



ISSN: 1309 4173 (Online) 1309 - 4688 (Print)

Volume 7 Issue 3, p. 81-98, September 2015

The Betrayal of the First Crusade

Birinci Haçlı Seferinin İhaneti

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Abstract: This article examines the launching of the First Crusade with a new outlook and argues that the First Crusade was not primarily and exclusively religious in nature, paradoxically, it rather was an outcome of social, political, and economic conditions of the eleventh century Western Europe.

Keywords: Crusades, Jerusalem, Papacy, Islam, Muslims, Seljuks

Öz: Bu makale Birinci Haçlı Seferi'ni yeni bir bakış açısıyla inceleyerek, Birinci Haçlı Seferi'nin başlamasının temel sebebinin sadece dini olmağını onbirinci yüzyılın Batı Avrupası'nda görülen sosyal, siyasi ve iktisadi şartların bir sonucu olduğunu tespit etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Haçlılar, Kudüs, Papalık, İslam, Müslümanlar, Selçuklular

Introduction

Crusades were one of the most titanic military expeditions to the East the history of humankind had ever seen. In November 1095, Pope Urban II, the mastermind behind the Crusading movement, called upon the knights of France to journey to the Holy Land to capture the city of Jerusalem, and to assist the Christian brethren in the East against the Muslim power. People from all walks of life from Western Europe took the vow for the Holy City. Over 60,000 people—men, women and children—set out to recover the Holy Land to secure spiritual and other secular rewards.² The ideology of the First Crusade—the only successful Crusade—did not develop all of a sudden, but combined with the appeal for help from the Byzantine emperor, Alexius I, against the advancing Seljuks. The changing environment Europe was experiencing provided the Pope a good time to call people to go for the Crusade war. Consequently, the First Crusaders captured the Holy City of Jerusalem and established four principal Crusader states/territories in the Near East. The story of the medieval Crusades sounds quite simple to the ears, but the subject of the Crusades, owing to its deep impact on the mutual understanding between the East and the West, has again attracted modern scholarship with diverse and divergent views surfacing in their works. Ergo, before we directly shed light on the First Crusade, it is important to know how Crusades are seen in the modern Western scholarship.

Causes of the Crusade War—Views of Western Scholars

What led the people of the Western Europe to go for a long military expedition to the East, has been hotly debated in the modern academic discourse. The Medieval Western

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² Jonathan Phillips, "The Call of the Crusades", *History Today*, 59/11, (November 2009): 11. <http://www.historytoday.com/jonathan-phillips/call-crusades> (Accessed 4 July 2015).



Christians, generally, exhibited a positive attitude toward the Crusade wars. They viewed the Crusades as an act of piety, religious zeal, spiritual progress, and more than that a war proclaimed by 'God' himself. During the second half of the sixteenth century, Europeans utterly lost their interest in the Crusades. However, in the eighteenth century, the historical view of the Crusades began to change dramatically. Still it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the foundations of modern western scholarship on the Crusades were laid. Since then many Western scholars began to argue one important question 'what were the Crusades?'³ The contemporary scholarship, due to the availability of wider sources, has widened the concept of the Crusades as against the generally held medieval perception where people often expressed it as an exclusive religious engagement or desire; accordingly, contemporary historians began to investigate to address the problem of what actually Crusades were. Consequently, various perceptions have emerged about the Crusades in recent past.

Chiefly continental European traditionalists,⁴ argued for the centrality of Jerusalem and the Holy Land to legitimate crusading as a military and spiritual goal of crusading and as a key feature of the Crusade indulgence.⁵ They believe that Crusades ended with the fall of the crusader states in the east thus for them the loss of Acre in 1291 marked the end of the Crusades.⁶

Pluralists, mainly British and American scholars,⁷ insisted that "it was papal authorization that alone defined a Crusade."⁸ They believed that where papal authority existed, there was a Crusade. In fact pluralists want to expand the crusading to include all military expeditions launched with papal indulgence, whether to the Holy Land of Jerusalem or against heretics, Christians, pagans or non-Levantine Muslims. Thus, for them, the history of the Crusades extends both geographically and chronologically, up to the recent times.⁹

However, for many western historians, both of the above approaches pose problems; for they are concerned "what to do with the so-called pre- or proto-crusades, which were neither directed toward the east nor summoned by the pope".¹⁰ Thus historians put those Crusades, which were neither authorized nor supported by the papacy, under the category of 'popularists.'¹¹ Popularists favor the idea that crusading emerged as an expression of popular piety.¹²

Generalists, according to Constable, trace the genesis and nature of crusading in the long development of Christian holy war before 1095, they justify fighting in defense of the faith.

³ Myoung-Woon Cha, *The Crusades, Their Influence and Their Relevance for Today*, (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Pretoria, 2006), 6-7.

⁴ Han Eberhard Mayer (1972) is one of the classic examples of this school of thought. Edward Gibbon and H.E. J. Cowdrey also believe the centrality of the Jerusalem for the Crusade wars. Helen J. Nicholson, "Introduction: Definition and Scope" in *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen J. Nicholson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 1.

⁵ Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (London: Macmillan Press, 1998), 2.

⁶ Giles Constable, "The Historiography of the Crusades" in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, eds. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001), 12.

⁷ Jonathan Riley-Smith is considered the greatest proponent of the pluralist school; Helmut Roscher and Norman Housely are also few amongst them. Nicholson, "Introduction" 1.

⁸ J. Riley Smith, *What were the Crusades?* 2nd ed. (London, 1992) as quoted in Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades*, 2; for the difference between the Traditionalists and the Pluralists, see also, Jonathan Riley-Smith, "The Crusading Movement and Historians" in *The Oxford History of The Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1-12 (hereafter cited as Smith, *Oxford History*).

⁹ Constable, *The Historiography*, 12; Riley Smith, *What were the Crusades?* 2-3.

¹⁰ Constable, *The Historiography*, 13.

¹¹ Constable, *The Historiography*, 13.

