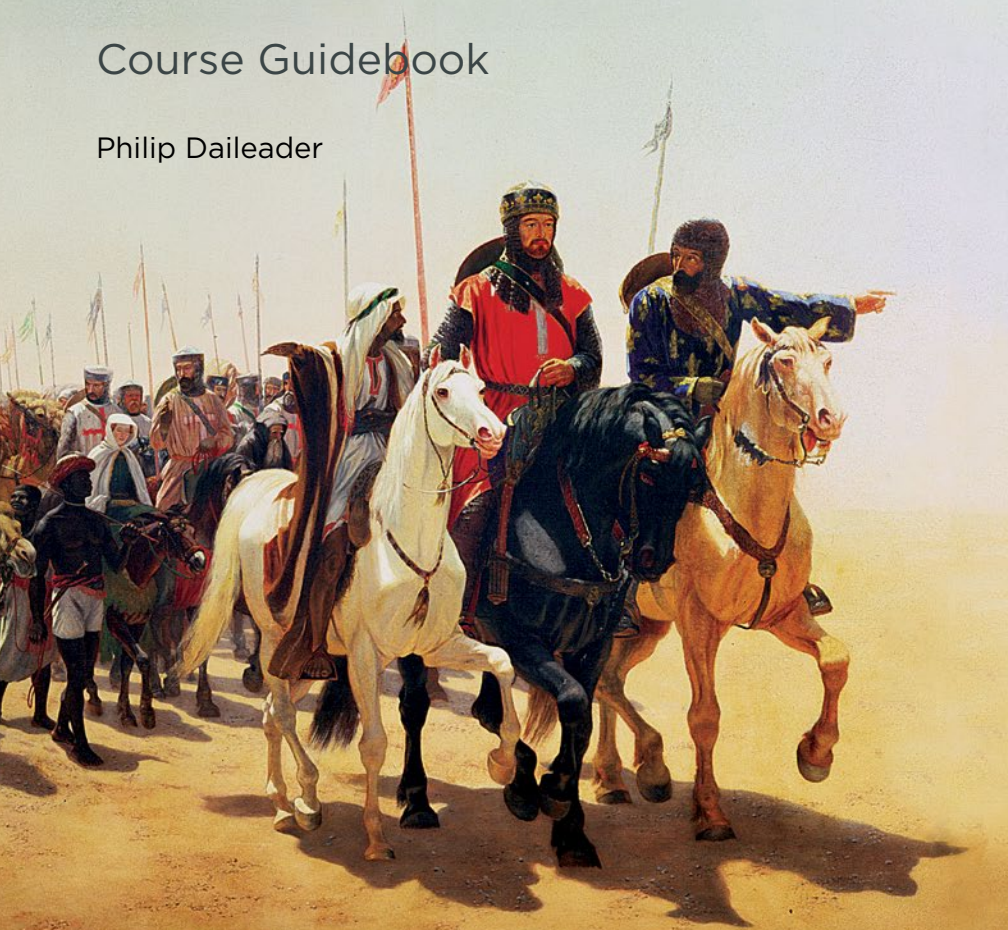


How the Crusades Changed History

Course Guidebook

Philip Daileader





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Scope

Few images of the Middle Ages are as enduring as that of the crusader knight traveling to the Holy Land. Yet the origins, nature, and consequences of the crusades remain lively topics of debate. What motivated people of every social status, from kings and nobles to peasants and hermits, to take part in the crusades? What was it like to go on a crusade and to live in a crusader society? Why and how did Europe suddenly intrude so forcefully in the affairs of the two established powerhouses of the Mediterranean, the Byzantine Empire and the House of Islam? How did the crusades shape the internal development of the medieval West, and how did the crusades affect East–West relations? Crusades to the Holy Land are the central focus of this course, but we will also examine the crusades in all their geographical manifestations. From Spain to the Baltics, the successes, failures, and unintended consequences of the crusading movement played a crucial role in determining the future shape and identity of Europe.

The course begins by examining the novel combination of holy war and pilgrimage embodied in the crusades, along with the crusading indulgence, a spiritual benefit that most likely did not exist before the First Crusade. We then explore the background and context of the First Crusade, launched in November 1095, in order to show why there were any crusades at all. From there, we move on to examine the narrative history of crusading between the launching of the First Crusade and the fall of the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem in 1291. These narrative lectures cover the crusader conquest of Jerusalem in 1099; the struggle between Richard Lionheart and Saladin during the Third Crusade; the crusader conquest of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, during the Fourth Crusade; and the failed crusading expeditions of King Louis IX (later, Saint Louis) in the later 13th century. As we will see, the startling success of the First Crusade initiated 2 centuries of crusading in the Holy Land, but subsequent crusades tended to be ineffectual at best and, at least for the crusaders themselves, occasionally disastrous. Crusading to the Holy Land rightly holds a

central place in any account of the medieval crusades, but these narrative lectures will also examine how crusading spread all along Christendom's frontiers in the Middle Ages and then to Christendom's interior.

Following this narrative examination of the crusades, we then address various questions and issues that pertain to crusading. What was it like to travel and to fight on a crusade? Did crusading hinder or facilitate cultural exchange between the Islamic world and medieval Europe? And, perhaps most importantly, what was the legacy of the crusades? To what extent and how did they change history?

The crusades changed medieval Europe and the Near East in many ways: through the European conquest of Jerusalem and the temporary establishment of Crusader States in Syria and Palestine and through the permanent conquest of Islamic Spain and of pagan lands in eastern Europe. But the crusading movement proved hard to control, as was evident during the famous Children's Crusade of 1212 and the less well-known Shepherds' Crusades of 1251 and 1320. Crusaders sometimes put crusades to purposes far removed from the interests of those who summoned them. Most importantly, the crusades' longest-lasting consequences were unintended and self-defeating ones that affected the internal history of medieval and postmedieval Europe as much as Eurasian geopolitics.



1

What Were the Crusades?

If all the words associated with the Middle Ages, the term “crusade” is perhaps uniquely double-edged. It can be laudatory or pejorative, depending on the speaker, denoting either selfless devotion to a worthwhile cause or tragically misguided action. Whether the crusades deserve admiration or opprobrium is a matter for individuals to decide for themselves. Our goals in this course are to understand the crusades and to assess their consequences. We will first trace a narrative history of the crusades from 1095 until 1291. Then, toward the end of the course, we will look at thematic topics, such as the experience of crusading and cultural contact during the crusades, to answer the question of how the crusades changed history.



Defining “Crusade”

- ◆ A medieval crusade, which must (or at least ought to) be summoned by a pope, combined holy war and pilgrimage.
- ◆ A crusade was a holy war in the sense that it was fought on behalf of a faith. Those who died in battle were martyrs; their willingness to sacrifice their lives atoned for their sins and merited their salvation.
- ◆ A crusade was a pilgrimage in the sense that crusaders went on long journeys after making a public vow announcing their intentions. Crusaders received all the material and spiritual benefits that pilgrims enjoyed and carried the traditional emblems of the pilgrim.

Plenary Indulgences

- ◆ Crusaders also received a benefit that went beyond what other pilgrims or holy warriors received: plenary indulgences, that is, the remission of all temporal penalties and punishment due to sin.
- ◆ Penitents who felt contrition for their sins and confessed their sins to a proper confessor escaped eternal damnation but still faced temporal punishment, meaning penance performed in this world. Temporal punishment also meant time spent in purgatory in the next world.

- ◆ The doctrine of purgatory stipulates that some souls do not immediately enter heaven or hell after bodily death. Instead, they experience a purifying punishment that prepares them for their eventual and inevitable entrance into heaven. That punishment is severe, but unlike hell, it is not eternal; it lasts for a period of time determined by God.
- ◆ Certain passages in the Bible seem to indicate that something other than immediate damnation happens to sinners after death and that sins can be, in some sense, forgiven after death. Theologians pondered these passages and, over the course of nearly a millennium, worked them into a coherent theology.

◆ Saint Augustine of Hippo (d. 430) proposed that the souls of those who had committed relatively minor sins did not go to hell. Instead, they experienced purgatorial punishment after death and then entered heaven.



- ◆ At times, Augustine stressed that he was not sure about the existence or nature of this purgatorial punishment; he also sometimes added that, if purgatory did exist, only a few souls experienced it, with most going to hell or heaven immediately after bodily death.
- ◆ During the 12th and 13th centuries, as crusading became more commonplace, theologians further developed the doctrine of purgatory. They spoke of it as a place not just for those who committed minor sins but for those who had committed major sins, confessed them, and then for some reason—such as sudden death—failed to do sufficient penance to atone for those sins. They also spoke of purgatory as a place through which many, perhaps most, souls would pass before entering heaven.

- ◆ Purgatory was to be feared, and earthly penance offered a way to avoid it. But there were no precise equivalences between time spent doing earthly penance and time spent in purgatory. Even sinners who completed all earthly penances assigned to them still faced the possibility and fear of purgatorial punishment, which might last until the end of the world and the Last Judgment.
- ◆ Before the First Crusade, popes and other ecclesiastics sometimes remitted earthly penance; that is, they relieved individuals of the need to perform penances assigned to them, usually in return for the penitent's performing some sort of service.
 - ◆ Remission of penance was not controversial. After all, human beings, having assigned the penance in the first place, could remit it.
 - ◆ The plenary indulgence, though, remitted all temporal penalties due to sin—it took the place both of earthly penance and afterworldly purgatory.
- ◆ Crusaders—and for a long time only crusaders—received plenary indulgences, which seem to have come into being alongside the crusades themselves. The question of who first thought of the idea of plenary indulgences remains controversial.
 - ◆ It's possible that the idea of indulgences originated with lower-level crusade preachers. It would have been unusual for a pope to make a theological innovation as daring as the indulgence.
 - ◆ Pope Urban II seems to have intended the First Crusade to serve simply as a traditional form of remission of penance—the act of going on crusade took care of all earthly penance. Low-level preachers, though, were looking to gain recruits; they had an incentive to sweeten the pot by making increasingly generous offers to listeners.



The Emergence of Crusading

- ♦ What seems true of indulgences is also true of crusading: It was not the invention of Pope Urban II but emerged out of actual practice. The fusion of holy war and pilgrimage appears to have occurred in the months following Pope Urban II's sermon, although what he seems to have envisioned was more holy war than pilgrimage.
 - ◊ The pope wanted a smallish army of perhaps a few thousand individuals to come to the assistance of Eastern Christians living in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), Syria, and Palestine.
 - ◊ What he got instead was an enormous movement of perhaps 100,000 individuals who traveled eastward but were more intent on conquering Jerusalem than on assisting Eastern Christians.
 - ◊ Those who answered the pope's call understood that they were to go east, and they associated eastward movement with pilgrimage and Jerusalem. They seem to have concluded that the expedition must therefore be some sort of pilgrimage. The crusade, in that sense, fused papal plans and the expectations of the faithful.



- ◆ It took at least a century for these various elements to coalesce; it has been suggested that crusading, as defined above, did not really exist in a recognizable form until the time of the Third Crusade in the 1180s.

The Emergence of Pilgrimage

- ◆ Both pilgrimage and holy war predated crusading itself but followed different historical trajectories within Christianity. Pilgrimage emerged early and quickly became commonplace, despite the misgivings of church fathers, such as Saint Augustine, who emphasized that travel per se makes no one's salvation more likely.
- ◆ But Augustine's suspicion was not enough to hold back the enthusiasm for travel. Already in the 3rd century AD, when to call oneself a Christian was still illegal in the Roman Empire, pilgrims traveled to the Holy Land; by the early 4th century, a pilgrimage industry of sorts existed there.
- ◆ The appeals of pilgrimage were many. Pilgrims enjoyed practical benefits, including the right to expect hospitality from other Christians and immunity from tolls, lawsuit, arrest, and other judicial actions. Pilgrims and their property came under the protection of the church; an attack against either was tantamount to an attack on the clergy and ecclesiastical property.
- ◆ Pilgrimage had a devotional component, as well. Seeing for oneself the places mentioned in the New Testament where Jesus lived, preached, and died would increase the fervency of one's own faith.
- ◆ From the 7th century onward, pilgrimage also developed an increasingly important penitential component. Irish monks traveling throughout Europe introduced the practice of ordering sinners to make long pilgrimages as acts of penance for especially serious sins.
- ◆ Further, pilgrimages had an acquisitive component: Going on pilgrimage made it easier to acquire relics and, perhaps, the protection of the holy person who had touched the relic or from whose body it was taken.



CELESTINUS
RELIGIUS
VILLANUS

The Emergence of Holy War

- ◆ Holy war emerged much more slowly than pilgrimage within Christianity, which, for many centuries, continued to bear the imprint of its pacifist origins.
- ◆ With the conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine in the early 4th century, a Christian emperor came to rule over an empire with a strong military tradition. When Christians became rulers, theologians slowly started to rethink Christianity's previous and uncompromising hostility toward warfare of all sorts.
- ◆ Saint Augustine was of decisive influence on this issue. He deplored Rome's wars of conquest and the necessity of any warfare in the world, but he accepted the notion of just war. The just war must be declared by a legitimate ruler and fought for a just cause. War must be the only feasible means of achieving the just cause, and the just war must be fought without any ulterior motive.
- ◆ A just war was not a holy war, and Augustine himself never suggested that any warfare could be considered holy. Nonetheless, by accepting the notion that some wars were just, Augustine helped clear the way for the later notion that some wars were holy. Such was the weight of pacifist tradition that more than 4 centuries elapsed between Augustine's acceptance of just war and the legitimation of holy war.
- ◆ The combination of holy war and pilgrimage was somewhat problematic. Pilgrims were supposed to travel unarmed, while holy warriors by definition ought to be armed. Crusaders traveled armed, and in that respect, they resembled holy warriors more than pilgrims. Yet holy war and pilgrimage were, on another level, complementary.
 - ◆ A problem facing pilgrims was the possibility that they would die en route before they had done enough to fulfill their penance and merit their spiritual rewards.
 - ◆ A problem facing holy warriors was the possibility that they might not die; those who failed to fall in battle were not martyrs.

- ◆ Crusaders, as pilgrims and holy warriors, received benefits if they lived and benefits if they died. In that sense, pilgrimage and holy war worked well together. Their fusion created a “win-win” situation, helping to explain the popularity of the crusades.

Reading

Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader*.

Housley, *Contesting the Crusades*.

Madden, ed., *Crusades: The Illustrated History*.

Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*.

Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*.

Setton, ed., *A History of the Crusades*.

Sivan, “Modern Arab Historiography of the Crusades.”

Tyerman, *God’s War*.

Questions

- 1 If world leaders were to listen to this course, would their newfound understanding of the complexity of the crusades cause them to be more careful when drawing parallels between medieval events and the present? Or are simplified and polemical depictions of the crusades so useful that there is little hope of ever chasing them away?
- 2 Is this course fair to the crusades and to all parties involved, and what would “fair” mean in this context?



Before the Crusades— Deep Background

In the first lecture, we saw that a crusade combined holy war and pilgrimage and that crusaders received, in addition to the benefits of participation in those endeavors, plenary indulgences. We also saw that it took about a century after the First Crusade for crusading to become a distinct, well-defined phenomenon. Not until the late 12th century did specific Latin terms for “crusade” and “crusader” come into existence. In this lecture and in the next one, we will examine why there were any medieval crusades at all. Specifically, we will look at how both long- and short-term historical developments led Pope Urban II to launch the First Crusade in November 1095.

Extent of Byzantine Rule

- ◆ What historians call the Byzantine Empire was simply a continuation of the eastern half of the Roman Empire, which remained standing even when the western half disintegrated in the 4th and 5th centuries. In general, the eastern end of the Mediterranean, with its substantial urban and commercial life, was much more important to the Byzantines than the west.
- ◆ The one exception to this lack of concern with the west came in the 6th century with the Byzantine conquest of southern and central Italy. As a result of that conquest, the papacy fell under Byzantine sway; popes-elect could not be consecrated and take up their papal duties until the Byzantine emperor or his local official gave his approval.
- ◆ The territory of the Byzantine Empire might include, at any given moment, southeastern Europe and the Balkan peninsula; Asia Minor; the eastern end of the Mediterranean reaching into Mesopotamia, or modern Iraq; and Egypt and North Africa. Although the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire constantly shifted, they roughly coincided with the boundaries of the eastern Roman Empire.
- ◆ The Byzantine Empire had changed from the Roman Empire over time. Even before the Arab eruption of the 7th and 8th centuries, Greek had replaced Latin as the language of Byzantine government, and it had become the sole language of Byzantine high culture. Although the Byzantines ruled over many different ethnic groups, crusaders referred to Byzantines as Greeks. The emergence of the Arabs out of Arabia and the birth of Islam would drive the Byzantine East and Latin West even further apart.

Conquests of the Arabs and Jihad

- ◆ Shortly after the death of Muhammad in 632, the Arabs embarked on a century of remarkable expansion and conquest. That expansion came at the expense of the Persian Empire and western India, the Byzantine

Empire (which lost Jerusalem in 637 and Egypt by the end of 646), and western kingdoms that had succeeded the Roman Empire. Despite its territorial losses, the Byzantine Empire survived.

- ◆ The Arabs established themselves as a ruling class through a vast swath of territory stretching from the Atlantic to the Himalayas, but they soon began to adopt the sedentary lifestyles and commercial sophistication of their new lands. Arabs also began to absorb those lands' philosophical and scientific traditions.
 - ◆ Part of this process of acculturation involved legal codification, and beginning in roughly the middle of the 8th century, Islamic scholars began to work out theories of jihad. These theories were intended to serve as a blueprint for the future, although their main function was to explain the recent past.
 - ◆ The word *jihad* (“struggle” or “striving”) and its variants are used in different ways at different points in the Koran. In the first half of the 9th century, Sufi mystics seized on these differences and began to



formulate the notion that there were two types of jihad: the greater jihad (personal spiritual striving) and the lesser jihad (military struggle against unbelievers).

- ◆ Islamic jurists elaborated on scattered militarist passages in the Koran, creating rules according to which jihad should be carried out. According to the jurists' conception of jihad, the world should mirror, as far as possible, the perfect unity of the single God.
- ◆ Before that goal was reached, the world had two parts: one ruled by Muslims in accordance with Islamic teachings (the House of Islam) and one ruled by non-Muslims (the House of War). It was the collective obligation of all Muslims to bring the non-Muslim world within the House of Islam. Until that final subjugation was achieved, Muslims were to be in a perpetual state of war.
- ◆ Although the jihad of these jurists was a holy war, its goals were more political than religious. It aimed at political domination but not the eradication of all other religions. Pagans had to convert to Islam or be executed. But Christians and Jews were given more tolerance because they were People of the Book. They were allowed to practice their own religions as long as they did not try to convert Muslims and paid a special tax as a sign of their submission to Islamic rule.

Rivalries in the House of Islam

- ◆ By the time Islamic jurists had developed their theories, the age of truly massive Arab expansion was over, having just about reached its possible geographical limits. The conquests extended far to the east and west but not so far north or south.
- ◆ In theory, the House of Islam should have remained bent on additional conquests, but in practice, local Arab rulers began to act in ways indistinguishable from their non-Muslim neighbors, fighting intermittently along their borders and taking advantage of opportunities when they arose. Later, diplomatic relations with non-Muslims normalized.

- ◆ Eighth-century juristic conceptions of jihad became more or less obsolete, and as circumstances changed, Islamic jurists tried to bring the theory into line with reality by adding to the House of Islam and the House of War a third option: the House of Peace. This realm included states that were not under Muslim rule but were nonetheless exempt from attack, provided that they paid tribute to the House of Islam.
- ◆ Even as relations between the House of Islam and its neighbors were normalizing, lands conquered by the Arabs splintered into different polities, sometimes with different religious allegiances. Between 750 and 800, Islamic Spain, Morocco, and Tunisia each threw off the political control of the caliphs of Baghdad, and local Muslim dynasties made themselves independent.

◆ Religiously, the main divide concerned the legitimacy of different lines of caliphs who were Muhammad’s successors. In contrast to Shi’a Muslims, Sunni Muslims did not (and still do not) accept the legitimacy of Ali (d. 661), Muhammad’s son-in-law.

◆ This disagreement resulted in the emergence of rival caliphates. The Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad were Sunni, but in the 10th century, a rival line of Fatimid Shi’a caliphs arose in North Africa.



- ◆ These internal rivalries created opportunities for the Byzantine Empire to recoup much of its lost territory. By 1025, its boundaries once again extended from the Danube to the Euphrates. They would also create opportunities for crusaders.

The Byzantine Empire and the Latin West

- ◆ The Arab expansion of the 7th and 8th centuries helped to widen the already growing divide between the Byzantine Empire and the Latin West. In the 7th and early 8th centuries, the papacy still acknowledged Byzantine imperial overlordship and expected Byzantine protection. But Arab success left the Byzantine Empire fighting for its own survival and forced to focus on the defense of Constantinople. Popes felt neglected and increasingly saw little value in remaining within the Byzantine orbit.
- ◆ Matters came to a head in the late 710s, when the Byzantine emperor faced another Arab assault on Constantinople. Thinking that perhaps the Christian veneration of religious images had descended into idolatry and angered God to the point of allowing Islam to defeat Christianity, the emperor ordered a policy of iconoclasm, the destruction of religious icons.
- ◆ For Byzantine emperors to make theological and liturgical determinations was nothing new, but on this occasion, the papacy refused to enforce the imperial policy of iconoclasm in churches under papal control. The papacy then followed this act of defiance with



one of self-liberation: Around the middle of the 8th century, popes-elect stopped awaiting Byzantine permission to undergo consecration and take up their papal duties.

- ◆ This split was a political rather than a religious one, but the liberated papacy now needed new allies and protectors. It looked for those protectors to the north. In 754, a pope made the first-ever papal visit north of the Alps.

The Great Schism

- ◆ The papacy's 8th-century pivot toward continental Europe was an essential precondition to the crusades, but much transpired between that pivot and 1095 that also made the crusades possible or, at least, shaped how they played out. Three changes especially are relevant.
 - ◆ First, the question of whether medieval Europe would constitute a single empire, like the Byzantine Empire, or consist of multiple independent kingdoms was settled for the next 1,000 years, although perhaps not once and for all.
 - ◆ Second, the papacy achieved an unprecedented level of freedom from secular control and became an autonomous political power in its own right.
 - ◆ Third, the Byzantine Empire and the Latin West continued to drift apart as their political division became a religious division.
- ◆ In 1095, Europe consisted of independent kingdoms. The Holy Roman Emperor ruled Germany, the kingdom of Burgundy in east-central France, and northern Italy, but he had no authority over France, much less England or Spain.
- ◆ As for papal autonomy, until the middle of the 11th century, the papacy remained substantially under the control of the Holy Roman Emperor. In 1059, however, the papacy managed to free itself from secular control of papal elections. It then became increasingly assertive. Popes began

excommunicating kings and even emperors with some frequency. At the Council of Clermont in 1095, Pope Urban II, in addition to launching the First Crusade, excommunicated the king of France.

- ◆ As for Byzantine–Western relations, by the middle of the 11th century, Christianity within the Byzantine Empire and Christianity within the medieval West differed on a number of issues, including the use of leavened versus unleavened bread at mass, the acceptance of married priests, and the question of the correct wording for the Nicene Creed, the definitive statement of Christian faith.
 - ◆ In 1054, the pope sent representatives to Constantinople to sort out these differences. Negotiations turned into recrimination and accusation. On July 16, 1054, the papal representative entered the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople and his chief supporters. The patriarch then summoned a synod and excommunicated the pope.
 - ◆ That these mutual excommunications would lead to a break between the Orthodox and Catholic churches that has lasted for almost 1,000 years is apparent only in hindsight. No one in 1054 paid too much attention to the Great Schism. Nonetheless, in excommunicating each other, the pope and the patriarch of Constantinople had further separated the Byzantine East from the European West.



Reading

Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War, c. 300–c. 1215*.

Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*.

Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*.

