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SPIRITUAL ANCHORS IN A SEA OF FRAGMENTED IDENTITIES: AMIN MAALOUF'S LITERARY VISION FOR GLOBAL COEXISTENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines Amin Maalouf's intellectual insights into contemporary notions of identity and social cohesion in the context of globalization. Thoroughly analyzing his essays and literary corpus, the study reveals his exceptional ability to express specific cultural experiences while addressing universal human concerns. The study shows how Maalouf's concept of spiritual anchors can serve as a theoretical framework for reconciling cultural uniqueness with universal human values. Thus, it proposes a practical approach towards maintaining social harmony while embracing diversity. The analysis explores three primary dimensions of Maalouf's intellectual contribution: cultural and linguistic preservation as fundamental stabilizers, universalistic humanism as ethical framework and the emergence of border-beings (êtres frontaliers) [i]as mediating figures in multicultural societies. Employing established analytical perspectives, this study examines Maalouf's literary vision, which transcends the conventional dichotomy of particularism and universalism, offering instead a nuanced synthesis that acknowledges multiple belonging while maintaining social cohesion. The study reveals how Maalouf's concept of spiritual anchors serves as flexible mechanism for navigating the complexity associated with identity amid globalisation, fostering cultural competence, linguistic diversity and ethical commitment to universal human dignity while preserving distinctive cultural legacies. This research contributes valuable insights to scholarly discourse on identity, multiculturalism and global citizenship by examining how literary intellectuals engage with pressing sociopolitical challenges offering humanistic perspectives to bridge the gap between real-life experience and pragmatic application.

KEYWORDS: *Identity Fragmentation, Spiritual Anchors, Cosmopolitanism, Cultural Multilingualism, Universalism, Linguistic Diversity*

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary global society, there is a notable paradox: advancement in technology has led to the fragmentation and division, rather than unification. It is against this backdrop of complexity on which the Franco-Lebanese writer Amin Maalouf has emerged as a distinctive literary voice. His work offers a penetrating insight into humanity's collective challenges and a vision for resolution. Born in Beirut in 1949, residing in France since 1976 and writing in French despite Arabic being his native language, Maalouf embodies the cultural diversity at the heart of his work. His writings have been translated into over forty languages and have earned him prestigious honours, including the Prix Goncourt in 1993 and the Prince of Asturias Award for Literature in 2010.

It is through his comprehensive intellectual vision, combining particular cultural experience with universal human concerns that Maalouf emerged as one of France's most significant contemporary thinkers. His election to the Académie française in 2011, followed by his appointment as Perpetual Secretary in September 2023, represent an institutional acknowledgement of how his literary work transcends conventional cultural boundaries, thereby enriching both French and global cultural discourse. This recognition reflects the Académie's appreciation of his unique contribution to contemporary thought on identity, culture, and global citizenship — central themes in today's world.

Through his essayistic and literary works spanning four decades, Maalouf has developed an intellectual approach that presents sophisticated observations on identity, challenging conventional approaches to belonging, diversity, and harmonious coexistence. His writing synthesises both autobiographical experience as a Lebanese-born, francophone author with broader cultural reflection on human belonging in todays interconnected and persistently divided world. The significance of Maalouf's literary vision lies in its refusal to accept the binary oppositions that dominate academic and political discourse on identity formation. Rather than choosing between the essentialist view of identity as a fixed aspect of one's inheritance and the constructivist approach that emphasises fluidity, he proposes a nuanced perspective that recognises identity as something that is both rooted and dynamic, particular and universal, and individual and collective. This approach resonates with Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic exploration of the *'foreigner within'* and Homi K. Bhabha's

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analysis of cultural hybridity, placing a distinctive emphasis on pragmatic wisdom over theoretical abstraction.

Theoretical Foundations: The Foreigner Within and Cultural Hybridity

Psychoanalytic perspectives on foreignness provide crucial theoretical grounding for understanding Maalouf's concept of spiritual anchors, particularly through examination of how internal displacement operates within identity formation. The recognition that "*the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder*" *(Kristeva **1**)*[1] illuminates the fundamental internal fragmentation that Maalouf identifies as central to contemporary identity crises. This theoretical insight reveals that foreignness operates not merely as external condition but as constitutive element of human subjectivity itself.

This psychological dimension of this internal foreignness manifests through what can be described as "*a choked up rage deep down in my throat, a black angel clouding transparency*," creating a condition where "*the foreigner has no self. Barely an empty confidence, valueless, which focuses his possibilities of being constantly other, according to others' wishes and to circumstances*"(Kristeva 8)**.**[2] This reflection captures the existential vulnerability that accompanies identity displacement while simultaneously revealing the adaptive potential inherent in such psychological flexibility.