¹² *Ibid.*



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They particularly emphasized the traditional concept of just war—Peace and Truce of God—to support and defend the papacy in the eleventh century.¹³

Contemporary historian Jonathan Riley-Smith believes Crusade as a “holy war fought against those perceived to be the external or internal foes of Christendom for the recovery of Christian property or in defense of the Church or Christian people,”¹⁴ to add more to this, with an expectation of forgiving sins for those who participated in these wars. Another great Crusade historian, Jonathan Phillips, writes that religion was not the only driving force for the participants who went in the Crusades, there were “other ideas, such as the lure of land and money, a sense of honor and family tradition, a desire for adventure, and the obligation of service, all sat alongside—and sometimes smothered religion.”¹⁵ Hans E. Mayer, hewing to a similar line, explains the material expansion of the Crusades: “obviously the crusade acted as a kind of safety valve for a knightly class which was constantly growing in numbers...a class which looked upon the crusade as a way of solving its material problems.”¹⁶

Prominent author, historian and former priest, James Carroll, reanimated an eighteenth-century position, prominently advocated by such Enlightenment thinkers as Voltaire (1694–1778), Denis Diderot (1713–1784), and Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) that the Crusades left a “trail of violence [that] scars the earth and human memory even to this day.”¹⁷ Reckoning the follies of the Crusades wars, the eighteenth century Scottish philosopher, economist and historian David Hume (1711–1776) bemoaned that Crusades represented the “most signal and most durable monument of human folly that has yet appeared in any age or nation.”¹⁸ Francis Bacon described the Crusades as “rendezvous of cracked brains that wore their feather in their head instead of their hat.”¹⁹

To summarize, there are mainly two popular perceptions of the Crusades. One emerged during the age of Enlightenment in the 18th century, where Crusades were seen as barbaric invasion—moved with full of ignorance and superstition—attacked the peaceful Muslim world. The other perception is that of 19th century-Romanticism²⁰ wherein the Crusades were seen as ‘noble wars’ fought for the safety of the Christendom and Holy Land; led by all-men of Europe motivated by spiritual gain. However, when we analyze the social, political, economic and religious conditions of the eleventh-century Europe it becomes clear that Crusades did not born out of a vacuum in 1095 but were a result of many factors—The ambitions of the papacy and church to strengthen religious authority, the rise of popular piety among common masses, the sanctification of violence, the perpetual domestic violence, the bonds of patronage and loyalty among the feudal classes—all played their crucial part in the creation of Crusades, which ultimately burst with the preaching of the sermon by Pope Urban II. Religious zeal, of

¹³ Ibid., 14; see also, Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades*, 2.

¹⁴ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History* (London: New Haven, 1987), xxviii, as quoted in Constable, *The Historiography*, 15.

¹⁵ Jonathan Phillips, *Holy Warriors: A Modern History of the Crusades* (UK: Vintage, 2010), xviii-xix.

¹⁶ Quoted in Rodney Stark, *One True God: Historical Consequences of Monotheism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 151.

¹⁷ James Carroll, *Crusade: Chronicles of an Unjust War* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004), 5. On these Enlightenment ideas, see Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 6, 1996, p. 64.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/> (Accessed 17 May 2014); see also, for example, Nicholson, "Introduction" 5; Jean Richard, *The Crusades, C.1071-c.1291* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 475; Constable, *The Historiography*, 8; and Richard, *The Crusades*, 475.

¹⁸ David Hume, *The History of England*, vol. 1, (London: Hatchard, 1816), 301.

¹⁹ Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), preface.

²⁰ This period witnessed the changing and contradicting views on the Crusades from romanticism to nationalism and from colonialism to racism, but it was the former that ultimately triumphed.



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course, was a dominant factor that forced them to fight against the advancing Muslim power that became the immediate cause for such an expedition. All these aspects, possibilities will be explored in the following sections.

Religious Motivations

During the second half of the 11th Century Western Europe was witness to many schisms. The relationship between the Byzantine Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church was sour and they severed from each other altogether in 1054, over various theological disagreements which became known as The Great Schism. Therefore, since the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Urban II had sought to re-establish friendly relationship and to unify the two severed branches of the church, believing that the crusading enterprise would bring the two churches together, ushering a new age of unity in Christendom.²¹ However, for him, first and foremost, it would provide an opportunity to expand papal power once again, thus creating his own legacy for times to come and his name associated with grandness.²² Thus, preaching the 'holy war' in the First Crusade was the ideal way to achieve both secular motives.

Moreover, popes of the 11th century sought to reform both papacy and the wider secular church from the corruption and superstitions in order to regain their supremacy. The Cluny reform movement thus sought to reassert their control over all of the clergy by "re-emphasizing separation and dominance of the spiritual over the secular in church appointments, management, finance and behaviour."²³ James A. Corbett presents the dismal picture of papacy as:

The need for a profound reform was obvious. During the turmoil of two centuries (ca. 850-1050) the clergy had become victims of the feudal disorders. Many were poorly formed for their clerical duties, many were grossly ignorant of canon law and of the obligations of clerical celibacy. Clerical marriage was widespread, simony²⁴ common.... From the middle of the eleventh century on, the papacy supplied the needed leadership and inspired the religious movement which was at the basis of the great spiritual, intellectual, and cultural achievements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁵

Furthermore, one must not forget the role of Gregory VII (1073-1085), the predecessor and mentor of Pope Urban II. In fact, Gregory VII was "The greatest figure in the papal reform"²⁶ movement. In order to persuade the nobles of Europe to go for the Crusade in 1074, he wrote: "a pagan race [has] overcome the Christians and with horrible cruelty had devastated everything almost to the walls of Constantinople [...] If we love God and wish to be

²¹ Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 20; see also, Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. I, 96-97.

²² For Pope Urban II's secular motivations in Crusades, see George Vicari, "The Secular Motivations of the First Crusade" *Research Report* (Alabama: Maxwell Air Force Base, April 2002).

<http://www.medievalists.net/2011/07/25/the-secular-motivations-of-the-first-crusade/> (Accessed 30 March 2014,; see also, for example, Douglas James, "Christians and the First Crusade" in *History Review*, 2005

<http://www.historytoday.com/douglas-james/christians-and-first-crusade> (Accessed 4 May 2014; Linda Moss, "Pope Urban II," <http://popeurbanfirstcrusade.blogspot.in/> (Accessed 5 June 2014, 1-25.