Questions

- 1 Christian polemicists of the Middle Ages juxtaposed the peaceful spread of their own religion during its first few centuries of existence with the Arab conquests of the 7th century. Does a recognition that the post-Constantine spread of Christianity often followed in the wake of military conquest and that the process of Islamization took many centuries in lands conquered by the Arabs undermine that juxtaposition?
- 2 At what point in history did contemporaries come to recognize that the schism between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches was going to continue indefinitely? Should we expect to see the two churches reunify during the next 1,000 years?



3

Before the Crusades— Immediate Circumstances

In the last lecture, we examined the deep background to the crusades. Recently converted to Islam, the Arabs upended geopolitics from Spain to India through their conquests of the 7th and 8th centuries. By the 11th century, though, the House of Islam, the Byzantine Empire, and the medieval West had reached a sort of rough territorial equilibrium. Between the middle of the 11th century and the First Crusade, a series of events complicated and destabilized relations among all three. Those events led the Byzantines to call on the West for assistance, which, in turn, led Pope Urban II to launch the First Crusade. In this lecture, we will examine the immediate circumstances that led to Urban's call.

Turkish Ascendance

- ◆ Since the early 9th century, modest numbers of Turks—central Asian nomads—had entered the lands of the House of Islam. Some came unwillingly as prisoners of war or purchased slaves; some came willingly as hired soldiers. The Abbasid caliphs organized Turks into regiments of personal bodyguards, known as Mamluks. Local Arab leaders, too, created Turkish military units.
- ◆ This modest migration gave way to a much broader migration, in which entire Turkish tribes moved into the lands of the Abbasid caliphate. Eventually, the Turks were in a position to take power from the Abbasid caliphs, and they did so. In 1055, the chief of the Seljuk Turks entered Baghdad and received the title of sultan from the caliph; the Seljuk sultan quickly assumed power in Baghdad, and the caliphs become religious figureheads.
- ◆ Westward migration brought the Turks to the western boundaries of Abbasid territory and then beyond. Between 1070 and 1079, the Sunni Seljuks took Syria and most of Palestine from the Shi'a Fatimids. In 1071, the Turks defeated the Byzantine army at the Battle of Manzikert and took the Byzantine emperor prisoner. The victory opened up Asia Minor to Turkish raids; refugees streamed out of Asia Minor toward Constantinople.
- ◆ Although military victories against the Fatimids and the Byzantines were impressive, the Turkish sultan of Baghdad hardly ruled over a unified empire. By the late 11th century, the sultan and caliph of Baghdad had little ability to control the military governors of various provinces and towns. The situation in the Fatimid caliphate was similar. The caliph in Cairo had effectively lost his power to the chief military officer, the vizier of Egypt, and viziers found it almost impossible to control local officials.
- ◆ In 1092, the Seljuk sultan of Baghdad died, just 1 month after his most important official had also died. Then, the Abbasid caliph, the Fatimid caliph, and the vizier of Egypt all happened to die in 1094. The result of these deaths in quick succession was even more internal turmoil for the Turks.

Deterioration in the Byzantine Empire

- ◆ From the Byzantine perspective, the situation was deteriorating. The Byzantines had been losing territory since the 1020s, and their losses accelerated in the 1070s. The location of the Byzantine Empire at the crossroads of Europe, Africa, and Asia left the empire with extensive frontiers that, when all pressured at once, were difficult to maintain.
- ◆ The Turks' capture of the Byzantine emperor in 1071 triggered a series of coups and usurpations that ended when the Byzantine General Alexios Komnenos seized the throne in 1081; he would rule until his death in 1118.
 - ◆ Alexios, although a usurper, used standard Byzantine practice to deal with his empire's collapsing frontiers: First, always make an alliance with whoever is located just behind the enemy, and second, hire anyone—regardless of religion or ethnicity—to fight for the Byzantine cause.
 - ◆ Alexios managed to defeat the Normans in 1085 and the Pechenegs, nomads from the steppe lands north of the Black Sea, in 1091.
- ◆ By 1092, the situation along the Byzantine Empire's western frontier had stabilized, but in Asia Minor, the situation was deteriorating once again.
 - ◆ In 1081, Alexios had made an alliance with the Turkish commander Suleiman. Alexios agreed to recognize Suleiman's authority in Asia Minor on the condition that Suleiman not permit Turkish raids beyond a certain point and that he rule on behalf of the Byzantine



Empire. Suleiman accepted the deal, acquired the important city of Nicaea, became sultan of the Turkish state of Rum, and proved a fairly loyal ally.

- ◆ But Suleiman died in battle in 1085, and those who succeeded him in Nicaea and Antioch did not think of themselves as owing anything to the Byzantine Empire. They began to expand at the expense of the Byzantines.
- ◆ As the situation in Asia Minor worsened for the Byzantine Empire, Alexios I looked for outside assistance. He sent ambassadors to Pope Urban II in March 1095, who asked the pope to organize an expedition to fight against the Turks. The Byzantines and the Westerners were fellow Christians, and they ought to stand together against the Muslim foe. Further, such cooperation might help to end the schism between Byzantine Christians and the papacy.

Urban's Call

- ◆ On November 27, 1095, the final day of a council held at Clermont, Urban II closed out the council with a sermon. So many clerics and laymen attended that this speech had to be given outdoors. Urban II called upon his listeners to come to the aid of Christians in the East.
- ◆ The response, likely choreographed in advance, was immediate. The crowd began to shout "*Deus lo volt*," "God wills it"; people began to cut garments into the shape of crosses and to place these crosses on their shoulders in imitation of Christ.



- ◆ Urban II appointed a bishop, Adhemar of Le Puy, as head of the crusade.
- ◆ Urban spent the next few months in France, preaching the crusade and writing letters to various places and groups urging them to take part in the expedition. In 1096, Urban II fixed August 15, 1096, as the departure date for the crusaders, who were to rendezvous at Constantinople. French bishops also sent clerics around the countryside, urging people to take up the cross, and freelancing eccentrics decided to preach the crusade, as well.
- ◆ One of the most enduring questions in history concerns when and how the conquest of Jerusalem became the First Crusade's primary focus. It would appear that Alexios's ambassadors mentioned the possibility of the expedition going to Jerusalem at the Council of Piacenza in March 1095, and surviving accounts all have Pope Urban II speaking of Jerusalem in his sermon at the Council of Clermont.
 - ◆ However, the accounts of Urban II's speech were all written after the First Crusade was over, and there is a possibility that chroniclers were reading the crusade's outcome back into its origins when they reconstructed Urban's speech.
 - ◆ Further, it's doubtful that Alexios I defined the crusade's primary goal as the capture of Jerusalem. From the Byzantine point of view, Jerusalem had not been a Byzantine possession for more than 400 years, and it was of no strategic significance; getting back Asia Minor, especially Nicaea and Antioch, was far more pressing.
 - ◆ Although Urban II may have relished the thought of a Christian conquest of Jerusalem, the capture of Jerusalem would not do much to win Byzantine goodwill and heal the schism with the Byzantine Christians. If it was not Urban II who put Jerusalem at the heart of the First Crusade, then it might have been local preachers or, perhaps, the crusaders themselves.

Answering the Call

- ◆ Regardless of who put Jerusalem at the center of the First Crusade, it seems clear that some crusaders answered the call for reasons that had little to do with the Great Schism, Byzantine territorial integrity, or anything else that concerned the crusade's originators.
- ◆ The benefits of pilgrimage to Jerusalem, holy war, and indulgences motivated crusaders, but there were other motives, too. Some crusaders went because they were required to follow their lords. Some went because family members were going. Some crusaders saw the expedition as a means of improving their personal fortunes. Among rank-and-file knightly crusaders, spiritual considerations were probably paramount.
- ◆ Going on crusade was an enormously expensive undertaking. Knights and higher-ranking nobles spent the time before their departure selling and mortgaging property and borrowing heavily.
 - ◆ Perhaps the chief appeal of the crusades to these knights and nobles was that the expedition offered them the opportunity to do what they had been trained to do: to wage war—and to do so in a manner that benefited rather than threatened their salvation.
 - ◆ For a century before the First Crusade, ecclesiastics had been struggling to pacify knights, whose belligerence was the source of the nobility's wealth. Against armored men fighting on horseback, peasants, townspeople, and ecclesiastics could do little other than to give



the knights whatever they demanded. Sometimes, knightly demands took the form of pillage; sometimes, knights imposed rights of lordship over peasants and others.

- ◆ To limit knightly violence, ecclesiastics had introduced, around the year 1000, the Peace and Truce of God movement, which then spread across much of Europe.
 - ◆ The Peace of God exempted certain categories of people from the violence of knights. It forbade knights to rob clerics or to invade churches; it forbade nobles to seize peasants or their animals, to beat peasants or their animals, to burn down peasant houses, and so on. It offered similar protection to widows, virgins, and orphans.
 - ◆ The Truce of God limited the times when knights could fight: They could not attack anyone from the beginning of Lent to the end of Easter or on Sundays. During the course of the 11th century, the scope of the truce was extended; knights were not to assault anyone around Pentecost or Christmas or from Friday to Sunday.
- ◆ For enforcement, bishops and abbots relied on oaths sworn by all knights of each diocese, and to give some force to these oaths, the bishops invoked the power of saints' relics. The relics served as a reminder that if knights refused to swear to the Peace and Truce of God, or if they did swear to it and then relapsed into bad behavior, the saints and holy individuals connected with the relics would punish them.
- ◆ Despite the sometimes remarkable effect the presence of relics had on knights, the Peace and Truce of God was a flawed instrument. Over time, as the memories of the relics faded, knights tended to revert to violence. From the knights' point of view, the Peace and Truce of God was a nattering list of dos and don'ts; it offered nothing positive to them. Crusading, on the other hand, offered knights an opportunity to fight for a good cause—an opportunity many could not pass up.

Reading

Lock, *The Routledge Companion to the Crusades*.

Riley-Smith, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*.

Questions

- 1 Can you think of other historical instances wherein large-scale migrations by entire ethnic groups, such as the Turkish migration, constituted the first link in a chain of events that had massive geopolitical consequences?
- 2 The First Crusade was launched in the hope that military cooperation would pave the way for the end of the religious schism between Rome and the Byzantines. Was that hope doomed from the outset?



4

The First Crusade and Conquest of Jerusalem

In the last lecture, we saw how Turkish migration and expansion during the 11th century triggered the First Crusade. The Turks, who had converted to Sunni Islam by the time of the First Crusade, expanded at the expense of the Sunni Abbasids, the Shi'a Fatimid caliphate, and the Christian Byzantine Empire. Byzantine territorial losses in Asia Minor caused the emperor Alexios I to request military assistance from the pope, who responded with the First Crusade. To some extent, the First Crusade did what the pope and Byzantine emperor wanted it to do; in many ways, though, it did not. In this lecture, we will examine the course and consequences of the First Crusade.

The Popular Crusade

- ◆ The response to Urban II's call, repeated at a local level by authorized and unauthorized preachers, was enormous. Perhaps some 100,000 Europeans joined the First Crusade. But the First Crusade did not consist of a single expedition. Rather, it was a series of loosely coordinated waves that left Europe over the space of several years.
- ◆ The great majority of those who went on the First Crusade were not knights or warriors. They were the *populous*: peasants and some craftsmen, often led by minor nobles and by the popular preacher and ascetic Peter the Hermit. Historians refer to these opening waves as the People's or Popular Crusade.
- ◆ Urban II's call for a military expedition to the East and to Jerusalem had triggered millenarian and apocalyptic expectations.
 - ◆ In the folklore of medieval Europe, various apocalyptic prophecies circulated. One such prophecy stated that before the coming of the Antichrist and the end of the world, a Christian king, called the Emperor of the Last Days, would rule in the East. The Antichrist would kill the Emperor of the Last Days, and that, in turn, would lead to the Second Coming of Jesus, who would kill the Antichrist before the Last Judgment.
 - ◆ Islamic rule in Jerusalem and the East seemed to preclude the apocalypse. But the calling of the First Crusade and the expectation that it would take back Jerusalem suggested that perhaps the time had come for the emergence of the Emperor of the Last Days.



- ◆ According to some apocalyptic scenarios, the death of the Antichrist would usher in a 1,000-year period when the good and the just enjoyed the same happiness and freedom from hunger, labor, illness, and death that Adam and Eve had enjoyed in paradise. In this scenario, the conquest of Jerusalem would lead to a world in which the *populous* enjoyed everything that it did not have and, absent the apocalypse, would never have.
- ◆ Another common apocalyptic expectation was that before the Second Coming of Jesus, all unbelievers would convert to Christianity. That belief had consequences for Europe's Jews. If Jews were allowed to persist in Judaism, then the conquest of Jerusalem would be in vain. Jewish existence would delay the coming of the millennium—the 1,000 years of paradise.
- ◆ For this reason, some of the bands included in the First Crusade attacked Jewish communities before departing Europe, demanding that Jews convert or die at the crusaders' hands.
- ◆ Their work done, these bands of popular crusaders then followed others that had already set out on the long overland march to Constantinople and Jerusalem.

The Trek to Constantinople

- ◆ The first bands of the Popular Crusade departed the Rhine River Valley in the middle of April 1096, but Urban II had set August 1096 as the departure date. The first band passed through the kingdom of Hungary mostly without incident; it arrived at Belgrade, on the Byzantine-Hungarian frontier, in late May or early June 1096.
- ◆ The Byzantines were not expecting anyone so early; they were not expecting the crusaders to travel overland through Belgrade; and they were not expecting several thousand individuals of, at best, modest economic means. Supplies ran short. The crusaders began to forage—or to pillage—Hungarian and Byzantine territory. Skirmishes broke out, pitting the crusaders against Byzantine border guards and local peasants and townspeople. The Byzantines restored order by assigning guards to escort the crusaders to Constantinople.

- ◆ The first band reached Constantinople relatively intact, but subsequent bands, traveling in the summer of 1096, were not so lucky. As the various groups composing the Popular Crusade traveled across Hungarian and Byzantine territory, supplies became harder to come by, and local residents became increasingly resentful. Fighting between crusaders, on the one hand, and Hungarians and Byzantines, on the other hand, became more common and more serious.
- ◆ When the last band of the Popular Crusade reached the frontier between Germany and Hungary and requested permission to enter, the Magyar king denied it. When the crusaders tried to force their way across the border, Hungarian troops destroyed them.
- ◆ The surviving members of the Popular Crusade mustered at Constantinople late in the summer of 1096. They crossed the Bosphorus Strait, entered Asia Minor, and raided Turkish territory. The Turks annihilated them in October 1096, with only a few survivors scrambling back to Constantinople.
- ◆ The result of the Popular Crusade was to sow mistrust between crusaders and Byzantines. Further, it showed that crusades, once summoned, were difficult to control. Crusaders devised and followed agendas different from those who had called them into being.

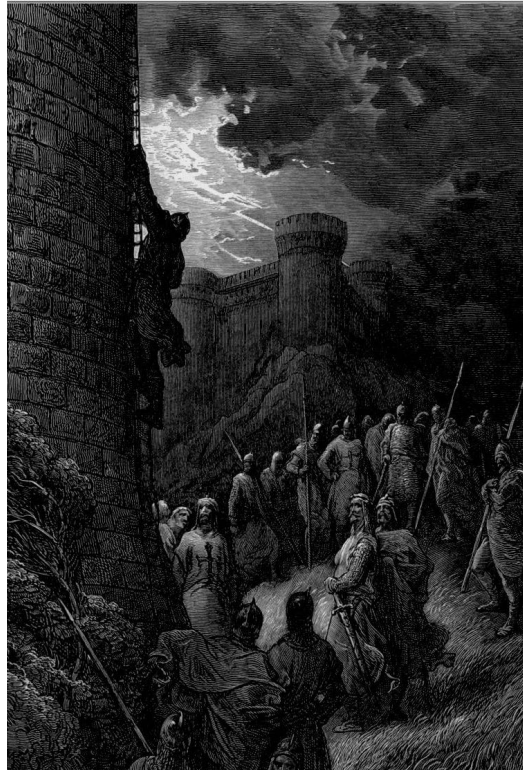
The Barons' Crusade

- ◆ In December 1096, 2 months after the end of the Popular Crusade, another band of crusaders arrived at Constantinople. This band was more in keeping with what Alexios I Komnenos and Urban II had expected.
- ◆ This group was led by Hugh of Vermandois, the brother of the king of France. Alexios asked Hugh to swear an oath promising to return to the Byzantine emperor any formerly Byzantine territory that the crusaders might capture. Alexios then transported the crusaders to the sliver of territory that the Byzantines still held on the other side of the Bosphorus. Likely, Alexios moved Hugh there to keep him and his followers separate from the other crusaders as they arrived, lest the crusaders join forces and oppose him.

- ◆ Late in 1096 and early in 1097, other bands of crusaders arrived at Constantinople, each headed by nobles who were often of some standing. Alexios greeted each band and leader as he had greeted Hugh of Vermandois. He gave them gifts but also asked that each leader swear an oath to return to the Byzantines any formerly Byzantine territory they captured. Some leaders objected to the oath, but Alexios cut off their food supplies and starved them into agreement.
- ◆ Finally, at the end of April 1097, this Barons' Crusade marched toward the Turkish frontier. Survivors of the Popular Crusade accompanied it, as did Byzantine troops. Emperor Alexios followed behind the crusaders, organizing supplies and logistics.

The Siege of Antioch

- ◆ The crusaders reached Nicaea and besieged it in May 1097; it fell the next month, after Alexios convinced the Muslim defenders to surrender to him rather than the crusaders. The crusaders were angered by the Byzantine deception, and the distrust between the two groups deepened, but they had not yet reached the breaking point, and crusader optimism remained high.
- ◆ From June through October 1097, the crusaders fought their way across Asia Minor, concerned not so much with taking and holding formerly Byzantine territory as with reaching Antioch, a large city at the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean.





- ◆ In October, the crusaders, still accompanied by Byzantine troops and with Alexios continuing to shadow them from the rear, besieged Antioch, but the siege dragged on for many months. Some crusaders deserted and returned to Europe. In February 1098, the Byzantine general Tatikios and his troops abandoned the siege.
- ◆ The Norman crusader Bohemond, a former foe of Alexios I, exploited the situation, letting it be known that he, too, was contemplating leaving the siege unless the crusaders agreed to allow him to keep Antioch after it fell. The crusaders' oath to Alexios no longer mattered because the Byzantines, through the flight of Tatikios, had broken faith with the crusaders.
- ◆ Not all of Bohemond's fellow crusaders were persuaded by his argument, but by May 1098, their situation was desperate. A relieving army was on the way to break the siege. The crusaders had to get inside Antioch's protective walls, and Bohemond found a way to do so: He made contact with a defender who agreed to allow the crusaders into Antioch.
- ◆ Before allowing his fellow crusaders inside the city walls, Bohemond reiterated his demand to keep Antioch. Except for Raymond of Saint-Gilles, the count of Toulouse, the last holdouts among the crusaders relented, although they made Bohemond promise that he would return Antioch to the Byzantine emperor if the emperor came in person to ask for it.
- ◆ On June 3, 1098, Bohemond and the crusaders entered the city, massacred most of those who were still alive inside, and, within a few days, found themselves besieged by the relieving army. The crusaders were now trapped in a city that had just experienced an 8-month siege at their own hands. Hope for a Byzantine rescue quickly dissipated; Alexios later claimed that deserting crusaders told him that the crusade had already been destroyed, and there was no one left to rescue.
- ◆ While besieged and starving in Antioch, many crusaders' spirits were lifted by an unusual incident: the alleged discovery of the Holy Lance, used to pierce Jesus's side during the Crucifixion. Bolstered by this find, on June 28, 1098, the crusaders sallied forth from Antioch and attacked the besieging army, which broke ranks and fled.

The Capture of Jerusalem

- ◆ After their harrowing experience, the crusaders remained in Antioch until January 1099. During that time, they invited Alexios I to come and take possession of the city, but Alexios didn't reply until April 1099, by which time most of the crusaders were on their way to Jerusalem and Bohemond's possession of Antioch was secure.
- ◆ By January 1099, it seemed doubtful that the crusade would ever resume its march southward toward Jerusalem. Finally, their numbers shrunk, with no Byzantine help, and without Bohemond, the remaining crusaders left Antioch and made a beeline for Jerusalem.
- ◆ On June 7, 1099, the crusaders arrived within sight of Jerusalem, whose governor had expelled its Christian inhabitants to protect against treachery and to stretch its food supplies.
 - ◆ As they besieged the city, the crusaders learned that a Fatimid army had been dispatched to save Jerusalem.
 - ◆ On July 15, 1099, before that army reached Jerusalem, the crusaders breached its walls and took the city, massacring perhaps some 3,000 of its inhabitants.
- ◆ The First Crusade was, in a sense, a success—the crusaders had captured Nicaea, Antioch, and Jerusalem—but it was a messy success. The Popular Crusade began with massacres of Jews in Germany and ended in defeat. And the First Crusade did not improve Byzantine-Western relations; if anything, it added new grievances that drove the two groups further apart.

Reading

Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade*.

Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade*.

France, *Victory in the East*.

Frankopan, *The First Crusade*.

Kedar, “The Massacre of 15 July 1099 in the Historiography of the Crusades.”

Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*.

———, “Crusaders and Cannibals.”

Questions

- 1 If Pope Urban II had lived long enough to hear of the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the First Crusade, what might his retrospective evaluation of the First Crusade have been?
- 2 Given that the numbering system used for crusades (First, Second, Third, and so on) is misleading and almost entirely capricious, would historians be better off abandoning it, or would doing so create more problems than it would solve?



5

The Rise of the Templars

In our last lecture, we saw how the First Crusade culminated in the crusader conquest of Jerusalem in July 1099. It was, from the crusader point of view, a notable achievement. However, the First Crusade also generated some new problems. Europeans called the lands that the First Crusade conquered Outremer, “the land beyond the sea.” Now, the former crusaders had to secure these lands, defend them, and hold on to Jerusalem, which was no easy matter. Indeed, the difficulty of policing and defending the Crusader States gave rise to one of the great institutional innovations to arise from the First Crusade and its aftermath: the foundation of the Order of the Temple, also known as the Templars.

Emergence of the Templars

- ◆ The Templar Order arose from the disordered and dangerous conditions within the Crusader States following the First Crusade.
 - ◆ Pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land found that the First Crusade and the establishment of the Crusader States had not made pilgrimage appreciably easier than it had been before the First Crusade. Crusader control of rural areas through which pilgrims passed was shaky.
 - ◆ The borders of the kingdom of Jerusalem, which contained the most important pilgrimage destinations, were porous, and the city itself was close to the eastern edge of the kingdom's borders. It was easy for raiders and brigands to come across the frontier, attack parties of pilgrims, and escape before any response could be made.
 - ◆ In 1106 and 1107, a Russian abbot named Daniel made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. His largish party of pilgrims did not encounter any difficulties, but Daniel recognized that he was one of the lucky ones, and he gave a grim account of what befell other pilgrims.
- ◆ In 1119, a small group of knights in Jerusalem organized themselves for the accompaniment and protection of pilgrims. Their leader was a knight named Hugh. He and his fellow knights formed the nucleus of what would become the Templars.
- ◆ The king of Jerusalem welcomed the assistance of these knights and allowed Hugh and his followers to establish their headquarters at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, located on the Temple Mount; hence, they came to be called the Order of the Temple and their members, the Templars.
- ◆ Although the Templars originated as an “escort service,” their role soon grew beyond traveling with and defending Christian pilgrims in the Crusader States. Already in the 1130s, the Templars were providing general military service. At some point, the oath the Templars took on joining the order came to include a vow in which the Templar swore to protect the kingdom of Jerusalem and, if possible, to conquer more land for it.



A KNIGHT TEMPLAR.

