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The crusades are often seen as epitomising a period when hostility between Christian West and the Muslim Near East reached an all time high. As this edited volume reveals, however, the era was one which saw both conflict and cohabitation.

Tackling such questions as whether medicinal and architectural innovations came to Europe as a direct result of the Crusades, and why and how peace treaties and intermarriages were formed between the different cultures, this distinguished group of contributors reveal how the Holy Wars led on the one hand to a reinforcement of the beliefs and identities of each side, but on the other to a growing level of cultural exchange and interaction. This volume breaks new ground in not only exploring the conflict between the Christian and the Muslim worlds, but also the impact of this conflict on the cultural evolution of European and Near Eastern thought and practices. Utilising the latest scholarship and original studies of the sources, this survey sheds new light on the cultural realities of East-West relations and marks a new departure for studies of the crusades.

Contributors include John France, Yehoshua Frenkel, Chris Wright, Natasha Hodgson, A.V. Murray, Sini Kangas, Léan Ní Chléirigh, Susan Edgington, Jürgen Krüger, Yvonne Friedman and Bernard Hamilton.