This psychoanalytic understanding provides essential context for comprehending how Maalouf's spiritual anchors function as stabilizing mechanisms rather than rigid identity markers. The internal foreigner's capacity for being "*constantly other*" according to external circumstances suggests remarkable psychological adaptability that can serve as resource rather than deficit when properly channeled. Maalouf's *border-beings* essentially transform this psychological condition from source of fragmentation into foundation for cultural mediation and social cohesion.

The historical precedent of religious communities providing therapeutic frameworks for managing such internal division demonstrates the practical viability of spiritual anchoring mechanisms. Rather than attempting to eliminate the internal foreigner through forced integration or cultural assimilation, effective spiritual anchors acknowledge and work with this fundamental aspect of human psychology. They provide frameworks for understanding internal multiplicity as natural condition rather than pathological state requiring correction.

This psychoanalytic foundation reveals why Maalouf's approach proves more sustainable than conventional identity politics that seek to resolve complexity through exclusive belonging. The internal foreigner cannot be eliminated through external political arrangements because it represents fundamental structure of consciousness itself. Spiritual anchors therefore function by providing meaning-making frameworks that enable individuals to navigate this internal complexity constructively rather than destructively.

The theological dimension of this analysis suggests that spiritual mechanisms for cohesion can transcend ethnic and cultural boundaries precisely because they address universal psychological conditions rather than particular cultural content. This creates possibilities for community formation based on shared recognition of internal multiplicity rather than common cultural inheritance, supporting Maalouf's vision of composite identity as source of strength rather than fragmentation. Such theoretical grounding demonstrates how literary intellectuals can draw upon established psychological insights to develop practical frameworks for contemporary challenges.

Bhabha's Productive Hybridity and the Unhomely

Postcolonial theoretical perspectives on cultural hybridity provide essential framework for understanding Maalouf's *border-beings* as mediating figures who navigate the complex terrain of cultural displacement and identity formation. The concept of hybridity offers particularly valuable insights into how individuals can transform the experience of cultural dislocation from source of fragmentation into foundation for creative identity construction and social mediation.

The theoretical understanding of hybridity reveals how it operates as "*an articulation of displacement and dislocation*" that fundamentally alters the dynamics of cultural authority and belonging (Bhabha 114).[3] Rather than representing simple mixture of distinct cultural elements, hybridity functions as mechanism that exposes the constructed nature of cultural boundaries while creating new possibilities for identity formation. This process proves particularly relevant for understanding how Maalouf's border-beings navigate multiple cultural worlds without being reduced to any single cultural category.

The productive dimension of cultural hybridity emerges through its capacity to challenge fixed identity categories while affirming difference as generative force rather than divisive obstacle. Hybridity operates by disrupting traditional authority structures that depend upon clear cultural boundaries and stable identity categories. When individuals embody multiple cultural inheritances simultaneously, they reveal the artificial nature of exclusive cultural belonging while demonstrating alternative models of identity formation that transcend conventional limitations.

This theoretical framework illuminates why Maalouf's border-beings prove effective as cultural mediators rather than simply

[1] ***Kristeva, Julia.*** *Strangers to Ourselves.* ***Translated by Leon S. Roudiez,*** *Columbia University Press,* ***1991.***

[2] ***Kristeva, Julia.*** *Strangers to Ourselves.* ***Translated by Leon S. Roudiez,*** *Columbia University Press,* ***1991.***

[3] *Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. Routledge, 1994*

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representing confused or incomplete identity formation. Their hybrid status enables them to understand multiple cultural perspectives while remaining committed to none exclusively, creating capacity for translation and bridge-building that would be impossible from position of singular cultural identity. The hybridity that characterizes border-being identity becomes resource for social cohesion rather than threat to cultural stability.

The linguistic dimension of hybridity proves particularly significant for understanding Maalouf's multilingual experience and his emphasis on language as primary cultural anchor. The untranslatable elements that persist across languages create spaces where "*newness [can enter] the world" through continuous processes of cultural translation and reinscription* (Bhabha 227).[4] These linguistic spaces of untranslatability become sites of creative identity formation rather than barriers to communication, enabling border-beings to serve as bridges between different cultural and linguistic communities.