Growth of the Order

- ◆ For about the first decade of its existence, the Templar Order was not a recognized order at all but more of a local confraternity of knights. It had difficulty finding recruits and support beyond that which the king of Jerusalem provided.
- ◆ The Templars acquired an important and influential champion in the monk Bernard of Clairvaux, who extolled the virtues of the Templars in his 1128 treatise *In Praise of the New Knighthood*.
- ◆ Thanks in part to Bernard's intervention on their behalf, the Templars received formal papal approval as a new religious order at the Council of Troyes in 1129. That council also approved the first version of the Rule of the Templars.
- ◆ A series of papal bulls between 1139 and 1145 further defined the Templars and gave them certain privileges. These bulls named the Templars as defenders of Catholic Christianity against its enemies and remitted the sins of all Templars as recompense for their service.
- ◆ These papal bulls also gave the Templars a great deal of autonomy. The head of the Templars, the Grand Master, answered only to the pope, not to any other ecclesiastical authority or to any secular authority. To preserve the order's independence, Templars were forbidden to be vassals of any lord other than the pope.
- ◆ The Templars, and military orders more generally, took the First Crusade's fusion of warfare and piety one step further by creating a group of people who were both monks and knights. Like knights, Templars traveled and fought; like monks, they took vows, lived communally, and followed a written rule.
- ◆ The Templars belonged both to medieval Europe's monkish spiritual elite and to its knightly social and military elite. A sign of the combination's popularity is the fact that during the 12th and 13th centuries, other military orders emerged, including the Knights of Saint Lazarus and the Hospitallers.

Financial Resources of the Military Orders

- ◆ The number of Templar and Hospitaller knights who served in the Crusader States was never very large (probably 600 Templars in Outremer), but the military orders were more important than their numbers would suggest. The Templars and Hospitallers drew on the resources of the medieval West in a way that the rulers of the Crusader States could not.
 - ◆ Because the kings of Jerusalem did not have extensive landholdings in Europe, the best they could do was to plead for assistance when they needed it.
 - ◆ In contrast, the Templars and Hospitallers amassed a large network of properties and religious houses in Europe, whose revenues and manpower could be used to sustain their activities in the East.
- ◆ The Templars, with their many widely scattered houses, also became an important provider of financial services in medieval Europe. People deposited money and valuables with the Templars, which they could withdraw later from a Templar house located elsewhere. The Templars increased the financial resources at their disposal by using their eastern connections to acquire relics, which they then put on tour in the West as part of fund drives.
- ◆ The Templars' and Hospitallers' financial resources were especially important because nobles who settled in the Crusader States frequently could not make a go of it. Either their lineages died out through natural causes or warfare or they simply went broke, unable to maintain their castles and lordships. The kings of Jerusalem and the heads of the Crusader States were often in no position financially to take over failing castles and lordships, but the military orders could and did take them over and kept them functioning.

Military Orders in the Field

- ◆ The military orders also provided the Crusader States with something resembling a standing army that could be mobilized quickly.

- ◆ Assembling an army of vassals through a feudal levy was always difficult. One problem with granting landed fiefs to vassals in return for military service was that the remuneration was entirely front-loaded while the work was back-loaded. Once the vassal had use of the fief, he had little incentive to serve well.
- ◆ Vassals had a habit of answering calls for service grudgingly, showing up late and bringing less equipment and fewer knights than they should have. Sometimes, vassals never showed up at all.
- ◆ Mustering a contingent of monk-knights who lived communally, whose rule demanded and inculcated obedience, and who did not hold fiefs was far easier than mustering a feudal levy.
- ◆ Further, the Templars and Hospitallers, as monk-knights stationed more or less permanently in the East, were far more disciplined in the field and more experienced in fighting Arabs and Turks than were armies of newly arrived crusaders.
- ◆ This experience came at a high cost. In the 1130s, when the Templars were still relatively new, all three engagements in which they are known to have been involved resulted in heavy Templar losses.
- ◆ But the Templars learned from these experiences and put their knowledge into writing, updating the Templar Rule for the benefit of new members. As a result, the Templar Rule became an operational military manual as well as a religious rule. It established procedures for marching, foraging outside of camp, responding to alarms, and so on.
- ◆ Both crusaders and their enemies came to appreciate the Templars' importance. For example, during the Second Crusade, when French crusaders botched a march through a mountain pass and suffered heavy losses, the French king realized that he was out of his element and put the Templars in charge of the rest of the march. Saladin, the Kurdish sultan of Egypt, made it his policy to execute all captured Templars rather than ransoming them because they were too dangerous to be released.

Problems with the Military Orders

- ◆ As crucial as the military orders were to the defense of the Crusader States, they also posed problems. First, the Templars and the Hospitallers were rivals. They vied for the same pool of recruits and donors and invariably came down on opposite sides of any issue. In 1168, for example, when the king of Jerusalem decided to invade Egypt, the Hospitallers agreed to take part, but the Templars simply refused.
- ◆ The independence of the Templars and Hospitallers was also an issue. Local bishops and clergy, in the Crusader States and in Europe, resented the fact that the Templars and Hospitallers had their own churches, received donations, and performed fee-generating services, such as burials, that siphoned off money that might have gone to parish clergy and bishops.
- ◆ Even more seriously, kings of Jerusalem could not command the Templars or the Hospitallers; each military order was free to pursue its own policies, including foreign and military policy, and each did so. At times, the military orders made truces with Muslims even as crusades were being launched; at other times, they refused to observe truces made by kings of Jerusalem or leaders of the crusades, which made coordinating the defense of Jerusalem difficult.
 - ◆ Conflicts between kings of Jerusalem and the Templars sometimes took a violent turn. In 1166, a Templar garrison surrendered a fortress to Muslims even though the king of Jerusalem was on his way to provide relief; the king hanged 12 of the Templars who surrendered.
 - ◆ In 1173, for reasons that still are not clear, some Templars murdered a Muslim envoy traveling to Jerusalem under a royal promise of safe conduct. The king, furious, ordered the Templars to hand over the culprits for punishment. When the Grand Master of the Templars refused, a standoff ensued, until the king managed to seize the culprits himself and imprison them.
 - ◆ Yet even the king of Jerusalem who had hanged and punished Templars also entrusted them with the defense of castles, recognizing that he could not do without them.

- ♦ The Templars and other military orders introduced a new element into medieval religious life and proved important to the defense of the Crusader States. At the same time, the rivalry between the Templars and Hospitallers was a problem for the Crusader States, as was each order's independence. And as we will see, the Crusader States already had enough problems.

Reading

Barber, *The New Knighthood*.

Forey, *The Military Orders from the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries*.

Seward, *The Monks of War*.

Questions

- 1 Was the creation of the Templars and other military orders a good or a bad idea, and why? How would one define "good" or "bad" in this context?
- 2 What accounts for the continued modern fascination with the Templars? How has fascination with the Templars figured into American history, especially the history of the American South?



6

Defending the Crusader States, 1099–1144

In this lecture, we will examine the early history of the four Crusader States that emerged from the First Crusade. An understanding of the Crusader States is essential to the history of the crusades because, after the First Crusade, every eastern crusade was launched, directly or indirectly, in response to losses suffered by the Crusader States. Indeed, if the Crusader States had been strong enough to stand on their own, there might not have been any eastern crusades beyond the First. By the 1140s, though, the precariousness of the Crusader States became evident. In 1144, one of the four Crusader States would be overrun. That, in turn, would lead to the launching of the Second Crusade.

Emergence of the Crusader States

- ◆ After the crusaders captured Jerusalem in July 1099 and repulsed a counterattack by an Egyptian Fatimid army south of Jerusalem, most crusaders went back to Europe. As a result, the Crusader States immediately faced a severe shortage of manpower. Those who remained—called Franks by contemporary Arabs—numbered far less than the indigenous population and tended to live in the cities of Jerusalem, Acre, and Tyre.
- ◆ The First Crusade gave rise to four Crusader States: the principality of Antioch, the kingdom of Jerusalem, and the counties of Edessa and Tripoli.
- ◆ The county of Edessa, founded by Baldwin of Boulogne in March 1098, was the northernmost of the four Crusader States. Geographically, it differed from the other three in that it extended hundreds of miles inland, across the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. The other three Crusader States hugged the coastline of the eastern Mediterranean.
- ◆ The county of Tripoli, wedged between the principality of Antioch to its north and the kingdom of Jerusalem to its south, was the creation of Raymond of Saint-Gilles after he passed up rulership of the kingdom of Jerusalem.
- ◆ Coordinating the defensive activities of these four states was never easy. Sometimes, the king of Jerusalem was the feudal lord of the rulers of the other three states, and sometimes, he was not; in any event,



much depended on personalities and calculations of personal interest. Coordinating defensive activities within each state, particularly when substantial fiefs were involved, was sometimes just as difficult.

- ◆ In the two decades following the conquest of Jerusalem, the Franks captured various coastal ports bypassed on the march to Jerusalem. In this, they were assisted by Italian naval forces from Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. Italian city-states played a more pronounced role in conquests after the First Crusade when they saw that the conquests opened up new commercial opportunities.
 - ◆ In return for their assistance, Genoa, Pisa, and Venice demanded and received their own waterfront quarters in conquered cities, within which they enjoyed great autonomy.
 - ◆ The Italian merchant fleets connected the Crusader States to Europe. Although the crusaders had marched through the Seljuk sultanate of Rum, most of Asia Minor remained under Turkish control. The Crusader States had no secure land route to Constantinople.
- ◆ For about a decade after the conquest of Jerusalem, Frankish policy toward defeated populations was the same as it had been during the crusade itself: massacre and annihilation. For towns that surrendered, all Muslim inhabitants had to convert or leave. That policy changed beginning with the Frankish conquest of Sidon in 1110. By then, the Franks were more concerned with keeping the local population in place than with eliminating it.
- ◆ Another adjustment the Franks made to their new circumstances involved a willingness to ally with local Muslim rulers.
 - ◆ The perilous situation of the Crusader States made such alliances appealing. Local Arab and Turkish governors seeking a counterweight to the Seljuk sultan of Baghdad found these alliances useful, as well.
 - ◆ Allying with local Muslim rulers was something of a mixed blessing for the Franks, though, because these alliances sometimes brought Crusader States into conflict with one another. In 1108, Edessa and Antioch briefly went to war because each had allied with a different Muslim ruler and their respective Muslim allies had gone to war.

Reinforcing the Crusader States

- ◆ The alliances with Muslim rulers were all the more important because the first European attempts to reinforce the Crusader States met with disaster.
- ◆ In 1100, enthused at the news of Jerusalem's conquest, more crusaders set out for the East, many of them Normans from Italy. Poorly organized, the crusaders traveled to Constantinople. In what was by now a familiar scene, they pillaged the outskirts of the city and fought against the troops of the Byzantine emperor, who cut off their food supplies in order to subdue them.
- ◆ Raymond of Saint-Gilles, who happened to be in Constantinople at the moment, helped to quell the disturbances and offered to lead the Norman crusaders, joined by recent French and German arrivals, on a march to Jerusalem that might open a permanent land route between the Crusader States and Constantinople.
 - ◆ The Norman crusaders would not hear of it. Their fellow Norman, Bohemond, had been captured by Muslims in 1100, and they insisted that they must find and free him. Raymond of Saint-Gilles agreed to lead the crusaders into Asia Minor on their quest.
 - ◆ These crusaders managed to capture Ankara in 1101 and handed it over to the Byzantines. After that, they followed an erratic path across Asia Minor, ran out of supplies, and found themselves cut to pieces by Turkish attacks.
 - ◆ A few survivors, including Raymond of Saint-Gilles, managed to make it to the Black Sea, where the Byzantines rescued them, but most did not escape, and two other bands of crusaders that followed in 1101 met similar fates. The defeat of these crusaders boosted Muslim morale.

Crusade against the Byzantine Empire

- ◆ In 1103, Bohemond, prince of Antioch, was released from captivity. In 1104, he appointed his nephew Tancred as regent and returned to Europe, arriving in Italy in January 1105. There, Bohemond informed the pope that another crusade was needed; the ultimate goal would be Jerusalem, but along the way, the crusade should conquer the Byzantine Empire.
- ◆ Pope Paschal II formally launched this crusade at the Council of Poitiers in 1106, although historians do not give this crusade, or embarrassing crusades more generally, a number.
- ◆ In a letter he wrote to Paschal II just before the crusade set out, Bohemond mentioned that it would end the Great Schism between the Eastern and Western churches. Those whom Bohemond recruited, though, seem to have thought that the crusade was focused on Jerusalem.
- ◆ Bohemond's crusade against the Byzantine Empire went badly for him. He returned to the Balkans, where he had fought the Byzantines in the 1080s, but Byzantine troops encircled his own. Bohemond surrendered in 1108 and recognized Byzantine overlordship of Antioch. Humiliated, he never returned to Antioch and died in Italy in 1111.
- ◆ Tancred, serving as regent in Antioch, refused to accept the terms to which Bohemond had agreed. The problem of Antioch remained a sticking point between the Byzantines and the Franks for several more decades. It would not be until the 1130s and 1140s that the Byzantines made good on their claims to Antioch.

Muslim Response to the First Crusade

- ◆ All four Crusader States faced the threat of an Islamic counterattack, but that threat developed more slowly than we might expect. Medieval Western chroniclers hailed the conquest of Jerusalem as an event of world-historical significance, but Muslim chroniclers were rather indifferent to it, and many believed that it was the Byzantines who had captured Jerusalem.

- ◆ One exception to Muslim indifference and misunderstanding can be found in the writing of a Sunni religious scholar in Damascus, ‘Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami. In 1105, in his *Kitab al-Jihad*, al-Sulami argued that the crusaders were part of a Christian jihad coming from the West that had aimed at the conquest of Jerusalem and at helping Eastern Christians in general.
- ◆ Al-Sulami claimed that the success of this Western jihad revealed the moral and political decay of Islam, but he argued that with cooperation among Muslims, the future triumph of Islam over Christianity was guaranteed.
- ◆ In Aleppo, Damascus, and Baghdad, refugees from conquered regions also agitated for the launching of a jihad.
- ◆ But organizing a concerted effort against the Franks proved to be difficult. In the early 1110s, the Seljuk sultan of Baghdad entrusted the organization of a counterattack to the emir of Mosul, named Mawdud, but Mawdud was refused entry to Aleppo and was assassinated in Damascus. Later, the allied Muslim forces of Damascus and Aleppo, together with the Christian forces of the kingdom of Jerusalem, Edessa, and Antioch, defeated the Seljuk sultan’s army at the Battle of Tel-Danith in 1115.
- ◆ Alliances sometimes shifted quickly. In 1119, Damascus and Aleppo fought against the forces of Christian Antioch, their former ally, at the Battle of the Field of Blood.
- ◆ More successful in defeating the Franks and exploiting victory was Imad ad-Din Zengi. Zengi first made a name for himself in 1126 when the Abbasid caliph tried to liberate himself from the control of the sultan of



Baghdad. Zengi led the sultan's forces to victory against the caliph's, but his tactfulness in victory made him a favorite of both the caliph and the sultan.

- ◆ In 1127, the sultan and the caliph agreed to make Zengi the governor of Mosul. From 1127 to 1130, through force and the threat of force, Zengi brought northern Syria and such towns as Aleppo, Homs, and Shayzar under his control.
- ◆ But in the 1130s, Zengi became embroiled in a civil war in Baghdad and then made several unsuccessful attempts to capture Damascus, which remained allied with the kingdom of Jerusalem.
- ◆ In 1143, both the Byzantine emperor and the king of Jerusalem died, and with the empire and kingdom bogged down in issues of succession, Zengi acted. He attacked a fellow Muslim, the ruler of Diyarbekir, who had recently made an alliance with the count of Edessa.
- ◆ The count honored that alliance and led his army out of Edessa and down the Euphrates River. Zengi then moved on Edessa instead, besieging it at the end of November 1144. On Christmas Eve 1144, Zengi breached the walls of Edessa; his soldiers massacred the Western men and enslaved the Western women and children still inside. Edessa was, for all intents and purposes, lost to the crusaders.
- ◆ The caliph of Baghdad heaped honorary titles on Zengi, but Zengi did not follow up the conquest of Edessa with any significant action against other Crusader States, and he was murdered in September 1146. Still, the loss of Edessa sent shockwaves through the medieval West and touched off fears that Jerusalem might be next.

Reading

Dajani-Shakeel, "A Reassessment of Some Medieval and Modern Assessments of the Counter-Crusade."

Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*.

Marshall, *Warfare in the Latin East, 1192–1291*.

Questions

- 1 Is it surprising that, following the First Crusade, crusaders quickly became embroiled in local politics, alliances, and wars among Muslim rulers?
- 2 The first Crusader State fell in the 1140s; the last, in the 1290s. Which is more surprising: the longevity of these states or the fact that they could not last? If their longevity, does that tell us more about the Crusader States themselves or about their neighbors?



The Second Crusade— False Steps and Failure

At the end of our last lecture, we saw that Zengi had captured Edessa in December 1144, effectively reducing the number of Crusader States from four to three. The result of the loss of Edessa was the launching of the Second Crusade. Like the First Crusade, the Second was launched in response to geopolitical developments in the Near East, and in several respects, it self-consciously modeled itself on the First Crusade. In many other respects, however, the Second Crusade differed from the First, perhaps most importantly in that it ended in failure. In this lecture, we will examine how and why the Second Crusade went so awry.

Launching the Second Crusade

- ◆ On December 1, 1145, Pope Eugenius III issued a bull calling on French nobles and the French king to take up the cross. On Christmas Day, King Louis VII of France announced his intention to go on crusade. Other French nobles, however, were unenthusiastic at the prospect. Further, it was not clear whether Louis VII was taking up the cross in response to the pope's call or trying to launch his own crusade.
- ◆ The man who saved the Second Crusade from collapsing before it ever got going was Bernard of Clairvaux, who made the cause of the Second Crusade his own.
 - ◆ Bernard interceded in order to make certain that proper procedure was followed. Pope Eugenius issued a slightly modified version of his crusading bull on March 1, 1146, and at the end of that month, Louis VII took up the cross, this time unambiguously in response to the pope's call. Bernard also used his considerable oratorical powers to persuade French nobles to join Louis VII.



- ◆ Bernard's enthusiasm for the Second Crusade seems to have caused him to go beyond Eugenius's wishes and plans. He later threw himself into preaching the crusade and even traveled to Germany to recruit the king and Holy Roman Emperor.
- ◆ The Second Crusade benefited from knowledge of what had happened during the First. Jews arranged for protection from local authorities, and both the French and German kings notified the king of Hungary and the Byzantine emperor that crusaders would be passing through their territories so that provisions could be made available. The Germans and French also staggered their departures to enable stores to be replenished after one group passed through each region.

Early Difficulties

- ◆ Despite this planning, the Second Crusade encountered some of the same problems as the First Crusade: Supplies ran short, and relations with the Byzantines deteriorated.
- ◆ The Byzantine emperor at the moment, Manuel, had not asked for the crusade, or any expedition, to be sent east, much less for the crusaders to rendezvous at Constantinople. When supplies ran short during the march to Constantinople, crusaders pillaged, fought against Byzantine troops, and were murdered by enraged locals.
- ◆ Odo of Deuil, a French chronicler of the Second Crusade, expressed shock at Byzantine clergy who held purification ceremonies for altars where Western clerics had celebrated mass and even rebaptized crusaders who married Byzantine women. These practices suggested to Odo that the Byzantines ought not to be considered Christians at all.
- ◆ Odo was not the only crusader thinking that way. Before the crusaders reached Constantinople, they learned that Emperor Manuel had prepared for their arrival by making a truce with the Seljuk sultan of Rum, the most important Muslim ruler in Asia Minor. Manuel did not want to have to deal with the crusaders and the Turks at the same time, but the crusaders took the truce as an act of betrayal.

- ◆ In a replay of the First Crusade, the Byzantine emperor demanded that the crusade's leaders swear oaths to him and backed up these demands by cutting off food supplies.
- ◆ Angered by their treatment by the Byzantines, the French crusaders contemplated an attack on Constantinople itself. Some members of the crusade argued that such an attack would be justified under the circumstances. Others argued that they could not attack a Christian city, and for the moment, this side won out.
- ◆ Although the German crusaders reached Constantinople in September 1147 and the French about a month later, the two groups failed to coordinate.
 - ◆ Reaching Byzantine Nicaea, the Germans split into two contingents. One contingent, under the command of crusade chronicler Bishop Otto of Freising and containing most of the noncombatants, marched along the Mediterranean coast, staying in Byzantine territory as long as possible.
 - ◆ The other contingent, led by Holy Roman Emperor Conrad III, tried to fight its way across Asia Minor but suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of the Seljuk Turks in October 1147 and scurried back to Nicaea. The second contingent finally disintegrated in February 1148 without reaching the Crusader States.
- ◆ The French reached Nicaea in November 1147. The recently defeated and wounded Conrad, who was in Nicaea, advised against trying to fight through the heart of Asia Minor. Thus, the French and remaining Germans decided to follow the Mediterranean coastline, trailing after the German noncombatants under Otto of Freising.
- ◆ The march went slowly. Although the crusaders were in ostensibly friendly territory, Turkish raids were common, as were clashes with the local population infuriated by crusader foraging. A much-reduced force finally reached Antalya, still some 200 miles short of the Crusader States, in January 1148.

- ◆ In Antalya, Louis VII and most of the French nobles decided to forgo the rest of the march and, instead, hired boats to sail them directly to the Crusader States; they left in March 1148. Those crusaders who could not afford passage were left to try to make the overland march. Some survived the march to Antioch, straggling in during the late spring of 1148, but most did not.

The Siege of Damascus

- ◆ Louis VII reached Antioch in March 1148 and tried to decide what to do next with what was left of his forces. He did not lack for suggestions; each of the heads of the Crusader States had ideas: the recapture of Edessa; the capture of some Tripolitan castles; an attack on Nur ad-Din, Zengi's son, at Aleppo; or assistance in Jerusalem. Louis decided to go to Jerusalem.
- ◆ After several weeks touring the sights of the Holy Land, Louis VII and Conrad III held an assembly at Acre on June 24, 1148, to decide their next move. None of the heads of Antioch, Edessa, or Tripoli attended, although the king of Jerusalem, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and the Grand Master of the Templars were present. The decision of the assembly was to attack Damascus.
- ◆ Damascus had usually been an ally of the kingdom of Jerusalem, which makes the decision to attack there hard to explain. The crusaders and the Franks may have feared that Damascus would come under Nur ad-Din's control if they did not capture it first. Whatever the reason, the crusader army set out from Galilee for Damascus in the middle of July 1148. On July 24, it reached the gardens and orchards on the western side of the city.
- ◆ Faced with an unexpected crusader attack, the governor of Damascus reluctantly called upon Nur ad-Din and Saif ad-Din, the emir of Mosul, for help.
- ◆ The crusader siege of Damascus was a debacle. The crusaders were too few to surround the city. The orchards and gardens on the western side provided much-needed shade, and water was available there, but they also provided cover for defenders, who raided from Damascus.



- ◆ After 3 days, the crusaders moved to the eastern side of the city, which was relatively open and barren. There, they did not have to worry about the defenders' raids as much, but there was little shade or water.
- ◆ The crusaders learned that Nur ad-Din was coming, and internal bickering set in. Nobles who were residents of the Crusader States wanted Damascus, once captured, to go to one of their own; Louis VII and Conrad III wanted Damascus to go to a fellow crusader. Local crusaders, realizing what the crusaders' eventual plans for Damascus were, began to complain that the entire expedition had been a bad idea.
- ◆ On July 28, 1148, the fifth day after it had begun, the siege of Damascus was abandoned. The crusaders and the army of the kingdom of Jerusalem retreated.