²³ Tyerman, *God's War*, 8; for more discussion on the reform movement, see also, Carter Lindberg, *A Brief History of Christianity* (UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 59-68; "Congregation of Cluny" in *Catholic Encyclopedia* <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04073a.htm> (Accessed 6 June 2016).

²⁴ Simony was the giving or receiving of clerical office for money or other considerations.

²⁵ James A. Corbett, *The Papacy: A Brief History* (Princeton, New Jersey, NJ:D. Van Norstrand, 1956), 27.

²⁶ Corbett, *The Papacy*, 29.



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recognized as Christians, [...] we should lay down our lives to liberate them.”²⁷ By doing this, Gregory VII wanted to create a legacy of primacy for the papacy not only in the West but in the East as well. However, it was Pope Urban II, who took up Gregory’s plans and gave them more definite shape.²⁸

Also, like Gregory, Urban desired to see the Greek Church back in the Roman Catholic fold but without any compromise on disputed theological issues. It apparently seems that Urban II had purely religious motives behind his plan of reunion of the church factions. However, this was not the case; when we analyze the appeal made by the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I, in which Alexius had requested Pope Urban II send only mercenaries to help him fighting the Turks of Asia Minor. Instead of organizing an army of typical military men, Urban raised a vast army of regular people whom he would motivate through religious appeals: “Urban II believed that recruiting regulars, whom recognized him as a divine leader and not the Emperor, would bring him a large army of followers, helping him gain political power and control over any lands the masses would obtain.”²⁹ This clearly depicts Pope Urban’s undercurrent of secular motives in the garb of religion in order to check his religious rival in the East and at the same time to create his own legacy as well. This will be dealt in more detail in Pope Urban’s political ambitions in the following section. However, it is quite germane here to analyze his famous sermon—which he delivered at the council of Clermont I in 1095—first in order to understand his secular political motives.

What Urban spoke on the occasion is not clear as we have four different versions of his sermon written by reliable chroniclers of his times “but none of them profess to give an accurate verbal account; and each wrote his chronicle few years later and coloured his account in the light of subsequent events.”³⁰

The four versions of Urban’s speech differ in themes and details but all of them seem agreed on to the principal points.³¹ Moreover, interestingly each of the chroniclers has stressed that part of his speech which particularly appealed to him. All of them were said to be presumably present, but the version of Fulcher of Charters is regarded as the earliest (1101), followed by Robert the Monk (1107-8), Baudri of Dol (c.1108), and Guibert of Nogent (c. 1055–1124).³² Moreover, Dana C. Munro³³ has aptly categorized Urban’s topics what appear to him to be found in Urban’s actual sermon as ‘certain, probable, and possible.’

Under what Urban certainly said, [Munro] listed the necessity of aiding eastern Christians (the Greek Church), appeals for aid from the east (the Byzantine Emperor), the advance of the Turks, the sufferings of eastern

²⁷ Oliver J Thatcher, trans. and McNeal, Edgar H. eds., “Pope John VIII: Indulgence for Fighting the Heathen, 878”, *A Source Book for Medieval History* (New York, NY: Scribners, 1905), 512, Reproduced in Halsall, Paul, ed. *The Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, Fordham University, 2001 <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html> (Accessed 10 June 2014).

²⁸ See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04543c.htm> (Accessed 10 June 2014).

²⁹ Moss, *Pope Urban II*, 1-25; Vicari, *The Secular Motivations*, 7-8.

³⁰ Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 1, 96-97; see also, J. F. Michaud, *The History of the Crusades*, trans. W. Robson, 3 vols. (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1881), vol. I, 49.

³¹ Thatcher, Oliver J. trans. and McNeal, Edgar H. eds., “Urban II (1088-1099): Speech at Council of Clermont, 1095”, Reproduced in Halsall, Paul, ed. *The Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, Fordham University, February 2001, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html> (Accessed 19 June 2014).

³² August C. Krey, ed., *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton, New Jersey, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 5.

³³ Dana C. Munro (1866–1933) was a professor of medieval studies at Princeton University from 1915–33. He was the author of *Children's Crusade* (1914) and *Middle Ages, 395–1272* (1921) and editor of *The Source Book for Roman History* (1904).



Christians, Turkish desecration of Christian churches and holy places, the special sanctity of Jerusalem, the expedition as God's work, the grant of plenary indulgence, the necessity of waging righteous wars, the promise of eternal and temporal rewards, the removal of all impediments to participation, and God's leadership of the expedition. As probable topics, [Munro] suggested the suffering of pilgrims, the participation of both rich and poor, and domestic hardships; and as possible topics, praise of Frankish bravery and contempt for the Turks.³⁴

What emerges out of the above discussion about Urban's motivation plainly speaks that Urban used the Emperor's 'cry for help'—appeal for military aid to assist the emperor—to achieve his secular objectives.

Political Motivations

The enterprise (Crusade) launched at Clermont by the Pope Urban II also provides evidences that he employed political 'symbolism' in his sermon to motivate the audience. The Pope initially would have simply thought to urge 'many to promise' by 'entertaining an oath' to help the Byzantine sincerely as far as they were fighting against the Muslims—the Seljuk Turks.³⁵ However, this seems to have aroused little or no interest/reaction. How then was the Pope successful at eliciting such fierce passions among those who heard it and ventured upon this expedition?

At this stage, Urban very well knew how to provoke a more vigorous response; he resorted to political symbolism to meet various papal ambitions envisaged. He shrewdly extended and applied the idea of "the Truce and the Peace of God"—the Peace of God threatened divine sanctions against those who assaulted clerics, monks, monasteries, women and other innocents, including their provisions; and the Truce of God sought to suspended any fighting from Wednesday evening to Monday morning, and above all any violence banned on holy days.³⁶ That said, Urban twisted, distorted and extended the idea of "Truce of God" to the Crusades by declaring these wars as God's wars, Holy wars, or wars fought for the safeguard of Christendom, and prosecuted under a controlled set of conditions and furthermore under papal authority. However, Urban's proclamation of the "Truce and Peace of God" was in fact the outcome of his ideological and motivational synthesis among his aristocratic warfare society. The popes had been attempting to achieve a 'Truce of God' among the feudal nobility; for many of whom 'fighting was a pastime as well as a necessity', what they had trained to do every day since early childhood.³⁷ Urban's innovative 'fusion of violence with faith' packed the "concept of sanctified violence in the devotional format [of Holy war or God's war] that was more comprehensible and palatable to lay society."³⁸ Thus for them, the Crusades offered an ideal opportunity to engage in violence without earning the condemnation of the church.³⁹ Moreover, the pope offered plenary indulgences, the transformation of a person's normal

³⁴ Penny J. Cole, *The Preaching of the Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095-1270* (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1991), 3 as quoted in Vicare, *The Secular Motivations*, 13.