The theoretical insight that culture functions as "*open textured, warlike strategy*" whose aim involves "*continued agony*" rather than "*total disappearance of the existing culture*" (*Bhabha* 114)[5] provides crucial context for understanding how spiritual anchors operate within conditions of cultural displacement. Rather than preserving static cultural forms, effective spiritual anchors enable dynamic negotiation of cultural inheritance that maintains continuity while allowing for transformation and adaptation to new circumstances.

Maalouf's perspective on contemporary global fragmentation

Maalouf's analysis of contemporary global conditions employs a carefully constructed maritime metaphor that serves multiple analytical functions while establishing the framework for his remedial vision. Addressing his readers as ("*compagnons de voyage*") "*travel companions*," Maalouf delivers his stark assessment: "*the ship on which we have embarked is now adrift, without direction, without destination, without visibility, without compass, on a turbulent sea, and an urgent awakening would be needed to avoid shipwreck. It will not suffice for us to continue on our momentum, come what may, navigating by sight, circumventing some obstacles, and letting time take its course. Time is not our ally, it is our judge, and we are already living on borrowed time*" (*Maalouf* 15).[ii] [6]This idea highlights the true scale of our current crisis: a profound lack of direction. Like a ship adrift without purpose, clarity or guidance, our collective systems seem to be failing on multiple fronts. The power of this ship metaphor lies in showing how our usual ways of responding just aren't enough to tackle such deep-rooted problems. Recognizing this inadequacy is why we propose spiritual anchors – not as a replacement, but as a different kind of compass. This concept forms the groundwork for the proposal that follows.

The Reductive Trap: Identity as Exclusionary Belonging

Maalouf's core argument reveals a profound irony: contemporary societies often create the very identity conflicts they aim to prevent. His systematic analysis shows how reductive identity formation operates as a deeply ingrained cultural practice. This isn't just abstract theory; it pervades our everyday interactions and the structures of our institutions. Crucially, the pressure to choose exclusive identities doesn't come only from extremist groups. It arises from pervasive social expectations – the constant demand for clear-cut, categorical allegiance. This creates systematic incentives, essentially rewarding individuals for suppressing parts of themselves that don't fit dominant group norms.

The psychological impact of this reduction is especially destructive. It takes natural human complexity and twists it into a source of internal struggle and outward aggression. When societies insist that authentic belonging requires exclusivity, they force people to deny significant portions of their cultural heritage. This creates deep psychological tension, which frequently boils over as hostility directed towards those who seem to embody the very aspects of identity the individual felt pressured to suppress**.** Maalouf's stark assessment culminates in his observation that "*This is how one 'manufactures' killers*" (*Les Identités meurtrières*, 14)[7]. The verb "*fabriquer*" emphasizes the artificial and constructed nature of violent identity formation, suggesting that extreme violence emerges through specific social and psychological processes that can be redirected through alternative approaches to identity formation and cultural education.

Regional Manifestations and Historical Context

Maalouf's analysis extends to concrete examination of how fragmentation operates across different global regions and historical periods. His treatment of medieval Crusades provides instructive parallel to contemporary conflicts, revealing how Arab chroniclers characterized the Crusaders as "*the scourge of Christianity*,"[iii] yet his analysis also uncovers moments of cultural exchange that suggest alternative possibilities (*Les Croisades vues par les Arabes*, 17).[8]

Contemporary Europe exemplifies how historical progress toward integration can coexist with persistent exclusion mechanisms. Maalouf identifies an invisible but "*real, cruel and dangerous*"[iv] wall separating European integration successes from the stagnant Arab-Muslim world across the Strait of Gibraltar (*Le Dérèglement du monde*, 89).[9] Similar patterns emerge in American failure to extend prosperity south of the Rio Grande, demonstrating that fragmentation operates through structural economic and political systems that concentrate benefits while excluding neighboring populations.

[4] *Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. Routledge, 1994*
[5] *Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. Routledge, 1994*
[6] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009*
[7] *Maalouf, Amin. Les Identités meurtrières. Grasset, 1998.*
[8] *Maalouf, Amin. Les Croisades vues par les Arabes. J'ai Lu, 1983.*
[9] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009.*

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His most detailed examination focuses on the Arab-Muslim world's crisis of legitimacy stemming from successive political failures and external interventions. His historical perspective reveals how earlier Islamic civilization demonstrated remarkable capacity for intellectual synthesis, with medieval Baghdad fostering rational debates that are now "*unthinkable nowadays in any Muslim city*" [10v](*Le Dérèglement du monde*, 162). This decline manifests tragically in the persecution of religious minorities, demonstrating how societies have lost tolerance capacities they previously possessed.