Aftermath of the Second Crusade

- ◆ The abortive siege was the effective end of the Second Crusade. Conrad III and Louis VII spent some time in the Holy Land, but more as pilgrims than as crusaders; by the summer of 1149, both had left. They had reached Jerusalem, as a crusader should, but they had accomplished nothing. Edessa was still lost, Nur ad-Din had not been weakened, and Damascus had been antagonized.
- ◆ Otto of Freising took comfort in the fact that although it had done nothing to help the Crusader States, at least the crusade had furthered the salvation of souls by resulting in so many Christian casualties and martyrs.
- ◆ Others attributed the outcome to the sinfulness of humanity or to the inscrutable will of God. Some, seeing the failure as a judgment of God, blamed Bernard of Clairvaux himself. French chroniclers and probably Louis VII blamed the Franks who lived in the Crusader States and the Byzantines for their lack of support.
- ◆ Following the Second Crusade, the condition of the Crusader States worsened.
 - ◆ Between 1149 and 1154, Nur ad-Din killed the prince of Antioch in battle, captured and blinded the titular count of Edessa, and gained control of Damascus with the support of the Damascene population. With Aleppo and Damascus under Nur ad-Din's control, the Crusader States were starting to face the possibility of encirclement.
 - ◆ Nur ad-Din suffered an incapacitating illness in 1157, which relieved some of the pressure on the Crusader States; though he survived until 1174, his abilities seem to have been diminished. But the weakened Nur ad-Din would not live forever, and whoever came after him might prove to be an even more formidable threat.

Reading

Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*.

Phillips, *The Second Crusade*.

Questions

- 1 Would it have been preferable if the Second Crusade had tried to retake Edessa rather than Damascus? Were there better targets available than Edessa or Damascus?
- 2 What does the relatively long gap between the First and Second Crusades tell us about crusaders' motivations and crusading more generally?



Saladin—General and Sultan

In the last lecture, we examined the Second Crusade. Launched in response to the fall of Edessa to Zengi, it made no attempt to recapture Edessa, failed to capture Damascus, and brought no discernible improvement to the situation of the Crusader States. Further, its failures discouraged potential crusaders from taking up the cross again. Indeed, some 40 years passed between the Second Crusade and the next major expedition to the East, the Third Crusade, which was itself launched in response to the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin. In this lecture, we will consider Saladin, his rise to power, and his reconquest of Jerusalem.

Saladin's Path to Egypt

- ◆ Both Arab biographers and medieval Western authors portrayed Saladin as honest, generous, and merciful. But not everyone in the Islamic world admired Saladin, who could also be vengeful and calculating. And the Franks of Outremer, and Europeans more generally, had reason to fear his focus on jihad. From the moment Saladin came to power, he proclaimed that his goal was to retake Jerusalem and drive the Franks into the sea.
- ◆ Saladin was a Kurd, not an Arab or a Turk; both he and his father were in Nur ad-Din's service. In 1165, Saladin was in Damascus, serving as chief of police. But it wasn't in Damascus that Saladin began his ascent to world-historical importance; it was, improbably, in Egypt.
- ◆ Although the years following the Second Crusade saw a number of setbacks for the kingdom of Jerusalem, they did see one notable success: In 1153, the kingdom of Jerusalem captured Ascalon, the last foothold of the Egyptian Fatimid caliphate in Palestine. Its capture opened the door to the Sinai Peninsula and to Egypt itself.
 - ◆ The loss of Ascalon plunged the Egyptian government into chaos; the vizier of Egypt and the Fatimid caliph turned on each other, and there followed a dizzying series of coups and assassinations.
 - ◆ The Fatimid caliphate looked as though it was about to collapse, and the rich prize of Egypt seemed to be up for the taking. In 1160, Egypt began paying the kingdom of Jerusalem tribute to forestall a Frankish attack.
- ◆ During the 1160s, both the kingdom of Jerusalem and Nur ad-Din vied to gain control of Egypt.
 - ◆ In 1163, when the kingdom of Jerusalem invaded Egypt because it had fallen behind on its tribute payments, Nur ad-Din dispatched an army to Egypt under the leadership of a general named Shirkuh; accompanying Shirkuh on this expedition was his nephew Saladin.



- ◆ Shirkuh succeeded in restoring to power a former Egyptian vizier named Shawar, but Shawar double-crossed Shirkuh and Nur ad-Din. Restored to power, Shawar allied himself with the Franks and made himself independent of Nur ad-Din. Shirkuh and the Franks had to withdraw from Egypt.
- ◆ In 1166 and 1167, both Nur ad-Din and the kingdom of Jerusalem intervened in Egypt again. Nur ad-Din dispatched Shirkuh, Saladin, and his army to Egypt; Shawar called on the kingdom of Jerusalem for help, and Shirkuh was forced to retreat. In the aftermath of this round of interventions, Egypt agreed to pay tribute to the kingdom of Jerusalem and even allowed the Franks to station a garrison in Cairo. It looked as though Egypt was on its way to becoming a protectorate of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

Appointment as Vizier

- ◆ But in 1168 and 1169, the situation in Egypt changed dramatically, to the detriment of the kingdom of Jerusalem and to the advantage of Saladin. The kingdom of Jerusalem and the Byzantine Empire, whose relations in the 1150s and 1160s had improved considerably, agreed to attack Egypt.
- ◆ In October 1168, the kingdom of Jerusalem invaded Egypt with the assistance of a newly arrived band of French crusaders but without the Byzantines. Invading before the Byzantines arrived would cut them out from the distribution of loot.
- ◆ Shawar called on Nur ad-Din, who dispatched Shirkuh and Saladin yet again to invade Egypt. Faced with stronger-than-expected resistance and the arrival of Nur ad-Din's army, the Franks and crusaders withdrew from Egypt in early 1169. Shirkuh and Saladin captured Shawar and killed him. The Fatimid caliph appointed Shirkuh as vizier of Egypt, and then, when he died in March 1169, Saladin was appointed. In 1169, the Byzantines and the kingdom of Jerusalem sent a joint expedition to Egypt, but they failed to dislodge Saladin from his new position.

- ◆ Saladin's appointment as vizier of Egypt was a large step upward, but it also left him in a precarious situation. He was a Sunni Kurd who headed an army of occupation sent by Nur ad-Din, but Saladin had been appointed as vizier of Egypt by the Shi'a Fatimid caliph. Such a situation was not necessarily survivable, and Saladin had to put down an Egyptian revolt.
 - ◆ Saladin's relations with Nur ad-Din were coolly friendly; Saladin sent monetary payments to Nur ad-Din and proclaimed his loyalty to him, but Nur ad-Din could not be quite sure of Saladin's intentions.
 - ◆ Still, when Saladin asked Nur ad-Din to allow Saladin's relatives to join him in Egypt, Nur ad-Din allowed it.
- ◆ In 1171, Nur ad-Din put Saladin to the test. He and the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad demanded that Saladin forbid any mention of the Fatimid caliph during prayers said in Egyptian mosques; instead, such prayers should mention only the Sunni Abbasid caliph. In effect, Nur ad-Din was asking Saladin to abolish the Fatimid caliphate, which Saladin did. When the Fatimid caliph died of natural causes in 1171, Saladin made certain that he had no successor.

Successor to Nur ad-Din

- ◆ When Nur ad-Din finally died in 1174, Saladin moved quickly to position himself as Nur ad-Din's successor; he peacefully occupied Damascus that same year and secured the Abbasid caliph's recognition as overlord of Egypt and southern Syria. In 1176, Saladin even married Nur ad-Din's widow.
- ◆ However, Nur ad-Din had a lone son, named as-Salih. Saladin claimed that he was only interested in securing as-Salih's rights, but as-Salih did not see it that way, and neither did Nur ad-Din's relatives, members of the Zengid dynasty, who still controlled Aleppo and Mosul. They saw Saladin as an upstart usurper to be resisted.

- ◆ As a result, Saladin spent the dozen years following Nur ad-Din's death focused on gaining control of Aleppo, Mosul, and other places still under Zengid control. He claimed that he could not launch a full-scale attack on the Franks until he had gained control of all the territory that had once belonged to Nur ad-Din.
- ◆ Even as he survived several assassination attempts, Saladin managed to grind down his Zengid rivals. As-Salih died of natural causes in 1181, which deprived the Zengid dynasty of a rallying point. In 1183, Saladin gained control of Aleppo, and in 1186, he forced the Zengid ruler of Mosul to accept his overlordship.

Invasion of Jerusalem

- ◆ Also in 1186, Saladin fell seriously ill. He survived the illness, but the experience highlighted his mortality. With Zengid resistance finally tamped down, Saladin decided to attack the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187.
- ◆ The time was propitious for an attack. The Byzantine army had suffered a catastrophic defeat against the Seljuk Turks in 1176 and was in no shape to provide assistance. Further, in 1174, the 13-year-old Baldwin IV had become king of Jerusalem. He suffered from leprosy; the disease debilitated him, and during his lifetime and after his death in 1185, fierce factional struggles over control of the royal government dominated the kingdom.
- ◆ Although Saladin's invasion of 1187 may have been the fruition of a long-held plan, Saladin used the actions of a Frankish noble named Reynald of Châtillon as his pretext.
 - ◆ Reynald had remained in the Holy Land after the Second Crusade and become an irritant to the Byzantines and the Crusader States. After his imprisonment by Muslims for almost 16 years, Reynald had relocated to the southern part of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but he refused to abide by the various truces between the kingdom and Saladin.
 - ◆ Instead, Reynald raided across the frontier and began a campaign of piracy in the Red Sea against pilgrims going to Mecca; he raided Arabia itself in the early 1180s. These raids were deeply embarrassing to

Saladin, who was still struggling with the Zengids. Saladin demanded that the king of Jerusalem assert control over Reynald, but these demands came to nothing.

- ◆ Saladin and his army, perhaps 30,000 soldiers strong, crossed the Dog River and entered Frankish territory on June 30, 1187. The kingdom of Jerusalem called upon every able-bodied Frankish male to assist in repelling the invasion.
- ◆ The kingdom of Jerusalem's army advanced toward Saladin's army, which had besieged the town of Tiberias, but the Franks had not yet decided on a plan. They initially chose to find a good defensive location and wait for the siege of Tiberias to run its course. But on July 3, 1187, King Guy of Jerusalem announced that the army should advance on Tiberias.
- ◆ That evening, their water supplies depleted, the Franks camped out on a pair of hills known as the Horns of Hattin. When they awoke the next day, they were surrounded by Saladin's army. The heat and thirst caused the army of the Franks to disintegrate. As the day wore on, Saladin's army advanced up the hills, pressing in more closely on the Franks, who finally surrendered. Saladin captured the king of Jerusalem, the Grand Master of the Templars, and Reynald of Châtillon; he killed the last of these three with his own hands.
- ◆ Tiberias surrendered a few days later, as did Acre. During the next few weeks, other towns surrendered, often without having been attacked or besieged. By the end of August, south of Tripoli, the Franks held only Tyre, Ascalon, Gaza, a few isolated castles, and Jerusalem itself.
- ◆ In September, Ascalon and Gaza fell, and Jerusalem sent ambassadors to Saladin, ready to discuss terms of surrender. When no agreement could be reached, Saladin began a siege on September 20, 1187. On September 29, he breached the city's walls. He offered generous terms to the Christian residents of Jerusalem and restrained his troop from pillaging the refugees. On October 2, 1187, Saladin entered Jerusalem, ending 88 years of Christian rule.

- ♦ Saladin spent the rest of 1187 mopping up in the kingdom of Jerusalem. Late in the year, he besieged Tyre, the last remaining Christian city in Outremer, and demanded its surrender, but Tyre refused, and in early January 1188, Saladin raised his siege. This was a crucial mistake for Saladin. Tyre gave the Franks one last toehold; with a little help, they might be able to recover what they had lost in the East—and help was going to arrive.

Reading

Eddé, *Saladin*.

Hamilton, *The Leper King and His Heirs*.

Jackson and Lyons, *Saladin: The Politics of the Holy War*.

Questions

- 1 Saddam Hussein, the late ruler of Iraq, likened himself to Saladin. Why was that comparison ironic?
- 2 Can you think of other historical instances in which a military foe, such as Saladin, came to be an admired and iconic figure among those whom he had fought? What does the posthumous Western lionizing of Saladin tell us about medieval Europe? Did Westerners lionize Saladin because of his qualities or because the act of lionizing him fulfilled some need or purpose within medieval Europe itself?

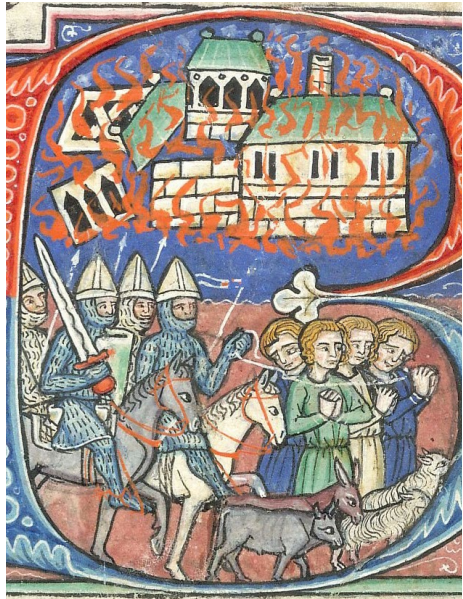


The Third Crusade— We Three Kings

As we saw in the last lecture, Saladin, having gained control of both Egypt and Syria, went on to conquer Jerusalem in October 1187 and very nearly eliminated the kingdom of Jerusalem. The loss of Jerusalem triggered the Third Crusade, which brought three Western monarchs to the East and pitted two of the most famous figures of the Middle Ages, Saladin and King Richard Lionheart of England, against each other. In this lecture, we will examine the course and consequences of the Third Crusade.

Launching the Third Crusade

- ◆ By the end of 1187, the only major town in the kingdom of Jerusalem still holding out against Saladin was Tyre. Leading its defense was a relatively new arrival, Conrad of Montferrat, a Westerner from an important noble family. Conrad had urged Tyre to resist Saladin. Given that King Guy of Jerusalem was still Saladin's prisoner, Conrad may have thought that he could parlay leadership of Tyre into a kingship for himself.
- ◆ News of the fall of Jerusalem reached the West within a couple of weeks. Pope Urban III died on October 20, 1187, just a few days after hearing about the fall. His successor, Pope Gregory VIII, issued a new crusading bull, apparently at the end of October 1187. But Gregory himself died in December 1187, leaving most of the organizing to his successor, Pope Clement III.
- ◆ The recent loss of Jerusalem brought about the greatest royal response to any crusading call. Two kings had led the Second Crusade. Three kings would lead the Third Crusade: those of Germany, France, and England. These rulers could mobilize resources on a scale beyond that of other nobles, but their rivalries, especially that between France and England, complicated the launching of the crusade.



- ◆ Ultimately, Easter 1189 was set as the departure date. Philip II Augustus, the king of France, was not much of a warrior and had little enthusiasm for the crusade, but popular pressure pushed him into taking up the cross. Henry II, the king of England, was a bit old to be going on crusade and, in fact, died before the departure date. But his son and heir, Richard Lionheart, had taken up the cross enthusiastically after learning of the fall of Jerusalem.
- ◆ The problem of how to finance crusades was always a pressing one. For the Third Crusade, both the French and English kings levied a 10% tax on all income and movable property. The only ones exempt from the so-called Saladin tithe were those who were actually going on crusade. Tax dodging and protests were rampant, but the tax raised some funds and set an important precedent for the future.

The German Advance

- ◆ Although mutual distrust caused the kings of France and England to take up the cross together, they coordinated their activities, and they would campaign together. The king of Germany, though, Frederick Barbarossa, struck out on his own in May 1189.
- ◆ Frederick followed the overland route taken by the Second Crusade and much of the First Crusade; his initial goal was to reach Constantinople. His march, like those of his predecessors, was plagued by conflicts between himself and his crusaders, on the one hand, and the Byzantine Empire, on the other. Some of this trouble was the result of provisioning difficulties, but some was due to a change in the Byzantine Empire itself.
- ◆ From 1081 until 1180, the Byzantine Empire had known only three emperors: Alexios I Komnenos, John, and Manuel. But Manuel had been unpopular, and his successor was murdered in 1183. The last emperor from the Komnenos dynasty was then killed in 1185 and was replaced by Emperor Isaac Angelus.

- ◆ Isaac Angelus, who had come to power in unsettled circumstances, had enough problems without having to deal with German crusaders. Bracing himself for the uninvited crusaders' arrival, Isaac made a truce with Saladin and seemingly made a secret agreement to slow down the German crusaders.
- ◆ Word of the truce reached Frederick Barbarossa, who seized the town of Philippopolis (now Plovdiv, in Bulgaria). Isaac then imprisoned Frederick Barbarossa's ambassadors. Frederick called on his son in Germany to secure papal approval for a crusade against the Byzantine Empire. No such crusade took place, if only because Isaac caved in and gave Frederick what he wanted: the release of his ambassadors and passage to Asia Minor. The deterioration in Byzantine-German relations was, for the Byzantines, an ominous development.
- ◆ Frederick Barbarossa reached Asia Minor in March 1190, but in June, he drowned while trying to ford a river. His crusade disintegrated after its leader's death. The expedition had done nothing to improve the kingdom of Jerusalem's fortunes or to set Saladin back.

Developments in the Crusader States

- ◆ As Frederick Barbarossa was making his fatal journey eastward, the situation in the Crusader States changed dramatically and improbably. In July 1188, even before Frederick had set out, Saladin released two of his captives: the Grand Master of the Templars and King Guy of Jerusalem.
 - ◆ Before setting them free, Saladin required his captives to swear oaths promising to return to Europe and never come back to the East.
 - ◆ Saladin may have expected—even hoped—that they would break their oaths. The return of two proven incompetents to leadership positions among his enemies could not have displeased him. At the very least, their reappearance in the kingdom of Jerusalem would sow discord, which it did.



- ◆ When King Guy and what followers he could muster attempted to enter Tyre, he was refused entrance. Conrad of Montferrat argued that Guy had forfeited his right to the kingship through his failures and his collaboration with Saladin. King Guy and his followers eventually gave up and instead besieged Acre in August 1189.

- ◆ Saladin led his troops to Acre in September 1189, but he could not dislodge King Guy. He and his army settled down to besiege the king, who was, in turn, besieging Acre. The Franks were not numerous enough to cut Acre off entirely from the outside world, but neither were Saladin's troops numerous enough to cut off the Franks, who began to receive a steady stream of reinforcements.
- ◆ The siege of Acre dragged on through the rest of 1189, through the whole of 1190, and well into 1191. Finally, the French king, Philip II Augustus, arrived in April 1191, and Richard Lionheart arrived in June. Acre surrendered on July 12, 1191.



- ◆ The crusaders agreed to let the Muslim inhabitants and defenders of Acre leave, except for about 3,000, who would be kept as hostages to guarantee that Saladin lived up to his promises: to return the relic of the True Cross he had captured at Hattin, to return Christian prisoners, and to pay the crusaders 200,000 gold marks.
- ◆ Shortly after the fall of Acre, the French and English kings helped to broker a new arrangement between King Guy and Conrad of Montferrat.

Upon Guy's death, Conrad of Montferrat would succeed Guy as heir, although Conrad was assassinated less than a year later and never got the chance.

- ◆ After helping to broker this deal between Guy and Conrad, the French king decided that he had done enough. Philip II headed back to Europe on July 31, 1191, leaving the Third Crusade under the leadership of Richard Lionheart.

Aftermath of the Siege

- ◆ Following the fall of Acre to the crusaders, Saladin's already tenuous hold over his followers grew even shakier. Richard Lionheart's defeat of Saladin in a battle just north of Arsuf in September 1191 compounded the humiliation occasioned by the fall of Acre. Given Saladin's advancing age, his followers began to position themselves to take advantage of the fluid situation his death would create.
- ◆ The crusaders began recapturing coastal towns lost to Saladin not long before, and by the end of May 1192, the Third Crusade had retaken almost the whole of the Palestinian coast. As he recaptured the coastline, Richard Lionheart made various offers to Saladin regarding a long-term truce to follow the end of the Third Crusade.



- ◆ In January 1192 and again in June 1192, Richard got within sight of Jerusalem, but he never besieged it, apparently believing that even if he took it, the Franks would not be able to hold on to it while Saladin remained ruler of Egypt and Syria.
- ◆ Back in Europe, Philip II was taking advantage of Richard Lionheart's absence and pressing French claims to English-ruled territory. That put pressure on Richard to wrap up the crusade and return to Europe.
 - ◆ Finally, in September 1192, Saladin and Richard agreed to terms that recognized the territorial status quo: Christians were to keep all the coastal towns they had captured except for Ascalon, which was to be razed to the ground so that neither Muslim nor Christian might control it.
 - ◆ Saladin guaranteed that Christian pilgrims could freely visit Jerusalem and the other holy places of Palestine, but Jerusalem was to remain under Muslim rule. With the signing of the treaty in September 1192, the Third Crusade came to an end.
- ◆ It was an ambiguous ending for all parties. The kingdom of Jerusalem had survived, but it no longer included Jerusalem; henceforth, Acre would be its chief city. Saladin, so close to complete victory in 1187 and 1188, had lost some of what he had won, and he had to make concessions regarding Jerusalem to bring the war to an end.
 - ◆ Saladin died less than a year later. He had designated his eldest son, al-Afdal, as his successor, but once Saladin was dead, his followers openly refused to serve al-Afdal.
 - ◆ Saladin's empire fragmented into numerous city-states and small kingdoms ruled by various members of the Ayyubid family, while members of the Zengid dynasty tried to reestablish themselves. Squabbles within the Ayyubid family and with the Zengids meant that there would not be another concerted effort to overrun the kingdom of Jerusalem again until the middle of the 13th century.
- ◆ In 1195, there was another coup in the Byzantine Empire; the emperor Isaac Angelus was overthrown and blinded by his brother, Alexios III Angelus. Because Isaac's daughter Irene was married to Philip of Swabia,

brother of King Henry VI of Germany, the German king attempted to organize a crusade against the Byzantine Empire. The pope dissuaded him from attacking Constantinople, but at some point, the string of near-misses for the Byzantines would come to an end.

- ◆ The Third Crusade checked the advance of Saladin but failed to recapture Jerusalem, resulting in a state of permanent crisis. During the next century, crusades to the East became more frequent; indeed, less than a decade elapsed between the end of the Third Crusade and the first attempts to launch the Fourth.

Reading

Eddé, *Saladin*.

Gillingham, *Richard I*.

Jackson and Lyons, *Saladin: The Politics of the Holy War*.

Questions

- 1 Was Richard Lionheart right not to make any attempt to capture Jerusalem?
- 2 Does the Third Crusade mark a significant turning point—or even *the* significant turning point—in crusading’s history with regard to methods and objectives?



10

The Fourth Crusade—Conquest of Constantinople

In the last lecture, we examined the Third Crusade, which restored much of the kingdom of Jerusalem's territory but failed to take Jerusalem itself. As a result, not much time elapsed between the Third and the Fourth Crusades, which ended with a conquest even more remarkable than the First Crusade's capture of Jerusalem—but a conquest that was controversial then and remains controversial even today. In this lecture, we will see where the Fourth Crusade went and what it did to generate so much controversy.



Pope Innocent III's First Call

- ◆ Pope Innocent III was elected in 1198 and issued his first crusading bull later that year. He called upon cities, nobles, bishops, and other ecclesiastical officials to raise a crusading army by March 1199 and to provide enough financial support to field that army for two years. Curiously, Innocent III did not address kings in his crusading bull, perhaps because crusades under royal leadership had not fared as well as the First Crusade, in which no kings had participated.
- ◆ March 1199 came and went without any significant response to Innocent's call. Finally, in November 1199, a number of French nobles took up the cross. The Fourth Crusade, like the First Crusade, would consist of various loosely allied contingents, each headed by a noble.
- ◆ By the summer of 1200, a substantial crusading army was, at long last, taking shape. The French barons appointed six of their own to make arrangements for transporting the crusaders across the Mediterranean, and the six ambassadors chose to go to Venice. Their plan was to sail directly across the Mediterranean, following the lead of Richard Lionheart and Philip II Augustus during the Third Crusade and, thereby, avoiding the overland march that had proved fatal to Frederick Barbarossa and so difficult for crusaders before him.