³⁵ Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 15.

³⁶ Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades*, 6.

³⁷ Rodney Stark, *God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades* (New York, NY:Harper Collins, 2009), 2-3 (hereafter cited as Stark, *God's Battalions*); Mark Gregory Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 10-11; Kathryn Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades, 1000-1300* (UK:Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 60.

³⁸ Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 37.

³⁹ Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades*, 60.



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penance for his sins, into another form: in this case into an act of war, a pilgrim journey⁴⁰ to liberate Jerusalem from the 'infidel'. This offer had a profound impact that certainly resolved a major problem for the Pope.⁴¹ For the criminals, and those preoccupied with the sin and its consequences, Urban's grant was a powerful incentive, as the Crusader Geoffrey de Villehardouin wrote, "because the Indulgence was so great the hearts of men were much moved; and many took the cross because the Indulgence was so great."⁴² How powerful would be the use of this 'symbolism' in alluring one's consciousness, Murray Edelman states that "Potent symbols justify man's lot and his acts; and they are invoked not only explicitly but also implicitly through the structure of language."⁴³ Moreover, pope Urban's motivations behind the Crusades have one more dimension which has not been touched yet, the socio-economic context.

Socio-economic motivations

Eleventh-century Europe was full of poverty, epidemic, warfare and violence. As Fulcher of Chartres explicitly reveals the dismal picture of society on the eve of the Crusades, he writes "evils of all kinds multiplied throughout Europe because of vacillating faith." He went even one step farther specifying the evils: "in all parts of Europe peace, virtue, and faith were brutally trampled upon by stronger men and lesser, inside the church and out."⁴⁴

The great social metamorphosis taking place in Europe also added to the eruption of these violent Crusades. First and foremost, there was a steep rise in the population of Western Europe in the eleventh century, coupled with high standards of law and order. Consequently, the aristocracy tended to seek new external outlets for its military ardor and its desire for land⁴⁵ as much of the land had gone out of cultivation during the barbarian invasions.⁴⁶ Moreover, to have land was at the same time to have more power and freedom; "thus the landowner was also a lord; to be deprived of it, was to be reduced to serfdom";⁴⁷ carried the obligation to perform very heavily services for the master, the landlord.⁴⁸

Observing the disorder and confusion in eleventh-century Western Europe, historian Nicolas Cheetham, states that "The economic and social reasons for seeking an outlet from contemporary miseries – overpopulation, poverty, lack of cultivable land, subjection to oppressive lords, and the general drabness of life – were probably as potent (in gaining popular



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⁴⁰ "Pilgrimage to the Holy Land was an important reason for that sense of attachment, and it was one of the firm foundations upon which the popularity of crusading came to be built", Marcus Bull, "The Pilgrimage Origins", in *History Today*, March 1997, 15.

⁴¹ When Urban proclaimed that all would be resolved if they took up the cause of reclaiming Jerusalem, the people saw within the claim instantaneous forgiveness in a world in which assurance of salvation had been regarded as impossible. For further details see Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad: Two Former Muslims Look at the Crusades and Killing in the Name of Christ* (Michigan: Kregel Publications, 2004), 200-203.

⁴² Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes*, 3rd ed. (US: Yale University Press, 2006), 136-137.

⁴³ Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 129.

⁴⁴ F. R. Ryan and H. S. Fink, (trans. and eds.), *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem 1095-1127* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1969), 61, as quoted in Tomaz Mastnak, <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/data/tinymce/Projekti/EE-vklju%C4%8DDevanje/tomazmastnak.pdf> (Accessed 27 June 2014).

⁴⁵ H.E.J. Cowdrey, "The Genesis of the Crusades: The Springs of Western Ideas of Holy War," 2009, 13, *Medievalists.Net* at <http://www.medievalists.net/2009/09/03/the-genesis-of-the-crusades-the-springs-of-western-ideas-of-holy-war/> (Accessed 21 May 2014); for the impact of overpopulation and violence, see also Jonathan Phillips, *The Crusades: 1095-1204*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2014), 11-13.

⁴⁶ Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 114.

⁴⁷ Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (New York: Harcourt, 1937), 12.

⁴⁸ Jean Richard, *The Crusades, C.1071-c.1291* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7.

support for the Crusade) as religious idealism.”⁴⁹ Thus, condensing with other factors, the pope reminded the people of their present “domestic sufferings”, in his sermon, and the people responded as the pope had hoped. The First Crusade was launched in these circumstances in 1095.

The First Crusade (1096-1099)

The Pope’s sermon received an outstanding response: people from all walks of life—peasants, women, children, nobles—answered his call and eagerly took a vow to join the expedition to Jerusalem. Moreover, Urban himself journeyed throughout Western France in spring 1096, repeating his call, and sending written letters/appeals to areas that he could not personally visit.