Culture and Education as Foundational Stabilizers

In response to his comprehensive analysis of global fragmentation, Maalouf proposes "*spiritual anchors*"—cultural resources and educational practices capable of providing stability and meaning in an otherwise disorienting world. Central among these anchors is the primacy of culture and education, which he positions as essential survival mechanisms for contemporary humanity.

Maalouf's assertion that *"the twenty-first century... will be saved by culture, or it will sink*"[vi] establishes culture not as luxury but as fundamental necessity for human survival in an interconnected world (*Le Dérèglement du monde*, 247).[11] This formulation challenges widespread assumptions about culture's secondary importance relative to politics, economics or technological innovation.

Culture functions as survival discipline particularly crucial for managing human diversity in societies characterized by increasing complexity. Maalouf's vision suggests that cultural competence enables individuals and communities to move beyond superficial stereotypes to grasp the genuine essence of different peoples and traditions. His emphasis on literature as providing access to internal dimensions of human experience reveals culture's distinctive capacity for fostering understanding across difference in ways that remain invisible through purely political or economic analysis.

Language as Primary Cultural Anchor

Among cultural anchors, language occupies paramount significance in Maalouf's intellectual analysis, functioning as both vehicle for cultural transmission and fundamental component of identity formation. He argues that "*Of all the belongings we recognize in ourselves, it is almost always one of the most determining. At least as much as religion, of which it has been, throughout History, the principal rival, in a certain way, but sometimes also the ally*" (*Les Identités meurtrières*, 178)[vii].[12]

This analysis positions language as competing with religion for primary influence on identity formation while simultaneously recognizing their potential complementarity. Maalouf's multilingual experience—writing in French despite Arabic being his native language—demonstrates how linguistic displacement can enable cultural enrichment rather than impoverishment through continuous translation and cultural negotiation that creates bridges between communities.

His vision involves individuals becoming both generalists, knowing their native language and English for global communication, and specialists, mastering a freely chosen third language that enables deeper fulfillment. This trilingual competence fosters enrichment rather than fragmentation, creating practical mechanisms for navigating multiple cultural worlds while serving as bridges between different communities.

Universal Humanism as Ethical Foundation

Beyond cultural and linguistic anchors, Maalouf champions universalistic humanism as essential spiritual foundation for navigating contemporary challenges without sacrificing either human dignity or cultural diversity. The foundation of his approach lies in belief in shared human journey that requires recognizing "*It is only if one believes in this common adventure that one can give meaning to our specific itineraries*" (*Le Dérèglement du monde*, 289)[13].[viii]

This formulation establishes the relationship between universal and particular dimensions of human experience as complementary rather than competitive. Universal humanism requires recognizing the equal dignity of cultures while prioritizing values that transcend particular civilizations, traditions and beliefs. This framework navigates the tension between cultural relativism and universal human rights by distinguishing between respect for cultural dignity and acceptance of particular practices. Respecting cultures involves promoting their languages, arts, and intellectual traditions, but explicitly excludes condoning practices that violate human dignity such as tyranny, oppression or systematic discrimination.

The Border-Being: Cosmopolitan Identity as Mediating Force

Perhaps the most innovative aspect of Maalouf's intellectual contribution is his articulation of the "*être frontalier*" or "border-being," which he describes as the human being possessing an identity composed of several opposed belongings. This figure embodies Maalouf's vision of identity as composite rather than singular, challenging conventional assumptions about coherent selfhood while demonstrating possibilities for navigating multiple allegiances without fragmentation.

Maalouf's personal example illustrates this concept through lived experience rather than abstract theorization. When asked whether he feels "rather French or rather Lebanese," he responds "*L'un et l'autre !*" / "Both!"[ix] (*Les Identités meurtrières*, 9).[14] This response

[10] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009.*
[11] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009.*
[12] *Maalouf, Amin. Les Identités meurtrières. Grasset, 1998.*
[13] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009.*
[14] *Maalouf, Amin. Les Identités meurtrières. Grasset, 1998.*

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challenges binary thinking that dominates contemporary political discourse about immigration, citizenship, and national loyalty while offering alternative models for understanding complex identity formation.

The border-being functions as global citizen, moving between different spaces, cultures, and belief systems without ever postulating the singularity of their belongings, recognizing that exclusive identities prove most dangerous. This mobility requires rejecting the false choice between complete assimilation and total separation, instead embracing the creative possibilities that emerge from cultural intersection and dialogue.