- ◆ Arriving in Venice in February 1201, the French barons struck a deal with the *doge*, Enrico Dandolo. The Venetians agreed to build enough shipping to transport 33,000 crusaders, including 4,500 knights and their horses, and to have the shipping ready no later than June 1202. The crusaders were to muster at Venice by April 1202 and pay the Venetians 85,000 silver marks. Venice agreed to provide, without charge, 50 additional galleys, provided that Venice was allowed to keep half of whatever the crusade conquered.
- ◆ At some point, the barons and the *doge* agreed that the Fourth Crusade would be an expedition against Egypt, although they did not announce this fact to their fellow crusaders until the expedition was underway. Gaining control of Egypt would make a later attempt to take Jerusalem more feasible.
- ◆ After the successful conclusion of the negotiations, one of the barons, Count Thibaut of Champagne, died, and the other barons decided to recruit a single leader for the expedition. They chose Boniface of Montferrat, the brother of Conrad Montferrat, who had led the defense of Tyre against Saladin.



Expedition to Zadar

- ◆ Crusaders straggled into Venice throughout the summer of 1202, well past the departure date, and Boniface of Montferrat himself did not show up until August 1202. Even worse, the crusaders, numbering perhaps 11,000, did not have enough money to pay the Venetians, and without payment, the Venetians would not transport them anywhere.

- ◆ The Venetians agreed to allow the crusaders to postpone payment if they would help to conquer the Croatian port town of Zadar, which had thrown off Venetian rule in 1186 and come under the rule of the king of Hungary. The leaders of the Fourth Crusade agreed to take part in the expedition against Zadar, although apparently with some trepidation. In September 1202, large numbers of Venetians took up the cross themselves, including the aged and blind Enrico Dandolo, who would personally lead the Venetians.
- ◆ In October 1202, the Fourth Crusade headed for Zadar. When Innocent III learned of the expedition, he issued a papal letter forbidding the crusade to attack Zadar and threatening to excommunicate any crusader who did so. Some crusaders held back from the siege, but others went ahead, and Zadar fell in late November 1202.
- ◆ The Fourth Crusade wintered in Zadar, joined by Boniface of Montferrat. During the winter layover, Innocent agreed to lift the sentences of the crusaders who were not Venetians, provided that they attack no more Christian cities and return Zadar. Boniface kept news of these papal commands from the crusaders and asked the pope for further clarification.

Diversion to Constantinople

- ◆ When the Fourth Crusade left Zadar in April 1203, it was not headed to Egypt but to Constantinople. Who made the decision to send the Fourth Crusade to Constantinople and when that decision was made have been enduring controversies.
- ◆ Before the Fourth Crusade left Venice, a member of the Byzantine imperial family had arrived in Europe. He was Alexios Angelus, known as Alexios the Younger, the son of the deposed and blinded Byzantine emperor Isaac II Angelus. Alexios the Younger was in Europe looking for assistance for his deposed father.
- ◆ While the crusaders were wintering at Zadar, Alexios the Younger joined them. He promised the crusaders Byzantine assistance if they would help to restore his deposed father to the throne and to overthrow Alexios III. He also promised to end the schism between the Byzantine church and the



papacy, to pay the crusaders 200,000 silver marks, to pay for provisions, and to contribute an army of 10,000 Byzantines to take part in the crusade.

- ◆ The decision to divert to Constantinople probably had Venetian support; the Venetians controlled the fleet transporting the crusaders and would expect commercial benefits if the crusade engineered a regime change in Constantinople. It's also likely that the decision had German and French support. Innocent III was not involved in the decision, nor were many members of the Fourth Crusade.
- ◆ On June 24, 1203, the Fourth Crusade arrived at Constantinople. The crusaders displayed Alexios the Younger to the city's defenders and called upon the city's inhabitants to restore Isaac II Angelus to the throne. Constantinople did not obey the crusaders' orders at first, but after the crusaders set a fire in July 1203, Alexios III fled the city, and Isaac II was released from prison and recognized as emperor.

Second Attack on Constantinople

- ◆ The Fourth Crusade had accomplished its mission, but Isaac II and Alexios the Younger (now co-emperor Alexios IV) fell behind on their payments to the crusaders. Further, the residents of Constantinople resented making any payments to the crusaders at all, and they resented the fact that Western crusaders had propped Alexios IV and Isaac II on the throne.

- ◆ As the crusaders and co-emperors bickered, another huge fire broke out in Constantinople. Westerners living in the city moved into the crusaders' camp, fearing that the Greeks would massacre them in a riot.
- ◆ Matters came to a head in January 1204. Riots broke out in Constantinople, and a son-in-law of the former emperor Alexios III Angelus invaded the imperial palace. His name was Alexios Murtzuphlus; he killed both Isaac II and Alexios IV and proclaimed himself to be Alexios V. He refused to honor any agreement his predecessors had made with the crusaders, who prepared to attack Constantinople again.
- ◆ Before attacking, the crusaders made some decisions about how to proceed if they succeeded in capturing the capital. A committee of six Venetian and six French crusaders would elect a new emperor. The crusaders also agreed that they would remain in the Byzantine Empire for one year after the fall of Constantinople to help the next emperor establish his rule. This would push back the continuation of the crusade to the East even further.



- ◆ Between April 13 and 15, the crusaders took Constantinople by force and sacked it, essentially ending the Fourth Crusade. Some individuals and small groups made their way farther east, but the leaders of the Fourth Crusade convinced papal representatives to release the crusaders from their vows, and in the months and years to come, most crusaders remained in the Byzantine Empire to conquer more territory.
- ◆ The Venetians engineered the election of Count Baldwin IX of Flanders as ruler, who took the title emperor of Romania. Boniface of Montferrat, although disappointed that he did not become emperor, became ruler of the kingdom of Thessalonika, and much of Byzantine Greece and the Byzantine Balkans came under the rule of various French nobles.



Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade

- ◆ The conquest of Constantinople and much of the Byzantine Empire was a significant accomplishment but also a hollow one in many respects. The first Latin emperor, Baldwin, was captured in 1205 fighting the Bulgars and never heard from again. Succeeding Latin emperors were often broke and resorted to various measures, some smacking of desperation, to find money.
- ◆ Despite its significant losses, the Byzantine Empire did not collapse in 1204 or at any point in the 13th century. Instead, Byzantine successor states sprang up at the far western and eastern ends of the empire, all claiming to be the true Byzantine Empire and mounting counterattacks against the Latin Empire of Romania. By 1237, that empire had been reduced to the city of Constantinople itself.

- ◆ From the 1230s onward, the Greek successor states and the Bulgars spent much of their time fighting to determine who would have the honor of trying to take Constantinople.
- ◆ The eventual winner was the Empire of Nicaea, which captured Constantinople in 1261 and reestablished it as the capital of the Byzantine Empire, although substantial parts of Greece remained under Western European rule into the 15th century.
- ◆ The Fourth Crusade did not end the schism between Orthodox and Catholic Christianity. Byzantine Christians refused to recognize the Latin patriarch of Constantinople and refused to adopt Western religious rites. Instead, a Greek patriarch established himself in exile at Nicaea, and Greeks continued to follow their customary liturgical practices.
- ◆ If anything, the experience of conquest and the attempts to impose the Latin liturgy made matters even worse.
- ◆ An agreement in 1274 to recognize papal authority and end the schism was repudiated in 1282, and the patriarch of Constantinople was restored as head of the Byzantine church.
- ◆ The establishment of the Latin Empire of Constantinople and of other states in what had been Byzantine Europe did not help the kingdom of Jerusalem. Even though these Western-ruled regimes were perhaps more favorably inclined toward the kingdom of Jerusalem than the Byzantine Empire had been, they were too hard-pressed and too concerned with their own survival to offer assistance.

Reading

Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*.

Laiou, ed., *Urbs capta*.

Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*.

Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople*.

Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade and the Conquest of Constantinople*.

Questions

- 1 Which was more important in leading to the crusader conquest of Constantinople: long-term crusading trends or historical accidents that occurred during the Fourth Crusade?
- 2 What would Pope Urban II have thought of the Fourth Crusade?



11

Crusades in Spain

In our last lecture, we examined the Fourth Crusade, which led to the conquest of Constantinople and much of the Byzantine Empire. Well before the Fourth Crusade, though, there had been crusades that had nothing to do with Jerusalem: crusades in Spain, for example, and in central and eastern Europe. In this lecture and the next, we will examine the geographical expansion of crusading from the 12th century onward, beginning with crusading in Spain.

The Iberian Peninsula

- ◆ At the time of the First Crusade and for some time afterward, most of the Iberian Peninsula's inhabitants were Muslims and Arabic speakers. The peninsula was divided into a smallish Christian north and a larger Islamic south. The Christian north included such kingdoms as Castile, Navarre, Leon, and Aragon. The Islamic south was divided into a few dozen small kingdoms and city-states known as *taifas*.
- ◆ This division had not always been the case. Until 1031, all of Islamic Spain, or al-Andalus, had been ruled by a single official, the caliph of Cordoba.
- ◆ During the course of the 11th century, and thanks to the collapse of the caliphate of Cordoba, the balance of power shifted between the Christian north and the Islamic south. Christian kings exacted tribute payments from *taifas* and occasionally conquered them.
- ◆ For the most part, though, pragmatism rather than religious considerations governed relations between the two regions.
- ◆ The extension of crusading to Spain required minimal theoretical adjustment. Warfare in Spain, just as in Outremer, pitted Christians against Muslims, and crusaders justified conquest of the Iberian Peninsula as they justified the conquest of Jerusalem, namely, as an act of reconquest. Arabs had taken Jerusalem from the Christian Byzantine Empire in the 7th century, and they had taken much of the Iberian Peninsula from its Christian rulers in the 8th.
- ◆ Not all modern scholars accept the term “Reconquista” to describe what happened in Spain. They point out that many hundreds of years had elapsed since the Arab and Berber conquest of Spain. Al-Andalus's Muslim majority experienced the Reconquista as a foreign conquest. Further, the medieval concept of a Christian Reconquista was, as we will see, slow to develop, but because the idea was increasingly embraced by rulers of the Christian north, we will use the term “Reconquista” while acknowledging that it is not universally accepted.

The Elevation of War in Spain

- ◆ The process of elevating wars in Spain to the status of crusades began during the First Crusade. Already in 1096, Pope Urban II ordered Spaniards who had taken crusading vows not to take part in the expedition to the East. Instead, those Spaniards should remain in Spain and help to rebuild and defend the recently captured town of Tarragona. If they did so, they would receive the same spiritual benefits as those who went to Jerusalem. Urban's ruling established a rough equivalence between warfare in Spain and warfare in the Holy Land.
- ◆ Urban II's successor recognized offensive expeditions in Spain as crusades and granted full crusading privileges to those who participated. In the 1110s, popes recognized expeditions to recapture the Balearic Islands and Zaragoza as crusades. The First Lateran Council of 1123 stated as a general principle that fighting against Muslims in Spain was just as meritorious as fighting against them in the Holy Land.
- ◆ Crusading in Spain differed from crusading in the Holy Land largely because in Spain, crusading was grafted onto a preexisting movement of royally directed territorial expansion. As a result, Spanish kings enjoyed a greater degree of control over crusades than did kings of Jerusalem, who were themselves products of the crusades. Spanish kings had some control over the influx of foreign crusaders and over their national military orders, such as the Calatrava and Santiago.
- ◆ Elevating wars in Spain to the status of crusades caused some problems for both Spain and the kingdom of Jerusalem. Foreign crusaders, most of whom had never seen a Muslim before, and Spaniards, who lived in close contact with them, disagreed about how these wars ought to be conducted.
 - ◆ The discrepancy between Spanish attitudes and those of foreigners is evident when one compares the Spanish hero El Cid with the French hero Roland.
 - ◆ In *The Poem of the Cid*, El Cid's attitude toward fighting is utterly pragmatic. He will fight anyone, Muslim or Christian, because that is how he earns his bread.

◆ In contrast, in the almost entirely fictional Old French epic poem *The Song of Roland*, Roland fights not because it is his job but to prove a point: that the Muslims are in the wrong and the Christians are in the right.

◆ These differing attitudes manifested themselves during campaigns. French crusaders joined Spanish troops at Toledo in 1212 but soon had a falling out over whether the crusaders should first attack the Jews of Toledo and, later, whether captured Muslims should be executed. When the Spaniards would not permit execution, most of the French crusaders left in disgust.



◆ The elevation of Spanish wars to the status of crusades hurt the kingdom of Jerusalem because Spain siphoned off crusaders who otherwise might have gone east. To bolster the kingdom of Jerusalem, popes sometimes stripped Spanish wars of their crusading status.

Consequences of the Reconquista

◆ As a result of the Reconquista, Christian rulers came to rule over Western Europe's most ethnically diverse population, with substantial numbers of Christians, Muslims, and Jews. In Christian Spain, Muslims and Jews were the king's property, called "serfs of the royal treasury." This status was expensive for Muslims and Jews because Spanish kings taxed them heavily, but it also brought them protection; an injury done to them was a crime against royal property.

- ◆ Even so, we cannot describe the situation in medieval Spain as a period of peaceful coexistence. One major difference between Spain and the Crusader States involved rebellions by subject populations.
 - ◆ In the East, rebellions were rare and small scale, with Muslims under Frankish rule actively resisting only during periods of Turkish and Arab invasion.
 - ◆ Spain, however, saw many massive Muslim revolts in the 1240s through the 1270s, revolts that ended with Christian victory and the partial expulsion of local Muslim populations.
 - ◆ Over the course of the 14th and 15th centuries, such expulsions and Christian settlement turned most of Spain into a predominantly Christian and predominantly Romance-speaking part of Europe, although with important regional and local variations.
- ◆ A second major difference between Spain and the Crusader States concerns what one might call lifestyle. In the Crusader States, attempts to regulate contact between Christians and Muslims were few and seemingly inconsequential. In Spain, however, both royal and municipal law regulated, in great detail and over the course of centuries, contact between Christians, on the one hand, and Muslims and Jews, on the other hand.
- ◆ One of the more unsettling aspects of the Christian Reconquista was the fact that, in medieval Spain, war bred tolerance and peace bred intolerance.
 - ◆ In the 11th through 13th centuries, when the Reconquista was at its most active and its outcome in doubt, tolerance for non-Christians was high because Christian kings could ill afford to antagonize any of their subjects.
 - ◆ But by the end of the 13th century, the Reconquista had come to a halt that lasted until the late 15th century. Without a threat pushing Christian kings and others toward an accommodation of their non-Christian subjects, Spain slowly became less tolerant of those populations. Total Christian victory in 1492 brought, not long afterward, total expulsion of Jews and Muslims.

End of the Reconquista

- ◆ The rulers who brought the Spanish Reconquista to an end were Ferdinand, king of Aragon, and his wife, Isabella, queen of Castile. Isabella's piety and domestic pressures on both monarchs favored conquest of the smallish Muslim kingdom of Granada in the second half of the 15th century.
- ◆ For financing, Ferdinand and Isabella turned to the church, which issued indulgences in support of their enterprise. Those indulgences were not used to recruit crusaders but to generate revenue to pay for the war. The campaign against Granada began in 1482; the city of Granada fell in November 1491, and Ferdinand took possession of it in 1492.
- ◆ The Christian conquest of Granada touched off excited speculation about the event's broader significance. Some Christian authors suggested it signaled that the final triumph of Christianity over Islam was at hand. Ferdinand would lead Christian armies eastward and recapture Jerusalem. All Muslims would convert to Christianity. Perhaps the end of the world was near.
 - ◆ To some extent, Ferdinand himself got caught up in the exuberance that followed his capture of Granada.





- ♦ Following the conquest of Granada, the land of three religions—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism—became the land of one religion, beginning with an expulsion of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492. In 1502, Ferdinand and Isabella ordered the expulsion of Muslims from Castile (including Granada), and from 1525 to 1526, Muslims were expelled from the kingdom of Aragon.
- ♦ The Christian Reconquista likely would have happened even if there had never been any crusades. Nonetheless, the introduction of crusading to Spain shaped the Reconquista, which resulted in a major religious and cultural reshaping of the Iberian Peninsula. It also shaped crusading itself by giving potential crusaders more options from which to choose and making crusading more diffuse.

Reading

O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*.

Powell, ed., *Muslims under Latin Rule, 1100–1300*.

Questions

- 1 In recent decades, interest in medieval Spanish history among US historians has increased markedly, while interest in medieval English history has lessened almost as markedly. Why is that so, and is it a good, bad, or neutral development? Does the history of remarkably multicultural medieval Spain hold any instructive lessons for residents of the United States? Or are the differences between medieval Spain and the modern United States so great that any attempt to draw lessons or parallels between the two is bound to be misleading?
- 2 In Spain, expulsions of Jews and Muslims followed the successful completion of the Reconquista, while in the 20th century, much ethnic cleansing occurred not after military victory had been achieved but during times of war. Why was that so?



12

The Northern Crusades

In our last lecture, we saw how crusading came to Spain within a few decades of the First Crusade. Crusading contributed to the transformation of the Iberian Peninsula from a predominantly Arab-speaking and Muslim part of Europe, which it was in the 11th century, to one that was predominantly Romance-speaking and Christian. Not too long after crusading spread to the Iberian Peninsula, it spread to other frontier regions, as well—specifically, to central and northeastern Europe. These northern crusades will be the focus of this lecture.

Northern versus Mediterranean Crusades

- ◆ To some extent, the northern crusades shared much in common with Spanish crusades. In both cases, crusading was grafted onto a preexisting movement of expansion. Crusading furthered the expansion and helped to give it a new focus. In eastern and central Europe, as in Spain, crusading fueled long-term geopolitical and ethnic transformation.
- ◆ But there were also important differences between the northern crusades and their Mediterranean counterparts.
 - ◆ In Spain and Outremer, Christians encountered monotheistic peoples who were more urbanized than the crusaders themselves were. Muslims' knowledge of science and ancient philosophy was greater than the Christians' own, and Islamic economies were more commercialized and complex than those of the Christians.
 - ◆ The northern crusades pitted crusaders not against Muslims but against pagan Slavs and Balts. These pagans of central and eastern Europe were divided into many different tribes that shared a common lifestyle that was rural, agricultural, and pastoral rather than urban. The pagans were also illiterate.
 - ◆ Toward these pagans, crusaders felt not just a sense of religious superiority but also a broader cultural and intellectual superiority. That sense of crusader cultural and intellectual superiority, combined with the relative dispersion of the many different pagan tribes, would mean that the northern crusades would be a long, grinding, and brutal affair.

The Wendish Crusade

- ◆ When the northern crusades began, the frontier between Christian and pagan Europe largely followed the Elbe River, which today runs through eastern Germany. There were Christian kingdoms to the east of the Elbe, most notably Catholic Poland and Orthodox Russia, but other polities, such as Lithuania, were still pagan, as were numerous tribes.



- ◆ In 1147, a crusade against the pagan Wends, a tribe living just to the east of the Elbe River, was launched. The crusade was initially authorized by Bernard of Clairvaux in response to the request of a group of Saxon nobles. Bernard's declaration that the Wends "shall either be converted or wiped out" set the tone for the northern crusades. The goal was not just to take territory but to immediately convert the subjugated pagans or, failing that, to destroy them.
- ◆ The ensuing Wendish Crusade was a failure. Ethnic splits emerged between Saxon nobles and Danes, and divisions arose among the Saxons themselves. Those who received tribute from the Wends did not want to see the pagans conquered and converted and, indeed, tipped off the Wends about the crusade. There were also splits between crusaders who saw the expedition as a chance to plunder and those who emphasized conversion.
- ◆ The Wendish Crusade lasted only a few weeks; it captured some Wendish forts and baptized some Wendish leaders, but those leaders renounced their baptisms as soon as the crusaders left. However, by the end of the 12th century, the Wends had indeed been conquered by Saxons and Danes, and their permanent Christianization had begun.

The Baltic Crusades

- ◆ From the lands of the Wends, the northern crusades then jumped several hundred miles east-northeast to Livonia, in what is today Latvia.
 - ◆ German merchants and missionaries had been active in the Baltic region for decades before the launching of the Baltic Crusades at the end of the 12th century, but the missionaries did not have much success there.
 - ◆ Popes issued bulls calling for crusaders to go to the Baltics in 1171 and again in the 1190s. The calls were ignored at first; when a crusading army finally went to Livonia in 1198, led by a missionary bishop, it was defeated by the indigenous Livonians, and the bishop was killed.
- ◆ In 1199, the appointment of a new bishop for Livonia, Albert, invigorated the northern crusades. Between his appointment and his death in 1229, Albert led annual crusades into Livonia and founded a military order for the region, the Livonian Sword Brethren. He and his crusaders subdued the Livonians and then led the Livonians and other Baltic allies into Estonia, conquering much of it while the Danes conquered other parts.
- ◆ When Bishop Albert died, Livonia fell into the hands of the Livonian Sword Brethren, but within a decade, that order had been absorbed by another military order: the Order of the Hospital of Saint Mary of the Germans of Jerusalem, better known as the Teutonic Knights.
- ◆ Before taking over the Livonian Sword Brethren and Livonia, the Teutonic Knights had shown territorial ambition in central Europe, but they had been expelled from Hungary in 1225. Then, an opportunity opened up for the Teutonic Knights in pagan Prussia, located between the land conquered following the Wendish Crusade and Baltic Livonia.
 - ◆ In 1225, Polish missionaries and nobles operating in Prussia called on the Teutonic Knights to assist the Poles against the Prussians. The king of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II Hohenstaufen, wanted to bring Prussia within a German rather than a Polish orbit; he declared that the Teutonic Knights could keep whatever territory they conquered in Prussia.

- ◆ From about 1230 onward, Prussia, rather than Baltic Livonia and Estonia, was the main theater for the northern crusades, and by 1300, the Teutonic Knights had conquered it.
- ◆ Substantial German emigration and settlement followed the conquest. The local Prussian population, like the Wends, was slowly Germanized. Thanks to their absorption of Livonia and conquest of Prussia, the Teutonic Knights were now rulers of a sizable state, answerable only to the king of Germany and the pope.
- ◆ In 1245, the pope made a remarkable concession to the Teutonic Knights: He granted full indulgences to anyone who went to fight in Prussia or elsewhere at the request of the Teutonic Knights, even if there had been no formal papal proclamation or public preaching of a crusade. In effect, this concession established a perpetual crusade in central and eastern Europe for the next two centuries.

Setbacks for the Teutonic Knights

- ◆ For all their successes, the northern crusades and the Teutonic Knights encountered setbacks. For instance, they captured the Russian principality of Pskov in 1240 but then were defeated in 1242 by the Russian prince Alexander Nevsky and the forces of Novgorod.
- ◆ The Teutonic Knights were also victims of their own success: Central and eastern Europe began to run out of pagans against whom the Teutonic Knights and the crusaders who joined them from the West could fight.
- ◆ When the ruler of Lithuania converted to Christianity in 1386, there were no longer any pagan polities left in that part of the world, and the Teutonic Knights' reason for existence disappeared.
- ◆ Increasingly, the Teutonic Knights found themselves fighting for territory against Catholic Poles, which was unseemly for a military order. The Poles inflicted a defeat on the Teutonic Order at the Battle of Tannenberg in 1410, from which the Teutonic Knights never fully recovered.



- ◆ Meanwhile, even the Germans who settled in Prussia came to see the Teutonic Knights' methods of rule as heavy-handed. The result was a series of rebellions in Prussia, not by newly conquered pagans but by Christian nobles and towns determined to defend their local lands and their privileges against the Teutonic Knights.
 - ◆ Prussian towns and nobles banded together in defensive leagues, such as the Prussian League of 1440. When the Teutonic Knights ordered the league to disband, it refused and sought Polish support, offering to hand Prussia over to Poland.
 - ◆ In the ensuing war, Poland defeated the Teutonic Knights, absorbing part of Prussia and forcing the Teutonic Knights to accept Polish overlordship of the rest.
- ◆ The Teutonic Knights of Prussia finally disbanded in 1525, when the Grand Master and many of the knights became Lutherans. The Teutonic Knights of Livonia limped on until 1562, when they, too, finally disbanded.

