all their descriptions of a cross-cultural encounter and not with regard to all the out-groups they defined as different. Within the medieval Latin tradition of pilgrimage reports, it is Felix Fabri in his monumental 'Evagatorium' who assigned some function to the 'Muslim Other' more often than other authors. Writing in the first place for the intimate circle of his Dominican brethren, he was able to give a more nuanced, in some cases also less orthodox image of the Muslims than, for instance, Breidenbach/Rath. In that way, his report is linked to the narratives of John Mandeville and Arnold of Harff, vernacular travelogues that, inspired by courtly literature, deliberately blended fact and fiction and drew more attention to the 'exotic Other' with the aim of entertaining their audiences. Moreover,

the desire and/or requirement to provide their readers with an encyclopaedic overview of the journey, including the topography, history, and the present state of the places the pilgrims visited, sometimes made it difficult to uphold a coherent image of the 'Self' and the 'Other' throughout the whole report. Fabri's 'Evagatorium', with its many reported micro-events, stands out again, while the absence of almost any personal experiences in Breidenbach's report allowed a more one-sided, but more concise, negative image of Islam and the Muslims.

The understanding that the 'Self' is always delineated against the 'Other' points to the fact that travelogues did not provide an unfiltered account of the writers' perception of his culture and the society he was living in. As the pilgrimage reports were not neutral documents of the worlds abroad, they were not "mirrors of the Self" either.¹⁵⁸ Generally, the pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a test for the travellers' character and the encounter with the 'Other' was meant to show their religious steadfastness, modesty, and bravery. As a result, the authors used their experiences to morally guide the readers and to fashion their 'Self' accordingly as a pious Christian. The collective identity shaped through narrating 'Otherness' did not necessarily refer to a condition already achieved, but could express the writer's wish to represent how he himself and/or his own imagined community should be seen and/or how it should act.¹⁵⁹ That, in turn, opened up the possibility of ascribing the 'Muslim Other' different roles and to bring some shades of grey into the black and white dichotomy of the shining 'Christian Self' and the obscure 'Muslim Other' without, however, fundamentally questioning the superiority of the Christian worldview.

158 BÖDEKER, BAUERKÄMPER and STRUCK (note 13), p. 24.

159 Fritz HERMANN, Sprache, Kultur und Identität. Reflexionen über drei Totalitätsbegriffe, in: Andreas GARDT, Ulrike HASS-ZUMKEHR and Thorsten ROELCKE (eds.), Sprachgeschichte als Kulturgeschichte (Studia linguistica Germanica 54), Berlin, New York 1999, pp. 351–391, here pp. 381–385; Peter STACHEL, Identität. Genese, Inflation und Probleme eines für die zeitgenössischen Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaften zentralen Begriffs, in: Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 87 (2005), pp. 395–425, here p. 402.