The Mediating Function and Social Cohesion

Border-beings serve essential mediating functions by acting as bridges and mediators between diverse communities and cultures. They function as relays and cement within societies, providing connections and cohesion that would otherwise be absent in increasingly fragmented social environments. This mediating capacity emerges from their ability to understand multiple cultural perspectives while remaining committed to none exclusively.

The mediating function addresses the profound desire for social solidarity that emerges in contemporary fragmented contexts. Border-beings embody this desire for connection while possessing cultural competence necessary to create meaningful bridges between different communities. Their multiple cultural competencies position them uniquely to facilitate transformative encounters that create ethical obligations across cultural boundaries.

Maalouf's historical research provides precedent for border-being identity through examination of medieval cultural exchange, revealing how certain figures transcended religious and cultural boundaries to facilitate understanding. His analysis of Lebanon provides complex case study for understanding both possibilities and limitations of institutionalizing multiple identity recognition within political systems, demonstrating how border-being identity can contribute to practical governance solutions for diverse societies.

Taming the Panther: Identity as Manageable Force

Maalouf's approach to managing identity conflicts centers on his metaphor of "*taming the panther*,"[15] which encapsulates his sophisticated strategy for handling identity desires and ethnic consciousness without either dangerous suppression or unlimited expression. Like a panther, identity can prove deadly if persecuted, ignored, or given complete freedom, but it can also be domesticated through careful observation, patient study, and gradual mastery of appropriate techniques.

This approach requires fundamental recognition that identity operates as powerful force requiring careful management rather than simple acceptance, rejection, or political manipulation. The goal involves preventing social breakdown while avoiding the historical pattern of massacres, expulsions, and purifications that have repeatedly marked human experience when identity conflicts are mismanaged.

Maalouf's analysis includes crucial observation about contemporary priorities and their relationship to identity conflicts. He argues that "*in a world dominated by the golden calf, I am not sure that the priority of priorities is to expel God. It is the golden calf that must be fought, it is the one that constitutes the worst threat to democracy as well as all human values*" [16x] (*Le Dérèglement du monde*, 312).

This analysis locates the primary contemporary threat not in religious belief itself but in materialistic obsession that corrupts both secular and religious institutions while undermining authentic spiritual and ethical values. Genuine spiritual needs can serve as refuge for the defeated and should not be dismissed, provided they do not become exclusive, intolerant, or violent.

The Call to Action: Embracing Collective Responsibility

Maalouf's vision culminates in urgent call to action that explicitly rejects fatalistic acceptance of contemporary trends while maintaining realistic assessment of required transformation. He insists that "*The 'deluge' is not fate. The future is not written in advance, it is up to us to write it, up to us to conceive it, up to us to build it; with audacity, because one must dare to break with secular habits; with generosity, because one must gather, reassure, listen, include, share; and above all with wisdom*" [xi](*Le Dérèglement du monde*, 331).[17]

Maalouf's approach emphasizes the importance of individual action in addressing contemporary global crises. He rejects the idea that the future is predetermined, emphasizing that the future is shaped by human choices and actions. However, meaningful change requires more than superficial action. Rather, it requires three critical qualities that transform potential into meaningful change.

The first quality is the audacity to dismantle entrenched systems that perpetuate division and conflict. This quality goes beyond incremental reform to embrace fundamental structural change. The second quality, inclusivity, involves embracing diverse contributors to solutions and recognizing that sustainable transformation requires broad participation rather than narrow expertise. The third quality, humility, offers the discernment to navigate complexity without inadvertently reproducing the harmful effects of current systems. Together, these three qualities convert abstract concepts of agency into effective, concrete intervention.

[15] *Maalouf, Amin. Les Identités meurtrières. Grasset, 1998.pg 187*

[16] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009.*

[17] *Maalouf, Amin. Le Dérèglement du monde. Grasset, 2009.*

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The transformation Maalouf envisions is revolutionary in that it extends far beyond conventional policy adjustments toward what can only be described as a reimagining of civilization. This comprehensive approach requires a global, collective effort to reconsider the core pillars that structure contemporary society. These include political systems that determine power structures and participation; economic frameworks that establish value systems and equity; cultural mechanisms that shape identity and belonging; religious institutions that influence ethics and coexistence; and historical narratives that define legacy and meaning. This analysis reveals the inadequacy of conventional reform approaches. Producing such profound change necessarily demands authentic democratic participation, which transcends decision-making processes of elites. This requires engaging communities throughout the world in proactively creating systems reflecting their diverse realities. Rather than accepting central control, this approach prioritizes decentralized sovereignty as the basis for sustainable global transformation.