Fearing the large number of magnates who took the cross, Urban was careful to ensure his own leadership of the Crusade and thus he appointed Adhemar of Le Puy as his papal legate on the expedition.⁵⁰ Urban exhorted that all who went should obey his legate’s commands as they would his (Urban’s) own.⁵¹ He also had planned that those who took the vow and ready to march to the East, would be divided into a number of separate armies subordinate to their chosen leaders that would take different routes to arrive at the common assembly point of Constantinople. From there, they would form a combined army to cross over the Bosphorus to Asia Minor from where they would begin the next stage of the expedition towards Jerusalem.⁵² Moreover, Pope Urban had set August 15, 1096, as the official departure date for the Crusade armies.⁵³

To Constantinople

Generally, two main routes were taken by the first crusaders through the Balkans that led to Constantinople. Germans mostly passed through Hungary to enter the Byzantine Empire at Belgrade (in modern day Serbia), and then followed through Nish (Naissus), Sofia (Sardica), Philippopolis, and Adrianople to the Byzantine capital. The other route via Egnatia (in Greece) which began at Dyrrachium (Durazzo) then ran through Ochrida, Monastir, Vodena, and Thessalonica, and to the Constantinople.⁵⁴ Essentially, two groups set out for the First Crusade to capture the Holy land. Men and women of all social classes and occupation represented this Crusade.⁵⁵ However, one of the notable features of this expedition was the absence of all kings.⁵⁶

The Byzantines received the Crusade armies in three separate waves: the first two quite surprised the Emperor, who had expected the armies would arrive on the official date set by the Urban, but actually came earlier.⁵⁷ This first wave was led by one of the most popular Crusade preachers, Peter the Hermit, a man with short stature but the most eloquent, who

⁴⁹ Nicolas Cheetham, *Keepers of the Keys: A History of the Popes from St. Peter to John Paul II* (New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1983), 103, as quoted in Vicari, *The Secular Motivations*, 17.

⁵⁰ Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 59.

⁵¹ Kenneth M. Setton, ed., *A History of the Crusades*, 6 vols. Marshall W. Baldwin (ed.), “The First Hundred Years”, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1955. 249.

⁵² Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 59.

⁵³ Thomas F. Madden, *The Concise History of the Crusades*, 3rd ed. (UK: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 15.

⁵⁴ “History of the Crusades”, <http://www.cristoraul.com/ENGLISH/MedievalHistory/CRUSADES/11.html> (Accessed 29 November 2014).

⁵⁵ Simon Lloyd, “The Crusading Movement (1096–1274)”, in *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (New York Oxford University Press, 1999), 35.

⁵⁶ John France, “First Crusade (1096–1099)”, in *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, ed. Alan V. Murray (California, Colorado, and England: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 442.

⁵⁷ Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 59.



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mesmerized audiences with his fiery and emotional sermons.⁵⁸ This band departed from Cologne on 20 April 1096,⁵⁹ marched through Hungary, crossed the Sava River into Bulgaria and reached Nish on July 2nd, and Sofia on the 12th of July 1096. On August 1, the band arrived in Constantinople after three months and eleven days.⁶⁰ There was another band of large and ill-equipped troops under the leadership of the French lord Walter Sansavoir that had departed, on 15 April 1096, and arrived in Constantinople in mid-July 1096.⁶¹ Together, this first and second wave consisting of a few knights and large unruly group of ragged pilgrims, poorly equipped, an undisciplined army often known as the Peasants' or 'People's Crusade, led by Peter the Hermit and Walter Sansavoir.⁶² There were many other small similar groups, led by Folkmar, Gottschalk and Emicho, set out for the capture of Holy sepulcher. However, due to the weakness in leadership and lack of money for long journey, only some people actually managed to reach Constantinople and were assimilated in the large armies that had arrived earlier.⁶³

The journey of these two armies across Hungary, Bulgaria, and Greece was not without violence and pogroms. They plundered and massacred the Jewish inhabitants in the cities of Rhineland, Speyer, Worms, Mainz, Trier, and Cologne. Christian Crusaders killed Jews on the pretext of being the enemies of Christ: "why should Christians march two thousand miles to expel the enemies of Christ when there were so many dwelling here [in Germany] in their very homes?"⁶⁴ They even did not spare the bishops who protected and gave refuge to the Jews. Thus the first victims of the crusaders were the Jews of the Germany, and the slaughter of the Jews was carried out by Emicho's group. The horror of the terror has been recorded as:

They killed the women, also, and with their swords pierced tender children of whatever age and sex. The Jews, seeing their Christian enemies were.... Horrible so say, mothers cut the throats of nursing children with knives and stabbed others, preferring them to perish thus by their own hands rather than to be killed by the weapons of the uncircumcised.⁶⁵

No sooner had Peter the Hermit reached Constantinople than his undisciplined army started pillaging the suburbs as the food market prices were very high and the poor soldiers were unable to purchase any food. Moreover, Emperor Alexius I had not expected Crusaders so soon, therefore, no arrangements were made by the government to feed so large an army. Consequently, "foraging, theft, riots, and violence were the result."⁶⁶ It was therefore Alexius, who decided to allow the Peter to be ferried across to the Turks side of the Bosphorus escorted by the Byzantine army.⁶⁷ This ill-trained army harshly became involved in a confrontation with a Turkish army near Nicaea, and was almost completely annihilated by the troops of Kilij

⁵⁸ Cf., Archer doubts that Peter could have so much influenced the audience; and also he was not present at the Council of Clermont at all as is generally believed, for this see T. A. Archer and C. L. Kingsford, *The Crusades: The Story of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1919), 26.

⁵⁹ John France, *The Crusades and the Expansion of Catholic Christendom, 1000–1714* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 64.

⁶⁰ Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, 258-263.

⁶¹ Madden, *The Concise History*, 16.

⁶² Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 60.

⁶³ John France, *The Crusades and the Expansion*, 66.

⁶⁴ Madden, *The Concise History*, 18.

⁶⁵ Madden, *The Concise History*, 18.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁷ Cf., some historians argue that Alexius had urged Peter to wait the coming of the main Crusading armies before confronting any attack on the Turks; but it seems inappropriate owing to the fact that they committed widespread violence in the suburbs, fearing this Alexius hurried to decide to transport them across the Bosphorus.



Arslan on August 10, 1096.⁶⁸ Peter the Hermit was apparently the only survivor, and who returned to Constantinople to discuss the matters (food prices etc.) with the Emperor.⁶⁹ The people's or Peasants' Crusade was over. Although it had cost many thousands of lives it had taught that Christianity alone, without wisdom, skill, and discipline, would not open the road to the Holy land.