Brutality of the Northern Crusades

- ◆ The account of a missionary, Henry of Livonia, written in the 1220s gives us a good sense of the brutality of the first three decades of the Baltic Crusades. Henry tells of continual and almost habitual massacres and shows why this sort of brutality was both endemic and possible.
- ◆ In the northern crusades, crusaders had a lopsided technological and military superiority vis-à-vis their enemies that crusaders did not have in Spain or the Holy Land. The residents of the Baltic region had not seen stone castles held together with mortar and were unfamiliar with the crusaders' metal armor, weapons, and siege equipment.
- ◆ Another reason for the harshness of the Baltic Crusades was that as crusaders moved into regions farther from the German frontier, they encountered peoples who were more alien to them in language and custom than even the Wends had been. This unfamiliarity made it easier to treat



conquered peoples severely, and it cut both ways: Baltic peoples strenuously resisted Christianization, washing themselves down to eliminate the taint of baptism.

- ◆ Another factor in making the northern crusades so bloody was the ability of crusaders to find enthusiastic allies among some pagan groups, such as the Letts, who saw the coming of the crusaders as an opportunity for revenge against their rivals. In the Holy Land, the Crusader States sometimes found allies in such places as Damascus, but these alliances were not tactical and not fueled by a strong sense of ethnic grievance.
- ◆ One final reason for the harshness of the northern crusades was the especially intense ethnic rivalries among the crusaders themselves. In the Baltics, Germans, Danes, and Swedes were all interested in carving out areas under their own control. Henry of Livonia recounts how a Danish expedition encountered an Estonian who refused baptism on the grounds that he had already been baptized by a German missionary, whereupon the Danes hanged him to let others know that they were no longer to accept baptism from German missionaries.
- ◆ German and more general Christian expansion into eastern Europe did not begin with the northern crusades, but crusading facilitated expansion and gave it a distinctive cast. From the outset and throughout, conversion and crusade went hand in hand in the north.

Reading

Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*.

Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending*.

Urban, *The Teutonic Knights*.

Questions

- 1 Why are the northern crusades so little known today?
- 2 The prolonged and bloody northern crusades were fought in some regions that would also be where some of the 20th century's worst violence occurred and that one historian has characterized as Europe's "Bloodlands." Is that a coincidence? Have the reasons why wars fought in eastern and northeastern Europe tended to be exceptionally bloody, even by the standards of the Middle Ages and the 20th century, changed over time? Or is there some long-enduring, structural reason for this violence?



13

The Children's and Albigensian Crusades

The opening of crusading theaters in Spain and northern and central Europe diverted manpower and energy away from the eastern crusades, but the Third and Fourth Crusades' inability to take back Jerusalem meant that motivation for eastern crusading was still high. As a result, the 13th century saw a number of expeditions to the East, while the expansion of crusading into new theaters far removed from Jerusalem continued. In this lecture, we will examine the movement of crusading in the early 13th century from Europe's frontiers to its heartland with the Albigensian Crusade, fought in southern France. We will also examine an odd crusade that sprang up as the Albigensian Crusade was being fought: the Children's Crusade of 1212.

Catharism

- ◆ The term “Albigensian” is derived from the southern French town of Albi. The Albigensian Crusade was a war against Cathar heretics and against non-Cathars who protected their Cathar neighbors.
- ◆ In general, the Cathars were religious dualists. They believed that good and evil, God and Satan, were coeternal and equally powerful, locked in perpetual equilibrium. The material world had been created by someone other than God, perhaps even by Satan, and it was evil; the spiritual world alone was good.
- ◆ In the 12th century, Catharism achieved a remarkable level of organizational structure in southern France and parts of Italy. Cathars even engaged in public disputations with Catholics, during which each argued for the truth of their religious beliefs and the efficacy of their rituals.

Crusading against the Cathars

- ◆ Before the launching of the Albigensian Crusade in the first decade of the 13th century, Catholic preachers had missionized against Cathars in southern France but with little effect. Over the course of the 12th century, preachers and popes came to regard southern French nobles as the reason for this failure. The local nobility sheltered Cathars and prevented others from moving against the heretics, lest the social peace be disturbed.



- ◆ On several occasions between 1204 and 1207, Pope Innocent III invited King Philip II Augustus of France to lead a crusade against the Cathars and their defenders in southern France. The French king declined these invitations. Then, in January 1208, a papal legate was assassinated after leaving a meeting with Count Raymond VI of Toulouse. Suspicion fell on the count and on the Cathars more generally. In March 1208, Innocent again called on Philip Augustus to lead a crusade against the south of France, and Philip again declined.
- ◆ Finally, in October 1208, Innocent bypassed the French king and addressed himself directly to the nobility of northern France. He called on northern French nobles to take up the cross against the count of Toulouse, all supporters of heresy in the region, and the heretics themselves. He promised that the crusaders could keep any lands they conquered while crusading.
- ◆ In the spring of 1209, northern French crusaders, together with some Germans, made their way south. Faced with the northern invasion, Count Raymond VI of Toulouse apologized to the papacy for not having taken a harder line against the Cathars in the past. He even took up the cross and joined the crusade himself.
- ◆ In July 1209, the crusaders besieged the town of Béziers, broke through its defenses, and killed a large number of inhabitants without really knowing whether the victims were Cathars or not. By the end of the summer, the Albigensian Crusade had almost entirely dispossessed the lord of Béziers, giving his lands to a crusader named Simon of Montfort, who became the de facto head of the crusade from 1209 onward.
- ◆ In August 1209, Raymond VI of Toulouse parted ways with the crusaders and was excommunicated. Simon of Montfort was ambitious to make more gains in southern France, and his primary target was the count of Toulouse. But then, the Spanish king of Aragon, Peter, intervened against the Albigensian Crusade in 1213.

- ◆ Peter was also lord of Montpellier in southern France and anxious that the northern invasion might cost him the town. In 1212, King Peter was fresh off a Spanish crusader victory. The next year, he found himself in southern France, fighting not alongside crusaders but against them; he died in 1213 at the Battle of Muret.
- ◆ In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council declared that Count Raymond VI of Toulouse was a heretic, that all his lands were forfeit, and that they should be given to Simon of Montfort. Simon was still trying to make good his claims on the land when he died in battle in 1218, while Raymond lived on.

The End of the Albigensian Crusade

- ◆ By the time Simon of Montfort died, the Albigensian Crusade was in its 10th year, and it would continue for another decade; it did not end until 1229. Because the north and south of France were so physically close, crusaders often spent very little time on campaign before claiming that they had done enough to merit their indulgence and returning home. The result was a remarkable turnover in the ranks of the crusade.
- ◆ The Albigensian Crusade did not eradicate Catharism from southern France; the sect remained active for perhaps a century after the end of the crusade. However, the crusade deprived Cathars of the protection of the southern French nobility, which was the true loser of the conflict. The true winner was the French monarchy, which had not even participated initially.
- ◆ In 1223, Philip II Augustus died, and his son came to the throne as Louis VIII. At that time, it looked as though the count of Toulouse might succeed in fending off the Albigensian Crusade. In 1224, Simon of Montfort's heir gave up and surrendered his territorial claims to the king of France.
- ◆ At that point, the French monarchy finally intervened on a significant scale. In 1226, King Louis VIII led a royal crusading expedition to the south. Although the king died of natural causes while on that expedition, it helped to turn the tide, and more royal crusades followed in 1227 and 1228.

- ◆ Finally, in 1229, Count Raymond VII of Toulouse gave up the fight. He agreed to indemnify the crusaders, and he also agreed that, upon his death, his lands should pass to his daughter, who in turn was obliged to marry a member of the French royal family. The result was the de facto annexation of much of southern France by the French crown.

The Children's Crusade

- ◆ The Children's Crusade originated in the region around Chartres, in northern France. Factors that seem to have triggered it included disappointment with the outcome of the Fourth Crusade, the preaching of the Albigensian Crusade, and an order of Pope Innocent III to hold religious processions in France. The Children's Crusade seems to have originated in those processions.
- ◆ In the spring of 1212, processions consisting primarily of youths appeared in the region around Chartres. The youths carried religious symbols, and they called upon God to uphold Christendom and to return to it the True Cross, that is, the fragment of the True Cross captured by Saladin at the Battle of the Horns of Hattin.
- ◆ “Youth” (*peuri*), in this context, seems to have meant young people between the ages of perhaps 6 and 14. Some of the youths were specifically identified as shepherds, and some of the French *peuri* came to follow one Stephen of Cloyes, likely a shepherd himself.



- ◆ Stephen and his followers made their way to the town of Saint-Denis near Paris, perhaps aiming to exhort King Philip II Augustus to lead a crusade to Jerusalem. The king ordered the youths to disperse in late June. Some of them did so, but others began to march east, toward the Rhine River Valley.
- ◆ Along the way, disturbances broke out between lay residents of the places through which the youths passed and the local clergy; it seems that the residents supported the *pueri* and the clerics did not. Clerical chroniclers were uniformly hostile to the Children's Crusade.
- ◆ Reaching Germany in July 1212 and traveling up the Rhine River, the bands of French youths picked up German fellow-travelers. As it traveled through Germany, the expedition increasingly took on the trappings of a crusade, with vows and crosses worn on clothing. It also acquired an explicit destination: It was going to deliver Jerusalem into Christian hands through miraculous means.
- ◆ The bands of the Children's Crusade reached Genoa in August 1212, where a local resident estimated its numbers at 7,000. At Genoa, the crusaders could not pay for shipping to take them to Jerusalem. Some crusaders seem to have tried their luck at other ports but with the same results. As a result, by the end of 1212, the Children's Crusade had fizzled out.



Dissimilar Crusades

- ◆ The Children's Crusade, like the Popular Crusade of 1096, testifies to the appeal of Jerusalem and crusading to those who were neither knights nor clerics. But the differences between the Children's Crusade and the Popular Crusade are striking.
- ◆ The Children's Crusade was considerably more peaceful than the Popular Crusade. Medieval chroniclers make no mention of its participants bearing arms. Further, there were no attacks against Jewish communities during the Children's Crusade.
- ◆ The Children's Crusade was a standalone enterprise, its leadership was not knightly, and it encountered overt clerical hostility.
 - ◆ The lack of knightly participation and the presence of clerical hostility are both explicable because the Children's Crusade was, in a sense, a rebuke of what crusading had become and of those responsible for its failures.
- ◆ While the Albigensian Crusade transformed the shape of France, the Children's Crusade had no such long-term consequences. Despite the oddity of its composition, the Children's Crusade was, in some ways, the more traditional because its goal was Jerusalem. Within two decades of the Children's Crusade, two new major eastern crusades would take place.

Reading

Dickson, *The Children's Crusade*.

Hamilton, *Crusaders, Cathars, and the Holy Places*.

Pegg, *A Most Holy War*.

Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade*.

Questions

- 1 Why does the Children's Crusade, which was rather brief and inconsequential, continue to fascinate even today?
- 2 Do crusades against heretics and their defenders, such as the Albigensian Crusade, represent a logical extension and growth of crusading or a deviation from crusading's initial purpose?



14

Fifth and Sixth Crusades—Tragedy and Oddity

In our last lecture, we examined the Albigensian Crusade, fought in southern France against heretics and their protectors, and the Children's Crusade, a youthful expedition that fizzled out after only a few months. In this lecture, we turn to two other crusades of the early 13th century, the Fifth and Sixth Crusades. Both went to the eastern Mediterranean; beyond that, though, they could scarcely be more different. The Fifth Crusade was badly defeated in a way that no eastern crusade had been before. The Sixth Crusade resulted in the recovery of Jerusalem with almost no fighting, but the recovery was short-lived, and it occurred under such peculiar circumstances that even in Europe, not everyone considered it to be a success.

Start of the Fifth Crusade

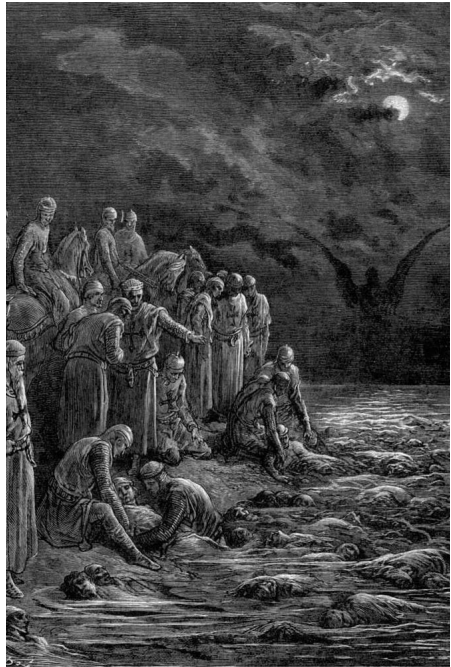
- ◆ In 1213, Pope Innocent III called for a new eastern crusade, tried to impose an economic embargo on the Islamic world, and took steps to maximize the amount of manpower available for this Fifth Crusade. In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council set the departure date for the crusade as June 1217. The council also imposed a clerical tax to defray the crusade's expenses. Crusaders were to depart from the southern Italian port of Brindisi and the Sicilian port of Messina. The crusade would muster at Acre; its target was Egypt.
- ◆ Innocent III did not live to see the Fifth Crusade's departure from Europe; he died in 1216. But the preaching that had been done since 1213 and the organizational work carried out at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 bore fruit and garnered a good response.
 - ◆ King John Lackland of England took up the cross in 1215, perhaps for the protection it gave him from a baronial rebellion in England. However, King John never actually went on crusade.
 - ◆ The king of Germany and future Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen also took up the cross. Indeed, the pope seems to have expected him to lead the crusade.
- ◆ As usual, the crusaders did not follow instructions well. They were slow to depart, left from unauthorized ports, and were sometimes quick to return home. Like the Albigensian Crusade, the Fifth Crusade was marked by the constant comings and goings of crusaders. Not until May 1218 had enough crusaders mustered at Acre for serious action to be taken.



- ◆ By the end of May, the Fifth Crusade had arrived in Egypt and besieged the port town of Damietta. Although crusaders expected the leadership of Frederick II Hohenstaufen, the German king never showed up. He dispatched some German troops to assist the crusaders in 1220 and 1221, but his absence left the crusade without a clear leader.
- ◆ At the siege of Damietta, the crusaders chose as their leader John of Brienne, king of Jerusalem—a title he held even though his kingdom no longer included Jerusalem and had Acre as its capital.
- ◆ In September 1218, the pope's legate arrived: Pelagius of Albano. Pelagius had control of the funds that the papacy had raised and, to some extent, took over control of the crusade.

Dissension in Damietta

- ◆ The year 1218 was a good time to be attacking Egypt. As the crusaders were besieging Damietta, a nephew of Saladin named al-Kamil became sultan of Egypt. His younger brother, al-Mu'azzam, ruled Damascus and Syrian territory; relations between the two were not good.
- ◆ Al-Kamil feared al-Mu'azzam and other Ayyubid rivals even more than he feared the crusaders. And he was far from certain about the willingness of Egyptians to fight on his behalf.



- ◆ As a result, starting in 1219, al-Kamil made several generous offers to the crusaders. If they would agree to leave Egypt, al-Kamil would give them Jerusalem and pay to have the city's defenses restored. He would also give the crusaders all the formerly Frankish castles and territory west of the Jordan River and return the fragment of the True Cross lost at the Battle of Hattin.
- ◆ John of Brienne wanted to accept al-Kamil's offers, but Pelagius of Albano refused, with some good reasons. It was not entirely clear that al-Kamil had the authority to hand over Jerusalem, and there was no offer of territory to serve as a buffer between a restored kingdom of Jerusalem and Egypt. Under the influence of Pelagius, the crusaders rejected al-Kamil's offers.
- ◆ Damietta fell to the Fifth Crusade in November 1219, after a siege of about a year and a half. It was a promising if hard-won start. But the Fifth Crusade remained at Damietta through the whole of 1220, paralyzed by internal dissension. The crusaders squabbled about the distribution of loot, and the leadership squabbled over the possession of Damietta. In July 1221, the Fifth Crusade finally started to make its way up the Nile River toward Cairo.

Campaigning in the Nile Delta

- ◆ Campaigning in the Nile delta proved to be difficult. The Nile River itself provided a seemingly easy way for crusaders to get supplies from Damietta, but crossing the delta's many tributaries and canals was difficult. The crusaders had to get to Cairo quickly because the annual flooding of the Nile would begin in August.
- ◆ The long delay between the crusaders' conquest of Damietta and their march on Cairo gave al-Kamil time to prepare. He had reconciled, for the moment, with al-Mu'azzam in Damascus and with other Ayyubid rulers. Together, they used their superior knowledge of the canal system to cut the crusaders off from Damietta and trap them near Mansurah; there, they opened sluices in the canal system and flooded the crusaders.

- ◆ In August 1221, the crusaders asked al-Kamil for terms. They agreed to return Damietta and evacuate Egypt, which they did; al-Kamil agreed to return the True Cross, which he didn't.
- ◆ How could a crusade that had started so promisingly have ended so badly? In hindsight, al-Kamil's early offers looked good; how could crusaders have turned down the restoration of Jerusalem? Pelagius of Albano bore the brunt of the criticism. Some charged that if the crusade had had more secular leadership, it would have succeeded.

Frederick II's Leadership

- ◆ One reason for the crusaders' stubbornness during the Fifth Crusade was their hope that they might receive reinforcements from Frederick II Hohenstaufen. Within a decade of the collapse of the Fifth Crusade, that king made good on his crusading vows as part of a different expedition, the Sixth Crusade.



- ◆ Frederick II had made quite a few crusading vows but had not fulfilled them. Finally, in 1225, he promised that he would crusade to the East in 1227; if he failed to do so, he would accept papal excommunication. Toward the end of that same year, Frederick II married the daughter of the king of Jerusalem, John of Brienne; for technical reasons, that marriage made Frederick himself king of Jerusalem. When Frederick's wife died in 1228, their son Conrad became king, with Frederick II acting as regent until 1243.
- ◆ In 1226, as Frederick was preparing for his crusade, he received ambassadors sent by the Egyptian sultan al-Kamil. Al-Kamil proposed an alliance between himself and Frederick against al-Mu'azzam in Damascus, with the promise of territorial reward. Nothing definitive was agreed upon, but Frederick was open to the possibility of cooperation when he set sail in August 1227.
- ◆ After a few days at sea, Frederick fell ill and returned to Italy, promising to catch up with his army when he had recovered. Pope Gregory IX regarded Frederick's return to Italy as evidence that he had broken his crusading vow of 1225 and excommunicated him.
 - ◆ Despite the pope's order that Frederick not continue with the crusade until the sentence had been lifted, Frederick resumed the expedition, arriving at Acre in September 1228.
 - ◆ Part of his crusading army had already melted away during the year-long hiatus that followed Frederick's illness, and the local clergy, including the patriarch of Jerusalem, was none too happy to see the arrival of the excommunicated emperor. Even worse, al-Kamil no longer needed Frederick's help because al-Mu'azzam had died.
- ◆ Frederick led the crusading army to Jaffa, which was in Christian hands, and began to refortify it—hardly a threatening action to al-Kamil. Nonetheless, al-Kamil proclaimed that a horrible war was about to erupt and that he was bound to do whatever he could to prevent it. Frederick announced that he, too, would do what he could to prevent any fighting. It's quite possible that al-Kamil and Frederick had agreed on these proclamations ahead of time to give themselves cover for what they were going to do next.

- ◆ In February 1229, Frederick and al-Kamil signed a treaty giving most of the city of Jerusalem, which was still unfortified, to the kingdom of Jerusalem. Frederick and al-Kamil also agreed to a 10-year truce.
- ◆ Both the pope and the patriarch of Jerusalem condemned the deal, and local nobles in the kingdom of Jerusalem did not like the fact that their new king was a German foreigner. Frederick departed the kingdom in 1229 and never returned.

The Aftermath in Jerusalem

- ◆ From Frederick's arrival in 1228 until 1243, the kingdom of Jerusalem was torn apart by fights between the local Christian Frankish nobility and Frederick II's officials. The desire of the local barons to be independent of the overlordship of the German emperors became clear almost immediately.
 - ◆ In 1228, Frederick tried to confiscate the fief of Beirut, held by a prominent baronial family, the Ibelins. The Ibelins protested that Frederick had no right to do this, and the other barons agreed. Frederick did not feel bound by local law, and because John of Ibelin would not voluntarily abandon his fief, in 1231, he sent a fleet to take Beirut by force.
 - ◆ Such a high-handed and manifestly illegal action caused most of the barons to unite behind the Ibelin family. Between 1231 and 1233, there was an active civil war in the East between Frederick's supporters and his opponents. In 1233, the Ibelin family defeated the Hohenstaufen forces on Cyprus and drove them off the island, which fell into the Ibelin camp.
 - ◆ A decade of relative peace followed, but the barons of the Holy Land took up the offensive again in 1243, when they besieged the city of Tyre. The citizens of Tyre welcomed the Ibelins, and the Hohenstaufen supporters eventually surrendered the city's citadel. The Ibelins and the barons of the kingdom of Jerusalem had shown that they, not the emperors of Germany, had the real power in Outremer.

- ◆ Frederick II's one success during the Sixth Crusade was not long-lasting. In 1239, after the 10-year truce expired, an Ayyubid sultan occupied Jerusalem almost without resistance. In 1240, Jerusalem again returned to Christian rule, but then a newly arrived Turkish tribe, the Khwarezmians, captured Jerusalem in 1244. Thereafter, Jerusalem would remain under Muslim rule until World War I.

Reading

Abulafia, *Frederick II*.

Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213–1221*.

Questions

- 1 Was the Fifth Crusade's focus on Egypt a wise choice? Were there other viable options available to the Fifth Crusade?
- 2 How historically significant was the return of Jerusalem to Christian rule during the Sixth Crusade? Was Frederick II Hohenstaufen's negotiated return of Jerusalem an important achievement or relatively meaningless?



15

Louis IX—The Crusader Saint

In the last lecture, we examined the Fifth and Sixth Crusades. The Fifth Crusade, launched against Egypt, surpassed the Second in its futility and ended in crusader defeat. The Sixth Crusade resulted in the negotiated return of Jerusalem to Christian rule, but not, as it turned out, for very long. As a result, the need for eastern crusades remained high throughout the 13th century. In this lecture, we will examine the Seventh and Eighth Crusades, each led by King Louis IX of France. The king's piety and thorough preparation raised hopes that his efforts would meet with more success than his predecessors' had. If King Louis IX were to fail, the disappointment would be all the more unnerving.

Preparation for the Seventh Crusade

- ◆ French chroniclers report that a near-fatal illness late in 1244 moved Louis IX to take up the cross for the first time. His decision is partly explained by his personal piety and partly by the fact that he faced significant baronial opposition and rebellion in the years leading up to the Seventh Crusade. A crusade gave Louis IX the opportunity to reassert his royal authority.
- ◆ Events in Outremer might also have played a role in the timing of the Seventh Crusade. A few months before Louis made his crusading vow, the Crusader States had suffered another setback that echoed what had happened back in 1187: a decisive military defeat and the loss of Jerusalem.
 - ◆ Egypt had allied with the Khwarezmians and captured Jerusalem in 1244; later that same year, the Egyptians and Khwarezmians decisively defeated the combined forces of Homs, Damascus, and the kingdom of Jerusalem at the Battle of La Forbie. Virtually the entire Frankish army was killed or taken captive.
 - ◆ The defeat at La Forbie was as decisive as the one at the Horns of Hattin in 1187, but this time, the result was not an immediate and massive loss of territory in the kingdom of Jerusalem. Egypt and the Khwarezmians still regarded their Ayyubid rivals in Palestine and Syria as a greater threat than the kingdom of Jerusalem. Until someone emerged who could unite Egypt and the cities of Syria, the kingdom of Jerusalem would hold on.
- ◆ When Louis IX made his vow late in 1244, the pope had not yet issued a crusading bull in response to the most recent loss of Jerusalem, but he did so in 1245. The planning for the Seventh Crusade was massive, and it stretched out over several years. The preparations did not always go smoothly.
- ◆ Still, between 1244 and 1248, Louis raised a substantial crusading army, numbering perhaps 10,000 to 15,000. The expenses Louis incurred during the Seventh Crusade would be enormous—six times the royal government's annual income between 1247 and 1257.