Conclusion: Toward Synthesis of Universal and Particular

Amin Maalouf presents a compelling framework for addressing contemporary global fragmentation through his concept of "*spiritual anchors."* This approach represents a sophisticated literary response that addresses fundamental cultural and spiritual dimensions of modern challenges, examining how individuals and communities understand their identity and relationships within an interconnected yet divided world.

Maalouf's primary contribution stems from his rejection of the false dichotomies which have constrained discussions of identity formation and cultural management. Rejecting conventional binary frameworks placing universalism against particularism, assimilation against multiculturalism, and nationalism against cosmopolitanism, instead, his work develops a balanced synthesis. This framework enables individuals to maintain multiple cultural belongings while preserving coherent self-identity and meaningful social participation.

The concept of "*border-beings*" provides particularly valuable insights for contemporary discourse on cosmopolitanism and global citizenship. This framework transcends abstract theoretical discussions by offering concrete applications for educational initiatives, policy development, and individual growth strategies. The approach emphasizes active cultivation of multicultural competence rather than passive tolerance, creating practical pathways for meaningful cross-cultural engagement.

Maalouf's emphasis on culture and language as foundational spiritual anchors establishes practical mechanisms for fostering genuine understanding across cultural differences. This approach enables authentic cross-cultural dialogue without requiring the abandonment of particular traditions or the dilution of cultural distinctiveness.

This framework balances a realistic assessment with constructive optimism. While recognizing the complexity and magnitude of current global challenges, Maalouf fosters confidence in individual and collective potential to reimagine and create an alternative future. His appointment as Perpetual Secretary of the Académie française in 2023 provides institutional validation to his humanistic approach. It demonstrates that cultural and educational resources serve as essential tools for navigating global fragmentation and establishing viable forms global coexistence

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Endnotes

[i] *Amin Maalouf's Les Identités Meurtrières (p. 13), an* ***être frontalier*** *("border-being") describes an individual whose very existence is defined by straddling violently conflicting identities (ethnic, religious, national, etc.). Occupying this precarious space between warring groups endows them with a unique potential—and burden—to act as essential mediators, bridge-builders, and peacemakers. However, Maalouf argues that society's relentless pressure forcing them to deny their multiplicity and "choose a side" is not merely tragic for the individual; it is a devastating symptom of collective dysfunction. When these natural unifiers are crushed by monolithic identity demands, Maalouf warns, society itself becomes a factory of violence ("fabrique des massacreurs").*

[ii] *le navire sur lequel nous sommes embarqués est désormais à la dérive, sans cap, sans destination, sans visibilité, sans boussole, sur une mer houleuse, et qu'il faudrait un sursaut, d'urgence, pour éviter le naufrage. Il ne nous suffira pas de poursuivre sur notre lancée, vaille que vaille, en naviguant à vue, en contournant quelques obstacles, et en laissant faire le temps. Le temps n'est pas notre allié, c'est notre juge, et nous sommes déjà en sursis"*

[iii] *"le fléau de la christianité"*

[iv] *"réel, cruel et dangereux"*

[v] *"impensables de nos jours dans n'importe quelle ville musulmane"*

[vi] *"le XXIe siècle... sera sauvé par la culture, ou bien il sombrera"*

[vii] *De toutes les appartenances que nous nous reconnaissons, elle est presque toujours l'une des plus déterminantes. Au moins autant que la*

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religion, dont elle a été, tout au long de l'Histoire, la principale rivale, d'une certaine manière, mais quelquefois aussi l'alliée" /

[viii] *"C'est seulement si l'on croit à cette aventure commune que l'on peut donner un sens à nos itinéraires spécifiques"*

[ix] *"plutôt français ou plutôt libanais"*

[x] *"dans un monde dominé par le veau d'or, je ne suis pas sûr que la priorité des priorités soit d'expulser Dieu. C'est le veau d'or qu'il faut combattre, c'est lui qui constitue la pire menace pour la démocratie comme pour toutes les valeurs humaines" /*

[xi] *"Le « déluge » n'est pas une fatalité. L'avenir n'est pas écrit d'avance, c'est à nous de l'écrire, à nous de le concevoir, à nous de le bâtir ; avec audace, parce qu'il faut oser rompre avec des habitudes séculaires ; avec générosité, parce qu'il faut rassembler, rassurer, écouter, inclure, partager ; et avant tout avec sagesse"*

Note: *All English translations of French quotations are my own.*