The second group often known as the Knight's Crusaders was the main body of the First Crusade which departed in mid-August 1096. This group was led by a number of independent leaders, and composed mostly of five armies. The first of these was led by Hugh, count of Vermandois, the brother of King Philip I of France, which departed from France in the middle of August 1096, and took a traditional pilgrim route to Italy. He crossed the Adriatic Sea from Bari in southern Italy to Dyrrachion (mod. Durrës, Albania) and arrived at Constantinople in November 1096. But he arrived with "a scant army" because most of his followers had been lost in a storm.⁷⁰ Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine, and his brother, Baldwin of Boulogne led the second army of troops from his own Duchy and northeastern France. They departed from the west about the same time as Hugh—in August 1096, and he followed the same northern route as the People's crusaders had in the previous year. They crossed the Danube and reached Constantinople by December 1096, before Christmas. The third army was led by Bohemond of Taranto—the leader of the Normans of south Italy—and his nephew Tancred. They took the route of Hugh of Vermandois, and crossed the sea fifteen days after Hugh and arrived at Constantinople on April 10, 1097.⁷¹ The fourth army—Contingents from northern France, Normandy, and Flanders, were led by Robert, Duke of Normandy, his cousin Robert II, Count of Flanders, and his brother-in-law Stephen, Count of Blois and Chartres. These only arrived in southern Italy in late November 1097; Robert of Flanders risked an immediate passage, but the others wintered in Italy, crossing in the spring and arrived at Dyrrachion on May 14, 1097.⁷² The fifth and the largest army was led by Raymond, count of Toulouse, who was accompanied by Adhemar, Bishop of Le Puy, the papal legate. He led a huge army drawn from southern France and Provence. This force set off in October 1096, but had a difficult journey through the Veneto and Dalmatia before arriving in Durazzo, and finally arrived at Constantinople on April 21, 1097. Raymond—a fifty-five-year old warrior, great lord of southern France, was among the first nobles to take the cross, and was the wealthiest of all the crusading leaders.⁷³ "It was this second wave [of Crusaders] which was later to pass through Asia Minor, capture Antioch [in 1098] and finally take Jerusalem itself [in July 1099]."⁷⁴

The third wave, composed of contingents from Lombardy, France and Bavaria, arrived in the Holy Land in early summer of 1101, to reinforce their predecessors in Jerusalem.⁷⁵ The actual number in the first crusading armies is not known; however, from all these waves 60,000-100,000 persons must have entered the Byzantine Empire between 1096 and 1097.⁷⁶

⁶⁸ Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 62-63.

⁶⁹ Madden, *The Concise History*, 17-18.

⁷⁰ Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, 266.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁷² Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. I, 164-168.

⁷³ Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, 270-278; John France, *Crusade Encyclopedia*, 444; Madden, *The Concise History*, 22.

⁷⁴ Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 60.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 169.



On the arrival of each Crusading army at Constantinople, particularly with the second and third waves, Alexius I, the Byzantine Emperor, engaged in the Byzantine practice of “overawing foreigners with the fabulous wealth of the ancient empire,”⁷⁷ in order to bring to heel foreigners by a show of military might and reminded them of the strength of the walls of Constantinople. Thereafter, Alexius asked them to show their faith: each of the leaders was required to swear an oath of loyalty to Alexius as ‘customary oath of the Latins’. The oath contained an undertaking that “any lands the Crusade should capture that had previously belonged to the empire should immediately be returned to the emperor.”⁷⁸ Some leaders at first rejected the Emperor’s request but eventually accepted the proposal and took the oath of allegiance, except Raymond in the ceremony.⁷⁹ As soon as the leaders complied with this requirement, Alexius showed more of his generosity, handed over quantities of gold, silver and other costly gifts as a sign of his approval; promised to give military and logistic support to the Crusaders.⁸⁰ The arrival of Robert of Normandy and Stephen at the Constantinople on May 14, 1097 marked the end of the march of first stage of the Crusades.

From Constantinople to Antioch

In May 1097, the First Crusaders (‘second wave’) crossed the Bosphorus with Alexius’ support. The first target of the Crusaders was the city of Nicaea, the capital of the Turkish sultanate, which lay on the shores of the Ascanian Lake near the Sea of Marmara. Nicaea was also considered as the gateway to Turkish territory because of its strategic location for any advances into Asia Minor.⁸¹ The time for orders to prepare and to advance on Nicaea was well chosen; for the Seljuk Sultan, Kilij Arslan was not in the city and initially did not take this second Crusading army very seriously. It was on about 21 May that Kilij Arslan came up with his army and pitched in a fierce battle outside the city walls against the enemy; both sides inflicted heavy losses but still each maintained its position. When a relieving army of Arslan failed to break through, and fearing that ill-prepared battle might prolong the siege for several months, Arslan sent a message to the city’s defenders suggesting to act ‘in the light of their own interests’. Kilij Arslan left the city and his family at the mercy of the Byzantine forces. On the night of June 18-19, the assault was ordered; the Byzantine army entered the city by means of boats that slipped silently across the Ascanian Lake; the Turkish garrison opened negotiations with Alexius for terms of surrender. By the first glimmerings of dawn, the coloured banners of the emperor were already fluttering over the city walls.⁸² Alexius thanks the westerners for their assistance and handing over the city to the emperor.

On June 26, the crusading army departed Nicaea, bound for Antioch. Both the crusaders and Byzantine hosts knew that if it were to reach Jerusalem, they would have to capture Antioch, the chief city of Syria. For the next four months, the crusaders accompanied by a small Byzantine army made their way across Anatolia under horrible conditions. On their way they defeated the Seljuk Turks at the battle of Dorylimum, as Ibn al-Qalanisi later wrote: “The Franks cut the Turkish army to pieces. They killed, pillaged, and took many prisoners, who were sold into slavery.”⁸³ Finally, on October 21, 1097, they reached the Iron Bridge of Yagi-Siyan’s territory, three hours’ distance from the city; where crusaders were filled with awe at

⁷⁷ Madden, *The Concise History*, 20.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ With whom he had achieved a private understanding; for this see Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 170.

⁸⁰ Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 63.

⁸¹ Madden, *The Concise History*, 23.

⁸² Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, Trans. by John Rothschild (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), 12-13; see also Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 180.

⁸³ Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 17.