- ◆ Incurring such great expenses changed the royal government itself; then, as always, war meant the growth of government. To squeeze as much money as he could out of his subjects, Louis overhauled the royal administration and increased royal supervision of local officials.
- ◆ The result was a French state that, while vastly smaller in powers and scope than its 20th-century counterpart, was considerably more omnipresent than its 12th-century predecessor.
- ◆ Regular royal income, no matter how assiduously collected, could not cover the cost of the crusade; thus, Louis had to rely on other expedients, including ecclesiastical taxes, supplemented by property confiscated from Jewish moneylenders, whom Louis expelled from France in the late 1240s.

Triumph at Damietta

- ◆ Finally, in August 1248, Louis departed France, reaching Cyprus in September. Once there, he had to wait through May of 1249 while stragglers arrived. Barons from the kingdom of Jerusalem and the Grand Master of the Templars joined Louis at Cyprus.
- ◆ The local barons and Templars recommended that Louis enter into negotiations with the new sultan of Egypt, al-Kamil's successor. They believed he might be willing to make large concessions to the crusaders, but Louis was not interested in negotiation, and in any case, Frederick II's negotiated return of Jerusalem had proven to be ephemeral. Louis seems to have envisioned nothing short of the conquest and French settlement of the whole of Egypt.
- ◆ Louis and his remaining forces landed in Egypt in early June 1249, outside Damietta. Within a day of the landing, the garrison at Damietta fled up the Nile, leaving Damietta open and fully supplied. It was an auspicious beginning. Equally promising, the sultan of Egypt, al-Salih Ayyub, was deathly ill. His followers and subjects had one eye on the crusaders and the other on the looming succession; al-Salih's son, Turan-Shah, was away from Egypt.

- ◆ The Seventh Crusade remained at Damietta from June to November 1249, waiting until the annual flood of the Nile subsided and for the arrival of latecomers. Some crusaders, especially the Italians, recommended an attack on the port city of Alexandria, but to take control of Egypt, the crusaders had to take Cairo.

Disaster at Mansurah

- ◆ In November 1249, the Seventh Crusade began to move upriver toward Cairo. The Egyptian sultan al-Salih was at Mansurah, between Damietta and Cairo, but al-Salih died before the crusaders reached Mansurah. The sultan's heir, Turan-Shah, was in northern Iraq at that moment; until his arrival, the resistance against the Seventh Crusade would be led by the late sultan's widow and his Turkish bodyguards, the Mamluks.
- ◆ In December, the Seventh Crusade arrived within sight of Mansurah, but between the crusaders and the town was a canal that was difficult to cross; on the opposite bank of the canal and outside Mansurah's walls was the Egyptians' camp. In February 1250, the crusaders found a place to ford the canal at some distance from Mansurah. The plan was to move many of the crusaders across the canal without the defenders noticing and then launch a surprise attack against Mansurah.
- ◆ But the crusaders who were the first to make it across the canal, led by Louis IX's brother Robert of Artois, did not wait for the rest of the crusading army to cross. Instead, the advance guard charged straight into the Egyptian camp, where they indeed surprised the defenders and killed the Egyptians' field commander.
 - ◆ Then, Robert of Artois and the advance guard charged into Mansurah itself, where they became separated, got trapped in the town's winding streets, and were killed. By the time the rest of the crusaders made it across the canal, the Egyptians knew they were coming and counterattacked.
 - ◆ Louis IX and the crusaders managed to hold their ground, but they sustained severe losses. They were now on the same side of the canal as Mansurah, but Mansurah itself was no closer to falling.

- ◆ The last straw came when the Egyptians cut the crusaders' supply line to Damietta. In April, the Seventh Crusade began to retreat back toward Damietta, but the retreat became a rout. On April 6, 1250, Louis IX surrendered. The king himself and most of his army were taken prisoner.
- ◆ Louis negotiated the terms of his and his army's release. He pledged to return Damietta to Turan-Shah and to pay a large ransom in two installments for the release of himself and his army. In return, Turan-Shah pledged to free Louis and some of his followers while keeping the rest as guarantees that the king would pay the ransom.
- ◆ Before the terms of this agreement could be implemented, Turan-Shah was killed in a coup in early May 1250. Henceforth, Egypt would be under Mamluk rule. The Mamluks honored the terms of Louis's release and, indeed, set the remaining prisoners free later in 1250, without receiving the second installment on the ransom. With the release of Louis IX and his army in 1250, the Seventh Crusade was essentially over.



The Eighth Crusade

- ◆ The capture of Louis IX occasioned anguish in Europe but surprisingly little recrimination of the sort that had followed the Second and the Fifth Crusades. Louis IX's reputation for piety shielded him and the crusade more generally from criticism. And the disaster of the Seventh Crusade did not keep Louis from dreaming of another crusade. In 1267, he took up the cross once again, along with three of his sons, in the Eighth Crusade.
- ◆ Planning for the Eighth Crusade was just as extensive and protracted as it had been for the Seventh Crusade, and recruitment was, if anything, even more impressive than it had been earlier. Edward Longshanks, the future King Edward I of England, took up the cross, as did King James of Aragon.
- ◆ As always, coordinating departures and arrivals proved impossible. Louis IX set May 1270 as the departure date, with the crusaders to muster on the islands of Sardinia and Sicily. But the king of Aragon left in June 1269 and was killed when his fleet ran into a storm. Most others overshot the departure date.
- ◆ The crusaders assembling on Sardinia and Sicily assumed that the destination of the Eighth Crusade would again be Egypt, but after they set sail, Louis announced, for reasons that are still unclear, that the Eighth Crusade would go to North Africa, specifically to Tunis. The crusaders arrived outside Tunis in mid-July 1270.
- ◆ It was hot in Tunisia in July, and the crusaders had difficulty securing access to fresh water. After only a few weeks, one of Louis's sons fell sick and died, and then Louis himself died on August 25, 1270. His brother Charles of Anjou took over the crusade and cut it short. Charles exacted a tribute payment from the ruler of Tunis, secured a promise that Christian missionaries would be allowed to operate in Tunis, and pronounced the Eighth Crusade over.
- ◆ The Eighth Crusade made Charles of Anjou wealthier but otherwise accomplished nothing beyond killing off Louis IX, one of his sons, and not a few other crusaders and their companions. Once again, hopes and expectations of victory were dashed.

- ◆ Louis IX's companion on the Seventh Crusade, a nobleman named Jean de Joinville, lived to see the king's canonization in 1297, but Joinville had disapproved of Louis's decision to take up the cross for the Eighth Crusade. He saw a conflict between crusading and duty to one's own kingdom and people. Because of this conflict, crusading was not necessarily an instrument of salvation; it could also be a source of mortal sin and, therefore, an instrument of damnation.
- ◆ The Seventh and Eighth Crusades were arguably the best-organized and best-financed crusading expeditions to date, yet they failed—the Seventh Crusade disastrously and the Eighth Crusade ineffectually. Louis IX's crusades were the last major eastern crusades to be headed by a European monarch. After the Seventh Crusade, the eastern Mediterranean would not experience a European military intervention similar to the Seventh Crusade until 1798, when the rapidly rising Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt.

Reading

Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade*.

Le Goff, *Saint Louis*.

Questions

- 1 After the failure of the Fifth Crusade, should Louis IX have focused the Seventh Crusade on Egypt once again? Did his crusade have a realistic prospect for success? Could Louis IX have affected the outcome of the Seventh Crusade by making different decisions?
- 2 Was Louis IX's personal piety a help or a hindrance to him as a crusade leader? Or was that piety largely irrelevant and the outcome of his crusades determined by forces external to the king's religiosity?



16

The Hohenstaufen and Shepherds' Crusades

In our last lecture, we examined the crusades of King Louis IX: the Seventh Crusade, leading to the king's capture in 1250, and the Eighth Crusade, ending with his death in 1270. Louis's crusades added to the litany of the eastern crusades' disappointments and outright failure, but crusading activity remained high throughout the king's lifetime. Some of that activity arose in response to Louis's debacle in Egypt, and some of it ended in crusader triumph, albeit far from Egypt or the Holy Land. In this lecture, we will examine two mid-13th-century crusades: the crusades against the Hohenstaufen dynasty, beginning in 1239; and the Shepherds' Crusade of 1251, which would have a sequel in the Shepherds' Crusade of 1320.

The Papal States and the Holy Roman Empire

- ◆ Perhaps it was inevitable that popes, once in possession of the power to launch crusades, would eventually launch them against Catholics who happened to be the papacy's political opponents. The first such opponent against whom the papacy brought crusading to bear was a Hohenstaufen king of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor.
 - ◆ The Holy Roman Empire included northern Italy, which made it the neighbor of the Papal States in central Italy. Imperial control in northern Italy was always difficult to maintain, and popes feared that having such powerful German neighbors to their north would lead to the swallowing up of the Papal States.
 - ◆ Papal fears of imperial expansion became especially acute when, in the 1190s, the Holy Roman Emperors also became the rulers of the kingdom of Sicily, which included southern Italy. The Papal States now faced encirclement.
- ◆ In their struggles against German kings and emperors, popes had two advantages. First, the office of king of Germany was as much elective as it was hereditary, and second, to assume the title of Holy Roman Emperor, the German king had to be crowned by the pope. Because the papacy had more leverage with German kings than it did with other monarchs, conflicts between popes and the kings of Germany tended to be especially sharp.

The Crusade against Frederick II

- ◆ The first Hohenstaufen ruler to have a crusade proclaimed against him was Frederick II, the crusader who had incurred excommunication in the 1220s, negotiated the return of Jerusalem to Christian rule, and then ended his crusade by returning to Europe to fend off a papally initiated attack on the kingdom of Sicily. Frederick II had resisted that attack, and in 1230, he reached an uneasy truce with the papacy, which lifted his sentence of excommunication and agreed to recognize his negotiation of Jerusalem's return to Christian control.

- ◆ But in 1239, after Frederick had won victories in northern Italy against imperial opponents, Pope Gregory IX excommunicated him again and proclaimed a crusade against him. At first, the pope offered crusading indulgences to those who were already in Milan and other places in northern Italy that resisted Frederick, but then Gregory extended the crusading call outward. He ordered that crusading vows could be fulfilled by remaining in Europe and fighting Frederick rather than traveling to the East.
- ◆ Through the 1240s, the papacy ratcheted up the crusade against Frederick. In 1245, Pope Innocent IV deposed Frederick, releasing all his subjects from their obligation to obey him. Innocent IV also spread the preaching of the anti-Hohenstaufen crusade even farther than Gregory IX had. In 1246, the pope ordered crusading preachers in Germany to give the anti-Hohenstaufen crusade priority over the crusade to the East.
- ◆ Outside of Hungary and a few German regions, the proclamation of crusades against Frederick seems to have generated few recruits. European monarchs were not keen on supporting a crusade against one of their own. Further, the crusades against Frederick overlapped with Louis IX's Seventh Crusade, and when that eastern crusade ended in disaster, contemporaries in Europe looked askance upon a papacy that seemed more interested in overthrowing Frederick than in helping Louis.
- ◆ Still, the papacy persevered in the anti-Hohenstaufen crusade. When Frederick died in 1250, he was still in a state of excommunication, and the crusade against him was ongoing. The ultimate goal of the papacy and its allies was to end Hohenstaufen rule entirely.

End of the Hohenstaufen Dynasty

- ◆ Frederick II's heir in Germany was Conrad IV, against whom the papacy proclaimed a crusade in 1251. This was ironic considering that Conrad also held the title of king of Jerusalem. After Conrad IV's death in 1254, crusading against the Hohenstaufen and their allies continued.

- ◆ In the end, it was the crusader Charles of Anjou, the brother of King Louis IX of France, who ended the Hohenstaufen dynasty. In 1266, Charles defeated the Hohenstaufen ruler of the kingdom of Sicily, Manfred, an illegitimate son of Frederick II; in 1268, he defeated, captured, and executed Conrad IV's heir, Conradin, the last Hohenstaufen ruler of Germany. In 1273, the German electors chose as the new king of Germany Count Rudolf of Hapsburg.
- ◆ The end of the Hohenstaufen dynasty had a peculiar postscript in Sicily. In 1282, during an event known as the Sicilian Vespers, Sicily rebelled against Charles of Anjou and accepted the overlordship of the king of Aragon, Peter III, who had a Hohenstaufen wife.



- ◆ The papacy didn't welcome the ejection of Charles from Sicily and proclaimed a crusade against Peter in 1285. This call was heeded by the king of France, Philip III, who led a crusading army against Aragon.
- ◆ For the second time in the 13th century, the king of Aragon found himself fighting French crusaders. But this time, the Aragonese defeated the French, and Philip III himself died in 1285 during the retreat.

The Shepherds' Crusade of 1251

- ◆ The Shepherds' Crusade originated somewhere along the frontier between France and Germany, possibly in Flanders. Most of those who participated were peasants of various sorts, but the crusaders seem to have identified with shepherds; they carried before them a banner depicting the Lamb of God.
- ◆ Both Louis IX's Seventh Crusade and the crusades against the Hohenstaufen shaped the origins of the Shepherds' Crusade, albeit in different ways.
 - ◇ The capture of Louis in Egypt had been a tremendous shock, and although Louis himself had been freed before the Shepherds' Crusade got underway, much of his army was still being held prisoner. In 1250, Louis wrote a letter to Europe calling for a crusading expedition to come and assist him, and he even suggested that the expedition begin its journey east in April and May 1251—exactly when the Shepherds' Crusade began.
 - ◇ As for the crusade against the Hohenstaufen, the areas in which the Shepherds' Crusade of 1251 originated were also areas of intense crusade preaching against the Hohenstaufen. This preaching seems merely to have convinced the shepherds that Louis IX, and Jerusalem more generally, could expect no help from the pope or the European nobility. Thus, the Shepherds' Crusade would take matters into its own hands; the crusaders would go east for the purpose of helping Louis.
- ◆ Although no crusading bull called the Shepherds' Crusade of 1251, those who participated regarded themselves as crusaders. They armed themselves with what weapons they could find and with farm tools. For reasons that are still unclear, the crusaders began marching toward Paris, rather than the Holy Land or the Mediterranean. Various bands then departed Paris in June 1251, scattering to the north and south.

- ◆ As they traveled, the crusaders' frustrations against those whom they blamed for the failures of crusading turned violent. Specifically, the crusaders began attacking and killing Christian clergy in the places through which they passed, such as Rouen and Orléans.
- ◆ By late June or early July 1251, the Shepherds' Crusade had lost the support of the queen of France, and the English king had ordered his officials in southwestern France not to admit the crusaders under any circumstances.
- ◆ Some bands may have gotten as far as Bordeaux in the southwest, but by that point, French royal officials knew what to expect and had organized their forces. They killed a crusade leader known as the Master of Hungary and some of his followers and dispersed the others.
- ◆ Probably by the end of July, the Shepherds' Crusade of 1251 was over. Despite its brevity, this flare-up of violent anticlericalism would be remembered for centuries and would have a successor in 1320.

The Shepherds' Crusade of 1320

- ◆ In 1320, frustrated crusading expectations once again resulted in an unauthorized and violent Shepherds' Crusade. In 1313, kings of France and England took crusading vows and collected crusading taxes, but in what had by then become a frequent occurrence, they kept the money and did not actually go on crusade.
- ◆ Further, even though King Philip IV of France had expelled France's Jews in 1306, his successor, Louis X, in July 1315, allowed Jews to return for a period that was supposed to last for 12 years. Louis also decreed that debts owed to formerly expelled Jews would have to be repaid, with two-thirds of the debt going to the king and one-third to the Jews. Christian debtors were unhappy at the return of their debts.
- ◆ At first, it looked as though the Shepherds' Crusade of 1320 might simply be a replay of the Shepherds' Crusade of 1251.

- ◆ Somewhere in northern France, shepherds and other laborers gathered and proclaimed that they were going to the Holy Land. The crusaders first went to Paris, where they called on the French king, now Philip V, to lead them east.
- ◆ But the king would not meet with the crusaders, and officials imprisoned those whom they could seize. The crusaders freed their captured companions and began marching south toward the sea.
- ◆ The greatest difference between the Shepherds' Crusade of 1320 and that of 1251 was their targets. The first Shepherds' Crusade was primarily anticlerical and attacked Jewish buildings and probably Jews themselves when there were no Christian clerics to be attacked. The Shepherds' Crusade of 1320 primarily attacked the recently returned Jews as it passed through central France and into southern France.
- ◆ Royal officials mustered armies and spent the summer of 1320 hunting down various bands that kept dwindling in size. Some crusaders survived to reach northeastern Spain, continuing attacks on Jewish communities there until Aragonese royal forces put an end to them.
- ◆ Perhaps what is most striking about the Hohenstaufen and Shepherds' Crusades was their tendency to consume their own.
- ◆ The crusades against the Hohenstaufen turned crusading against Frederick II Hohenstaufen, the only crusader to succeed in winning Jerusalem back for Christianity after Saladin's conquest in 1187. The Shepherds' Crusade of 1251 turned crusading against the clergy.



- ◆ As these crusades turned on their own, they proved incapable of saving that to which they had given birth, namely, the Crusader States and the kingdom of Jerusalem.

Reading

Abulafia, *Frederick II*.

Barber, *Crusaders and Heretics, 12th to 14th Centuries*.

Dickson, "The Advent of the *Pastores*."

Questions

- 1 Historians sometimes designate the crusades against the Hohenstaufen dynasty and Italian city-states as the "political crusades." Is that an appropriate and useful designation or not?
- 2 If participants in the Shepherds' Crusades had written accounts of their expeditions, how might those accounts have differed from those written by clerical observers? How can historians properly study phenomena, such as the Shepherds' Crusades, for which nearly all the evidence is generated by hostile parties?



17

The Fall—1291

In our last lecture, we examined the Shepherds' Crusades of 1251 and 1320 and the crusades against the Hohenstaufen dynasty from 1239 through 1268, when the last Hohenstaufen king of Germany was defeated and executed. Even as the crusades against the Hohenstaufen were going on, the situation in the Holy Land continued to deteriorate, at least from the crusader point of view, and neither the Seventh nor the Eighth Crusades brought much in the way of substantive help. As a result, by the end of the 13th century, the Crusader States were gone. In this lecture, we will examine how that came to pass.

The War of Saint Sabas

- ◆ By 1250, the Crusader States were not in good shape. As we have seen, the kingdom of Jerusalem had been defeated at the Battle of La Forbie in 1244, which came on the heels of 15 years of sporadic fighting between Hohenstaufen officials and much of the local nobility. In 1256, the Crusader States became embroiled in the War of Saint Sabas, which pitted Venice against Genoa.
- ◆ Well before the War of Saint Sabas, commercial rivalry among Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians occasioned violence in the towns of the Crusader States and across the Mediterranean. Italian merchants in the Crusader States always coveted waterfront property and tried to deny access to this property to their rivals.
- ◆ In Acre, the Venetian and Genoese quarters were separated by a neutral section of town belonging to a monastery called Saint Sabas. The Venetians and the Genoese each petitioned the papacy to be granted possession of the monastery and its territory, and in a breakdown of papal recordkeeping, each secured the papal grant it was seeking. When the Genoese and Venetians confronted each other with their grants, war erupted.
- ◆ The Genoese, assisted by some local nobles, besieged the Venetian quarter of Acre; the Venetians received reinforcements from Venice and, in turn, besieged the Genoese in their quarter. By 1257, virtually the whole population of the Crusader States was choosing sides.
- ◆ The most intense fighting took place between 1256 and 1260, and the war dragged on until 1270. Many of Acre's defensive towers and some sections of the city were destroyed.
- ◆ Such events as the War of Saint Sabas compounded broader structural problems that had always faced the Crusader States. The greatest problem was demographic: The Franks who settled in the East were just not that numerous. In addition, turnover within the Crusader States' nobility was high because so many lineages were extinguished in battle, and finding relatives in Europe willing to take up risky positions in the East was not easy.

- ◆ Further, the absence of conquests following the First Crusade, with the exception of Ascalon and the surrounding region in the 1150s, meant that the Crusader States had to live off existing resources rather than acquire additional ones. Defensive battles were not nearly as profitable as offensive battles. As a result, during the 12th and 13th centuries, noble families increasingly died out, went bankrupt, or gave up on trying to make a go of it in Outremer.
- ◆ More and more, nobles and their rulers sold or donated territories and castles to the military orders, whose landholdings in Europe gave them the financial resources to absorb these economically losing propositions. But the further empowerment of the military orders was a double-edged sword; after all, during the War of Saint Sabas, they had fought on opposite sides.

The Mongols and the Mamluks

- ◆ In the 1240s and 1250s, crusaders thought that perhaps they had found a solution to their problems: the Mongols.
- ◆ Around 1200, various Mongol tribes had united under the leadership of Genghis Khan and embarked on a series of conquests stretching from Korea and China through eastern Europe.



- ◆ In 1241, Mongols swept through Poland and the Ukraine and defeated a German army. Europe then caught one of the luckiest breaks in history: Genghis Khan's son Ogadai, now leader of the Mongols, died, and the Mongols returned home, sparing Europe. After the death of Ogadai, the Mongols took a decade off but resumed their conquests in 1251.
- ◆ During the Seventh Crusade, Louis IX entertained hopes that the Mongols could be converted to Christianity and would then enter into an alliance against the Ayyubids. In response to diplomatic overtures, the Mongols declined to convert and tried to exact tribute from Louis.
- ◆ When the Mongols captured Baghdad in 1258 and killed the last Abbasid caliph, the Franks did not mind, but when the Mongols captured Muslim Damascus in 1259 and Aleppo in 1260, the Franks became concerned; the Mongols were rolling toward the kingdom of Jerusalem.
- ◆ The Mamluks of Egypt were also concerned, and in 1260, they proposed an alliance with the Franks against the Mongols. Fearing both the Mamluks and the Mongols, the kingdom of Jerusalem declined to ally with the Mamluks, but it agreed to allow the Mamluks free passage through the kingdom of Jerusalem so that they could fight the Mongols.
- ◆ In 1260, a Mamluk army entered Galilee and, at the Battle of Ain Jalut, defeated the Mongols, who withdrew to present-day Iran and Iraq. But as a result of Ain Jalut, the Mamluks gained control of much of Palestine and Syria. Just as Saladin had gained control of Syrian territory and encircled the Crusader States, now the Mamluks had done the same.
- ◆ Between 1260 and 1277, Baibars, the Mamluk victor at Ain Jalut and the new sultan of Egypt, came close to driving the Franks into the sea. He took the town of Arsuf in 1265 and attacked the outskirts of Acre in 1266. In 1268, Baibars captured Antioch and massacred or enslaved its Christian inhabitants. By the time of the leader's death in 1277, the kingdom of Jerusalem had lost all of its inland territory to Baibars. In 1289, Baibars's successor, Kalavun, captured Tripoli, massacring its inhabitants and razing the city, thereby putting an end to the third of the four Crusader States.

The Fall of Acre and Tyre

- ◆ If ever there was a time for an eastern crusade, now was it. The kingdom of Jerusalem made a truce with the Mamluks, hoping to buy time for the organization of such a crusade. Its calls for help were heeded, but organizing a major expedition required years of preparation. The only people who could move quickly in defense of the kingdom were peasants and urban laborers.
- ◆ In 1290, an unnumbered and popular crusade consisting of perhaps some 2,000 to 3,000 peasants and artisans set out from northern Italy for Acre. Once at Acre, they proved difficult to control; in August 1290, they attacked and killed Muslim merchants operating in Acre and Muslim peasants outside.
 - ◇ Templars and Hospitallers at Acre, knowing what the consequences would be, intervened to cut short the crusaders' killing, but the damage had been done.
 - ◇ Kalavun and the Mamluks demanded that the king of Jerusalem hand the crusaders over to them for punishment. Christian authorities in Acre apologized for what the crusaders had done, but they would not hand the crusaders over—to do so would likely result in no further assistance from the West.
- ◆ In April 1291, the Mamluks besieged Acre, breaching its defenses on May 18. The Franks and crusaders made a mad dash for the harbor, but many were killed or enslaved. A Templar citadel held on for another 10 days, but its walls were undermined. The Templars, having been promised their lives, surrendered and were promptly executed.
- ◆ The one major town remaining in Frankish hands, Tyre, surrendered in May 1291, a month after Acre fell. By the end of August, the Mamluks had mopped up a few inland castles held by Franks.

