

Al-Franj: the Crusaders in the Levant | Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

“... Muslim caravans go forth to Frankish lands, while Frankish captives enter Muslim lands.”

Ibn Jubayr (539–613 / 1145–1217), a Muslim from Valencia in Spain, wrote an account of his travels to the Middle East. He describes in detail the Great Mosque in Damascus and other shrines in and near the city. When leaving Damascus in September of 580 / 1184 with a caravan of merchants heading for the old city of Acre (Akko) in Israel he writes: ‘One of the strangest things in the world is that Muslim caravans go forth to Frankish lands, while Frankish captives enter Muslim lands.’



Name:
Pilgrim bottle

Dynasty:
Hegira third quarter 7th century / AD third quarter 13th century Mamluk

Details:
The British Museum
London, England, United Kingdom

Justification:
Probably intended as a gift, this highly decorative glass pilgrim's flask would have been carried in a leather container to protect it.



Name:
Dinar (gold coin)

Dynasty:
Hegira 649 / AD 1251 Crusader

Details:
National Museum of Damascus
Damascus, Syria

Justification:
Written in Arabic, Crusader coins like this dinar would have been circulated by them in an attempt to assert their dominance over the region.



Name:
Dinar (gold coin)

Dynasty:
Hegira 649 / AD 1251 Crusader

Details:
National Museum of Damascus
Damascus, Syria

Justification:
Obverse of a Crusader-period gold dinar.