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the sight of the great walls of Antioch. They laid the siege around the city, a blockading supplies and despoiling the region. However, owing to its strategic position, it was impossible for the Crusaders to lay the complete siege, and defenders would have little trouble communicating with the outside world and bringing in supplies.⁸⁴ On the other hand, for the crusaders, the winter of 1097-98 was very cold and difficult one. The Crusade leaders were often less concerned with the blockade of the city than the acquisition of their own food. Hunger and disease befell the crusaders; some even turned cannibalism, eating Turkish corpses.⁸⁵ Fulcher of Chartres described the miserable conditions:

At that time, the famished ate the shoots of beanseeds growing in the fields and many kinds of herbs unseasoned with salt; also thistles, which, being not well cooked because of the deficiency of firewood, pricked, the tongues of those eating them; also horses, asses, and camels, and dogs and rats. The poorer ones ate even the skins of the beasts and seeds of grain found in manure.⁸⁶

Fearing great threat on enemy's arrival, Yaghi-Siyan had sent his son to transmit the news to the various Muslim leaders of Syria. Ibn al-Qalanisi tells us that in Damascus Yaghi-Siyan's son spoke of a holy war (Jihād). However, in Syria, in the eleventh century, "the Jihād was no more than a slogan brandished by princes in distress."⁸⁷ Nearly nine months after the siege, Antioch finally fell, though not completely, on June 3, 1098. The captain of the guard of city gate, Firuz, had come to terms with Bohemond, who made the Crusaders scramble with the help of a rope over the city wall during the night. Within no time the Frankish army poured the city. In the ensuing fight, Yaghi-Siyan fled but was killed along with a considerable number of Antioch inhabitants. However, this victory did not end the crusaders' trial; two great problems emerged. First, the Turkish garrison, under Shams al-Dawla, the son of Yaghi-Siyan, had barricaded himself in the citadel⁸⁸ along with a small number of soldiers. Second, a big army under the Emir of Mosul, Karbuqa, began to march to relieve Antioch and besieged the Crusaders. According to the historian Ibn al-Athir, "the Franj were seized with fear when they heard that the army of Karbuqa was on its way to Antioch, for they were vastly weakened and their supplies were slender."⁸⁹

As soon as Karbuqa started marching towards Antioch he had received some alarming news. Troops of Franks had taken Edessa, a large city north of Mosul. Fearing risking his city if continue the march to Antioch, he retreated towards Edessa. Second, for the Crusaders was the rise of visionaries: one visionary, Peter Bartholomew on June 10, claimed that the Holy Lance⁹⁰ was buried in the cathedral of Antioch, and its discovery would be a sign of victory from God. The following day, similarly, a priest, Stephen of Valence, claimed had a vision promising divine aid. On the 14 June a lance-head was recovered from the pit where diggers

⁸⁴ Ibid., 20.

⁸⁵ Madden, *The Concise History*, 25.

⁸⁶ Edward Peters, ed., *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Charters and Other Source Materials*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 71.

⁸⁷ Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 21.

⁸⁸ Which towers some 300 meters above it.

⁸⁹ Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 29-33; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 72.

⁹⁰ The implement used to pierce the side of Christ during the Crucifixion according to 'Christian' belief. The papal legate, Adhemar Le Puy was openly skeptical: "How could the Holy Lance be in Antioch, he asked, when he and others had seen it in Constantinople?"



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earlier found nothing.⁹¹ Nonetheless, his plan worked, morale rose throughout the army. Finally, on June 28, 1098, the assault began and the Crusaders defeated the Turkish army and won an apparently miraculous victory. Muslim observers too noted the surprising outcome.⁹² Ibn al-Qalanisi tells us: "Thereafter the Franks, though they were in the extremely of weakness, advanced in battle order against the armies of Islam, which were at the height of strength and numbers, and they broke the ranks of the Muslims and scattered their multitude."⁹³ Bohemond took control of the city and refused to hand over it to the emperor thus broke his oath of allegiance made with the emperor.⁹⁴ This incident is clear enough to argue that some Crusade leaders had secular motives behind their marching to the East.

From Antioch to Jerusalem

In November 1098, after a long stay in Antioch, Crusaders continue their journey Southward to Jerusalem; en route they laid the siege of Maarat an-Nu'man which lasted from 27 November to December 11, 1098. In Maarat an-Nu'man, Franks mercilessly massacred everyone and even, due to the shortage of the foodstuffs, they turned into cannibals.⁹⁵ Fulcher of Chartres recounts the incident: "I shudder to tell that many of our people, harassed by the madness of excessive hunger, cut pieces from the buttocks of the Saracens already dead there, which they cooked, but when it was not yet roasted enough by the fire, they devoured it with savage mouth."⁹⁶ Another Frankish chronicler Radulph of Caen also confesses: "In Ma'arra our troops boiled pagan adults in cooking-pots; they impaled children on spits and devoured them grilled."⁹⁷

On 13 January 1099, Crusaders under the command of Raymond, barefoot and in the attire of a pilgrim, marched out of Maarat an-Nu'man, and took the coast route to Jerusalem. On May 19, 1099, they crossed the Dog River, just north of Beirut, and the Fatimid territory. Finally, by the evening of Tuesday, 7 June 1099 the Crusaders found themselves before the walls of the Holy City, Jerusalem, without any major fight.⁹⁸

Since the previous August, after the fall of Antioch, the city had been under the control of Fatimid Shiite caliphate of Egypt which was established in opposition to the Sunni caliphate in Baghdad. In the second half of the eleventh century, Fatimids had been waging a war against the Seljuk and other Turkish stakeholders for the control of Syria. Therefore, when the Fatimid caliph heard of Franks defeating the Turks, he extending his helping hand to the Crusaders and started negotiations for future plans. Even an Egyptian delegation bearing gifts, upon the fall of Nicaea, visited the camp of the Franks to wish them a speedy victory and to propose an alliance with them. Therefore, a firm friendship had developed between Cairo and Constantinople, between Fatimid caliph, Al-afdl, and emperor Alexius.⁹⁹ Al-afdl was skeptical,

⁹¹ When the diggers were ready to quit, Bartholomew himself jumped into the pit and after a few minutes he cried in triumph holding a Lance in his hands. Not everyone was convinced: Fulcher of Charters and others suspected that Bartholomew had planted the relic.

⁹² Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 73; Madden, *The Concise History*, 27; France, *The Crusades and the Expansion*, 80.

⁹³ Madden, *The Concise History*, 28.

⁹⁴ Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 74-75; the victory of Antioch was soured by the outbreak of disputes among the Crusade leaders, for this, see France, *The Crusades and the Expansion*, 82.

⁹⁵ Bohemond was eager to repeat his coup at Antioch announced that if the town surrendered to him he would protect the lives of all defenders that took refuge in a hall near the gate. The besiegers relied and accepted offer, however, the next morning, he slaughtered the men and rest were sold out as slaves.

⁹⁶ Peters, *The First Crusade*, 84.

⁹⁷ As quoted in Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 39.

⁹⁸ Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 278.

⁹⁹ Maalouf, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, 44-45.



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however, after negotiations had failed over the division and control of Syria proposed by him. Crusaders were now hysterical to capture the city for they had taken the vow. The commander of the Fatimid garrison sent to Egypt for reinforcements to help defend Jerusalem from the large Frankish army who had already camped before the great walls of the Holy City.

The Crusaders laid siege but as in the case of Antioch, they had to face difficult problems for the walls were too long. Lack of food and water were a perpetual problem for they had to go miles for water as all of the water bodies around the city were poisoned by the defenders of the Holy City. Moreover, ominous reports began to circulate in the Christian camp which became demoralised that a large relieving force from Egypt was marching towards Jerusalem. But what had proved so effective at Antioch, Crusade leaders sought to provoke that religious enthusiasm again through false visions and dreams, and certainly had done the job.¹⁰⁰ On the morning of July 6, 1099, a priest, Perter Desiderius, declared that he had seen Bishop Adhemar during the night, ‘commanded the whole army to fast and to repent for their sins, and then walk barefooted around the walls of the Holy City, if they did so with true repentance, then the Holy City would fall to them within nine days’. Once again the crusaders carefully obeyed the instructions of the Peter.¹⁰¹

After one week, on the night of July 13-14, the assault on Jerusalem began. The defending army offered a vigorous defence but, in the attack that followed on 15 July 1099, the Franks succeeded in breaching the defence line and in no time they poured the city. At long last the Crusaders recovered the Holy Sepulcher on July 15, 1099 (the twenty-second day of the month of Sha‘ban, in the year of the Hijra 492), after a forty-day long siege.¹⁰² The Crusaders massacred everyone “that they met” in houses and mosques, “men, women and children alike”. The massacre is recorded by three Christians who were with the Crusade army. On the massacre, Fulcher of Chartres writes, “almost ten thousand were killed. Indeed, if you had been there you would have seen our feet colored to our ankles with the blood of the slain. But what more shall I relate? None of them were left alive; neither women nor children were spared.”¹⁰³ Similarly, the extent of the carnage can be judged from the expression of Raymond of Aguilers when he narrates, “If I tell the truth [about the massacre], it will exceed your powers of belief. So let it suffice to say this much, at least, that in the Temple and porch of Solomon, men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins.”¹⁰⁴ The massacre at Jerusalem profoundly frightened the entire world.

The capture of the Jerusalem, the Holy City, was a remarkable achievement for the Crusaders. Jerusalem was given under the control of Godfrey, and rest of the leaders either retained other conquered cities or returned home. The First Crusade resulted into the establishment of four Crusade principal Latin States in the Near East: the county of Antioch (in

¹⁰⁰ Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 75.

¹⁰¹ Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 1, 335.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 336-337.

¹⁰³ Fulcher of Chartres, *Gesta Francorum Jerusalem Expugnantium [The Deeds of the Franks Who Attacked Jerusalem]*, in Frederick Duncan and August C. Krey, eds., *Parallel Source Problems in Medieval History* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1912), 114; famous Muslim historian, Ibn Athir records that 70,000 were massacred in Jerusalem, for more details see, Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tā’rikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 1965–67), vol. 10, 282–86.

¹⁰⁴ Krey, *Parallel Source Problems*, 317; medieval Muslim sources on the Crusades are often alleged as inaccurate and biased by the Western scholars, for this reason I have heavily relied on the Western sources. For an excellent discussion on the Muslim accounts on the massacre at Jerusalem in the year 1099, see Konrad Hirschler, “The Jerusalem Conquest of 492/1099 in the Medieval Arabic Historiography of the Crusades: From Regional Plurality to Islamic Narrative” (SOAS: University of London), 37-76.



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1098), the county of Edessa (in 1097), the county of Tripoli (in 1109) and the Kingdom of Jerusalem (in 1099).

Conclusion

The Crusades entailed not only an innumerable loss of human resources, it also shattered a once unwavering legacy of mutual understanding between Muslims and Christians. The Crusades pitted the world's largest two religions against each other. Though the First Crusade resulted in the capture of Jerusalem, these obnoxious wars put indelible scars on 'true' Christianity being the harbinger of peace and non-violence. The naïve Christians, mostly lured by spiritual gains, were exploited by the Pope at a time when Western Europe faced many challenges: fellow Christians were fighting against each other; the Papacy was in the venture of gaining their supremacy over the kings who were controlling and interfering in the religious affairs; younger sons were deprived of the lands of their fathers; violence was order of the day. The Papacy got the pulse of the time, choosing to channel the indigenous fighting off to the Near East by preaching for Holy war. As Karen Armstrong wrote in a *Guardian* article on September 25, 2014—"The Myth of Religious Violence"—"The Crusades were certainly inspired by religious passion but they were also deeply political: Pope Urban II let the knights of Christendom loose on the Muslim world to extend the power of the church eastwards and create a papal monarchy that would control Christian Europe."¹⁰⁵ From the ongoing discussion, therefore, the Crusades were not just religious wars, they were, at the same time, largely shaped and coloured by various undercurrents in eleventh century Western Europe, which received very timely impetuous from the threat of Seljuk expansion into the lands of the Byzantine Empire.



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¹⁰⁵ Karen Armstrong, "The Myth of Religious Violence," *The Guardian*, September 25, 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/25/-sp-karen-armstrong-religious-violence-myth-secular> (accessed 22 September 2015).

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