The End of Eastern Crusading

- ◆ There would be no more crusades aiming directly at the conquest of Jerusalem after the fall of the Crusader States, although not for a lack of thinking about such a conquest. The late 13th and the 14th centuries were the great age of the crusading treatise, in which authors theorized about what form such expeditions should take in the future.
- ◆ On a few occasions in the 14th century, it looked as though there might be a serious attempt to launch another crusade into the eastern Mediterranean.
 - ◆ In 1313, the kings of France and of England each took up the cross, but the French king died the next year. In the 1330s, another French king took up the cross and made serious plans for an eastern crusade but cancelled the project in 1336.
 - ◆ In 1365, King Peter of Cyprus led an expedition of perhaps some 10,000 crusaders in an attack on the Egyptian port of Alexandria. The crusade took Alexandria quickly but then evacuated it 6 days later, and the crusade disintegrated afterward.
- ◆ The Crusader States had provided allies, staging areas, and places to retreat. Their loss in 1291 would increase the difficulties for any future crusaders in the East.
- ◆ The temptation to use crusades to deal with Europe's internal problems, both political and religious, instead of to capture Jerusalem, also proved too strong. Much of the crusading that was actually done in the 14th and 15th centuries was carried out against heretics and papal political enemies.
- ◆ Finally, there were no more major expeditions to the East because such expeditions had become so expensive, so difficult to organize and manage, that even kings who had taken up the cross could not quite bring themselves to follow through on their vows. Going on crusade meant incurring enormous expense for an uncertain outcome and leaving one's kingdom vulnerable to forces of revolt or covetous neighbors.

- ◆ The dying out of crusading within Europe was a slower process because such crusades were not as taxing on participants and the crusades' goals sometimes overlapped with the aims of secular rulers. Crusading still took place in the 16th century, but it ultimately faded out, partly because secular royal authority had grown so strong in Europe that kings were not willing to allow spiritual authorities to determine when wars should be fought. The last formal crusade is generally reckoned to have been the Morean War, from 1684 to 1699, which pitted Venice and its allies against the Ottoman Turks.

Reading

Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*.

Leopold, *How to Recover the Holy Land*.

Schein, *Fideles crucis*.

Thorau, *The Lion of Egypt*.

Questions

- 1 The Mamluks, not Saladin, were the ones to drive the Franks into the sea. Was that because of the Mamluks' willingness to wage war in a much more severe manner than Saladin did, or was it because the Mamluks faced an easier task and a more favorable historical situation than Saladin faced?
- 2 Based on what you now know about the events of the crusades, do you agree or disagree with Sir Steven Runciman's famous assessment: "In the long sequence of interaction and fusion between Orient and Occident out of which our civilization has grown, the Crusades were a tragic and destructive episode. ... There was so much courage and so little honor, so much devotion and so little understanding. High ideals were besmirched by cruelty and greed, enterprise and endurance by a blind and narrow self-righteousness"? In the next seven thematic lectures, consider whether what you learn changes your opinion of Runciman's assessment.



18

The Crusades and Their Critics

In our last lecture, we saw the fall of the last of the Crusader States in 1291. None of the crusades launched after 1291 ever set foot on Syrian or Palestinian territory that had once belonged to the four Crusader States. The end of the Crusader States, therefore, marks the end of an era and an opportune moment to take stock of the crusades and their consequences. We will begin to do so with a consideration of medieval criticism leveled at crusading or, more commonly, at specific crusades or crusading institutions.

Criticism of the Crusades

- ◆ Instances of blanket condemnation of all crusading were rare. Generally, such criticisms centered on the question of whether crusading and its violence violated the moral precepts of Christianity.
 - ◆ According to the French theologian Peter Comestor (d. 1179), he once received a question from the patriarch of Jerusalem about whether crusading was permissible in light of the biblical command “Thou shalt not kill.” In response, Peter told the patriarch to “act in a manly way, be composed, and shed the blood of Christ’s enemies.”
 - ◆ Roger Bacon (d. 1292), a theologian, an early specialist in the field of optics, and a member of the Franciscan Order, abhorred the bloodshed of the crusades, but he also favored the recovery of the Holy Land. He tried to reconcile these two impulses with a proposition to build 12 giant mirrors in the East; Christians could then use these mirrors and the sun’s rays to start fires among enemy Muslim armies and, thereby, drive the Muslims away and secure Jerusalem without killing anyone.
- ◆ More common than implicit or explicit rejection of all crusading was criticism of individual crusades that, to a given author’s mind, did not match the crusading ideal. Such criticism tended to flow most easily when the crusade in question had been a failure.



- ◆ We have already seen how the Second Crusade's failure led to recrimination in Europe, but there were even earlier examples. Writing in the early 12th century, the English author Orderic Vitalis thought that the defeat of Bohemond's crusade against the Byzantine Empire in 1107 and 1108 was proof that God had not approved of the expedition.
- ◆ Some chroniclers of the First Crusade took the defeat of the People's Crusade as evidence that God had not approved of it either and had permitted its annihilation as punishment for the participants' sins.
- ◆ But some successful crusades, too, came in for condemnation. That was especially the case in the 13th century with the Albigensian Crusade and the crusades against the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Much of this criticism came from wandering poets and singers called troubadours or minnesingers. Although their preferred genre was the vernacular love song, they sometimes sang songs of a moral or political nature. Such songs often celebrated crusades to the East but criticized those carried out in Europe.



- ◆ For example, the troubadour Guilhem Figueira alleged that the indulgences issued to those who crusaded against the Hohenstaufen were invalid. The papacy was condemning to hell the souls of those who accepted such indulgences, thinking them to be legitimate.

- ◆ The German minnesinger Walther von der Vogelweide charged that the crusades against the Hohenstaufen diverted valuable resources away from the defense of the Holy Land. German crusaders who wanted to go to the Holy Land could not do so because they had to remain home and defend their territories against crusader depredation.
- ◆ Criticism of crusading sometimes focused on specific crusading institutions. Crusading taxes first became prominent with the levying of the Saladin tithe during the Third Crusade; thereafter, the levying of taxes for crusades became routine—and much resented.
 - ◆ Every crusading tax, royal and papal, generated avoidance and protests, and often there were good reasons for the protests. Sometimes, the promised crusades never materialized, while those who had collected the crusading taxes pocketed the money.
 - ◆ Some protests came from surprising quarters. In response to one of Innocent III's attempts to levy a papal crusading tax, a Cistercian monk named Rainier visited Innocent and told him that he had had a vision in which the Virgin Mary announced that the Cistercians should enjoy tax-exempt status with regard to the pope's crusading levy.
- ◆ It's difficult to determine the extent of such criticism. To commit criticism of crusading to writing was to invite suspicion of heresy. Medieval inquisitors were instructed to ask individuals what they thought of the crusades. An unfavorable answer was taken as a sign that the person asked was probably a heretic.

Responses to Criticism

- ◆ Crusade enthusiasts were sufficiently worried by criticism to take action against it. This was especially evident at the Second Council of Lyon, convened by the pope and held in 1274, just 4 years after the death of Louis IX on the Eighth Crusade. One of the items on the council's agenda was a general consideration of the crusades; that is, an analysis of the reasons for the repeated failures of eastern crusades.

- ◆ Some of those who submitted plans felt that any assessment of the crusades had to begin with a rebuttal of the objections being raised against them. One such report, submitted by Humbert of Romans in a work called the *Opus tripartitum*, claimed that there were seven objections against the crusades in circulation at the time.
 - ◆ Some criticized the crusades on practical grounds. Because so few Europeans had been willing to settle as colonists in the Crusader States, the entire enterprise was hopeless.
 - ◆ Critics also alleged that the crusades condemned unbelievers to hell and that crusading stirred up resentment against Christianity among unbelievers.
 - ◆ The last objection combined both practical and moral considerations: Opponents claimed that “it does not appear to be God’s will that Christians should proceed against Saracens in this way, because of the misfortunes which God has allowed and is allowing to happen to the Christians engaged in this business.” This criticism—that Christian victory did not seem to be in accordance with God’s will—cut right to the heart of the crusading movement. The battle cry of the First Crusade had been *Deus lo volt*, “God wills it.”
- ◆ Such criticism, however, seems not to have had much impact on the course of crusading, which continued to be popular. The absence of large-scale crusades to the East after the lifetime of Louis IX had more to do with the unwillingness of those who called and led such crusades than with widespread disillusion about crusading per se.

Suppression of the Templars

- ◆ In one respect, though, criticism had a noticeable impact; it paved the way for one of the more controversial episodes in medieval history: the suppression of the Templar Order. The Templars and all military orders always had critics, both because they were an innovation and because of their independence.

- ◆ Some critics put their thoughts in writing. The monk Isaac of l'Étoile, writing around the middle of the 12th century, charged that the Templars represented not a new knighthood but, as Isaac put it, “a new monstrosity.”
- ◆ Later in the 12th century, the English author Walter Map denounced the Templars by citing the incident in the garden of Gethsemane, in which Jesus had commanded Simon Peter to put down his sword rather than use it in Jesus's defense.
- ◆ Still, for much of the 12th century, criticism of the Templars and military orders remained a fringe phenomenon. The loss of Jerusalem, though, was a disastrous blow to the prestige of the military orders, especially the Templars. Criticism started to come from high places. In 1235, Pope Gregory IX issued a general reprimand of all military orders, writing that they were more concerned with increasing their own holdings than with regaining from “the infidel the lands consecrated by the blood of Christ.”
- ◆ Even before the final collapse of the Crusader States, the view that the military orders needed to be reformed had become commonplace in medieval Europe, and various plans for reforming the military orders circulated; some were discussed at the Council of Lyon in 1274.
- ◆ One idea that seemed to have some merit was a consolidation of all the military orders into a single order. That would end the rivalries, the lack of cooperation, and the wasteful competition among them, and the new single order would have all the resources necessary to take back and protect Jerusalem. But the consolidation never took place.
- ◆ In the opening decade of the 14th century, the crusade theoretician Pierre Dubois advocated the confiscation of all the military orders' property. They had not used it effectively; therefore, they should be made to forfeit it so that the property could be used to finance future crusades.

- ◆ On August 13, 1307, the Templars in France were suddenly arrested on the orders of Philip IV, the king of France. Philip charged the Templars with blasphemy, homosexuality, heresy, and idolatry. He sequestered Templar property and demanded that the pope order other Christian rulers to make similar arrests.
- ◆ French inquisitors, acting at royal behest, interrogated and tortured the arrested Templars, most of whom were not knights but support personnel and elderly retirees. The arrested French Templars, including the Grand Master, confessed to many of the charges against them. Philip IV pointed to these confessions as evidence of Templar guilt.
- ◆ It's impossible to know whether or not Philip actually believed the accusations against the Templars. He had been involved in a bitter dispute with the papacy and may have arrested the Templars, who were under papal jurisdiction, in an act of defiance.
- ◆ Although Philip seems to have expected the Templar matter to reach a quick resolution, the affair dragged on for most of a decade. The pope ordered the arrest of the Templars throughout Europe, but kings were not quick to carry out the orders. Further, many Templars maintained their innocence even under torture, and some recanted their initial confessions of guilt, at the cost of burning at the stake.
- ◆ Finally, in 1312, Pope Clement V ordered the suppression of the Order of the Temple. The remaining Templars, with the exception of the order's leaders, were to be transferred to other religious orders. In 1314, the Grand Master of the Templars and one other high Templar official were burned at the stake on an island in the middle of the Seine River.



- ♦ Almost from the moment of the crusades' inception, there were critics. For the most part, such criticism had little impact, but mounting criticism of the military orders, especially the Templars, set the stage for the orders' rapid and brutal suppression between 1307 and 1312. The Templars outlived the kingdom of Jerusalem, which had given birth to the order, by only about two decades.

Reading

Barber, *The Trial of the Templars*.

Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusades, 1216–1307*.

Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading, 1094–1274*.

Questions

- 1 Which is the more surprising to you: that there were contemporary critics of the crusades or that there were not more contemporary critics of the crusade?
- 2 If crusading criticism indeed had little impact on the actual course of crusading, why study the critics at all?



19

War and Travel— The Experience of Crusading



Getting at the experiences of crusaders poses serious problems for historians. Crusaders who wrote chronicles almost always did so years if not decades after the end of their crusades. The fact that they knew how the crusade turned out affected how they described it and their decisions about what material to include and exclude. Further, every chronicler had a reason for writing. Sometimes, it was to glorify a crusade or an individual crusader. Sometimes, it was to exculpate a crusade and shift the blame for its outcome elsewhere. Of course, experiences also varied for different crusades and different crusaders. Nonetheless, it is possible to build up a composite picture of crusading, as we will do in this lecture.



Preparing for a Crusade

- ◆ It is safe to say that crusading was, for most crusaders, occasionally exhilarating but often fearful and miserable. Poorer crusaders did not have to make extensive financial arrangements before departure because they counted on the charity of others to support them on their journey. Other crusaders, though, spent months and years collecting the money they would need, at times raising sums equal to as much as five times their annual income.
- ◆ Acquiring this much money required wealthier crusaders to mortgage and sell off property. The result of dumping so much property on the market at one time was to depress prices and create a buyer's market; even so, there were not many buyers with the financial resources to acquire these properties.
 - ◆ Often, the buyer was a local bishop, church, or monastery. When Godfrey of Bouillon sold Bouillon to the bishop of Liège, the bishop raised the necessary funds by stripping gold off the reliquary that held the relics of Saint Lambert, the patron saint of Liège.
 - ◆ Not everyone thought the bishop's actions were appropriate, but the bishop had a response: The castles that he and others bought had served as bases for knightly raids and fighting. By acquiring the castles, the bishops were protecting people from knights.

- ◆ As mechanisms of crusading taxation developed in the late 12th and 13th centuries, the financial pressures on crusaders were not quite so severe, but they were always substantial.
- ◆ There was more to preparation for a crusade than raising money. Even as early as the First Crusade, departing crusaders attempted to settle feuds and disputes with their neighbors, made devotional visits to local shrines and churches, and drew up their wills and made arrangements for the possibility that they would not return.
- ◆ The decision to go on crusade sometimes generated new disputes because families did not always support the crusader's departure. For a male noble to leave Europe for years on end and to leave his wife to defend his estates against the encroachments of nobles who had not gone on crusade was no easy matter. Pope Innocent III ruled that the objections of a wife could not prevent a crusader from taking up the cross.

Finances on Crusade

- ◆ No matter how much money a crusader collected, it was rarely enough. Crusade chroniclers, such as Odo of Deuil, who served as chaplain to Louis VII during the Second Crusade, sometimes fixated on exchange rates and expenses. Such expenses are not difficult to explain: The arrival of thousands of crusaders in a region or town inevitably sent prices for goods skyrocketing.
- ◆ Being pilgrims, crusaders expected hospitality; they resented being charged high prices for food and goods.
- ◆ The extended pauses, lasting for months on end, that punctuated crusades exacerbated the situation. Nobles burned through their money quickly, both because they had their own retinues to support and because they supported other crusaders whose money ran out. When those nobles ran out of funds, they turned to kings, if there were any, to support them.
- ◆ Further, money was helpful only if there were goods to be bought, but when the crusaders passed into enemy territory, there were sometimes no goods to be had, either through purchase or through forage and requisition. As a result, crusaders encountered hunger and starvation.

- ◆ Starvation was perhaps worst during the earliest crusades, when crusaders traveled overland. They sometimes cut their horses in order to consume their blood or ate their horses outright.
- ◆ During the First Crusade, some crusaders resorted to cannibalism, although they ate only defeated enemies, not fellow crusaders.
- ◆ To alleviate provisioning problems, crusaders tended to travel in different bands and to stagger their marches, but that generated morale problems. When crusaders marched along roads already traversed by other crusaders, the sight of their fellows' corpses and bones lying by the wayside was sobering.
- ◆ Travel by sea was faster than marching overland, but sea travel required cash up front, and crusaders from the European interior had a deep fear of sea travel, a fear shared by those against whom the crusaders fought. The switch from overland marching to sea travel during the Third Crusade also made it easier for crusade leaders to deceive their fellow crusaders and divert crusades to unexpected destinations, such as Egypt, the Byzantine Empire, and Tunis.

Crusaders in Battle

- ◆ Of course, crusading did not just involve travel; it also involved fighting.
- ◆ Even so, newly arrived crusaders were not prepared for the sorts of battles in which they found themselves. Their Turkish and Arab opponents fought in unfamiliar ways; although they used lances and swords, as Western knights did, they used them as a last resort rather than as weapons of choice.
- ◆ Crusading chroniclers marveled at how fast and mobile the lightly armored Turks and Arabs were and that they were able to fire arrows with some accuracy from moving horses. A typical battle would consist of Turks and Arabs swarming around crusaders from a distance and then pouring fire into their opponents' ranks. Sometimes they would ride toward crusaders, wheel around, and then fire backward as they moved away from their targets.

- ◆ When Turks and Arabs attacked in this manner, they were trying to kill the crusaders' horses, which were not easily replaced. They were also trying to goad the crusaders into breaking ranks and making uncoordinated charges. Those who charged too early would then be cut off from the rest and killed.
- ◆ The crusaders tried to hold together despite the missile fire, keeping their knights behind their infantry and protecting their horses. They then tried to maneuver their Turkish and Arab attackers into a location where the crusaders could charge them effectively and use their heavily armored cavalry to good effect. Such tactics required discipline and patience, which some crusaders lacked.
- ◆ From the First Crusade on, the more candid chroniclers acknowledged that such unfamiliar warfare frightened them. Fulcher of Chartres recalled that he and others huddled together like sheep as the Turks circled around them. Joinville wrote of his companions being cut down or suffering grievous wounds.
- ◆ The crusaders' unfamiliarity with their enemy meant that each newly arrived group tended to make the same mistakes as its predecessors. Despite warnings, new crusaders often fell victim to the feigned retreat of Turks and Arabs.
- ◆ Not all fighting consisted of battles in open territories. In fact, sieges of castles, towns, and cities tended to be more important than pitched battles during the crusades. But sieging could easily be as much of a horror to the besiegers as the besieged.
- ◆ Foraging for a besieging army could be unrewarding or even impossible. Often, the defenders had taken all the food in the vicinity and plugged up or poisoned wells; only a steady stream of supplies delivered from outside could allow a siege to be sustained.
- ◆ Illness, a problem at all times, was especially difficult during periods when the crusaders were stationary and supplies were low.

Crusaders' Mindset

- ◆ The experience of crusading sometimes proved to be too much for crusaders. Many cut their crusades short, although doing so could make them the targets of ridicule. Stephen of Blois went on the First Crusade, but he abandoned the crusade at Antioch and returned home, only to be disparaged by his neighbors and even his wife for failing to see the crusade through to the end.
- ◆ Other crusaders also saw their courage fail them. As the Seventh Crusade was overrun, Joinville and his surviving companions boarded a boat and made it into the middle of the Nile River, where they saw their fellow crusaders being killed on shore. Rather than returning to fight and dying as martyrs, Joinville and his companions chose to surrender, falsely claiming that Joinville was the cousin of the king of France in the hope that they would be taken for ransom rather than killed outright.
- ◆ If all this sounds unpleasant, it was, but we should temper that impression with a few observations that point in a different direction.
 - ◆ First, during their crusades, crusaders sometimes had a sense of belonging to something unique and much larger than themselves. Most crusaders were volunteers, proud of their service, and amazed at the degree of transnational cooperation achieved in their ranks, despite the sometimes fractious relations among those of different ethnicities.
 - ◆ Second, interspersed among the battles and sieges were episodes of fraternization that seem strange to us today. In one instance, a Frankish knight visited an Arab camp to inquire how a lance could pierce the layers of a knight's coat of mail. It's interesting to us that the knight visited the camp to pay his respects and was well received. During the siege of Acre in the Third Crusade, lethal raids and skirmishes took place alongside dinner invitations and parties between crusaders and Arabs.

- ◆ Finally, crusaders who traveled to the East sometimes evinced a genuine interest in what they saw and learned there. Those crusaders who passed through Constantinople, for example, marveled at its size. Joinville found the Nile River delta, the Mamluks, the Shi'a sect of the Assassins, and the Bedouin fascinating.
- ◆ The experience of crusading defies simple classification. To go on crusade was to experience impoverishment, hunger, and fright. At the same time, those who went on crusade also felt a sense of solidarity different than any they had felt before, and the crusade could be as mind-opening as it was life-ending. Crusaders came into contact with new places and people, and they came away changed as a result.

Reading

Bull et al., eds., *The Experience of Crusading*.

Edington and Lambert, eds., *Gendering the Crusades*.

Housley, *Fighting for the Cross*.

Maier, *Preaching the Crusade*.

———, “The Roles of Women in the Crusade Movement.”

Questions

- 1 Which is more surprising to you: that so many people went crusading or that more people did not go crusading?
- 2 Which aspect of the crusading experience do you imagine to have come as the biggest surprise to crusaders?



20

Life in the Crusader East

In our last lecture, we examined the experience of crusading. Crusaders experienced financial problems, illness, bafflement, and fear; they also experienced camaraderie and curiosity about the places and people they saw. In this lecture, we will examine the experience of those who settled and lived in the Crusader States during their two centuries of existence, and we will consider the question of whether the crusades ought to be considered a colonial enterprise.

Attitudes toward the Pullani

- ◆ Just as the crusades themselves were a multinational enterprise, so, too, was the settlement of the Crusader States. Over time, however, the Europeans who settled in the Crusader States developed a collective identity that set them apart from the inhabitants of their native kingdoms. The crusaders and their descendants who lived in the East came to be known to other Europeans as the *pullani*.
- ◆ Europeans did not think highly of the *pullani*. In the early 13th century, a cleric and crusade enthusiast named James of Vitry was appointed as bishop of Acre. James had been a crusade preacher, and he was initially excited about being appointed as a bishop in the Holy Land. Overall, though, his experiences in the Crusader States were disappointing, and he became a sharp critic of the *pullani*. According to James, the *pullani* also resented newly arrived Western crusaders.
- ◆ James of Vitry was not the only one who perceived a difference between those who had long lived in the crusader East and newly arrived crusaders. So, too, did Usamah ibn Munqidh, a 12th-century Arab who traveled in the Crusader States, sometimes as an ambassador.
 - ◆ On one level, Usamah was scornful of all Westerners. He thought their medical and legal practices, such as trial by battle, backward. He also found the Frankish practice of not wearing towels in public baths and of allowing wives to converse with men who were not their husbands most unseemly.
 - ◆ Although Usamah found all Franks strange and inferior, he nonetheless became friends with some of them, including one knight and pilgrim who made Usamah a startling offer: When the knight's pilgrimage was over, he asked to take Usamah's 14-year-old son back with him to France, where the boy could learn to be a Western knight.
 - ◆ In general, Usamah preferred Franks who had lived in the East for a while. He wrote: "Among the Franks are those who have become acclimatized and have associated long with the Moslems. These are much better than the recent comers from the Frankish lands. But they constitute the exception and cannot be treated as a rule."

- ◆ Franks in the East also sometimes protected Muslims against newly arrived Westerners, as Usamah himself experienced in Jerusalem. When a newly arrived Frank in Jerusalem tried to convince Usamah that he was facing the wrong direction while he prayed, local Templars hustled off the new arrival and apologized to Usamah for his behavior.

Tension in the Crusader States

- ◆ Alongside these episodes of friendship and tolerance, we must take into account other episodes indicating that the Crusader States could also be places where co-residence led to tension and physical danger. Usamah recalls, for instance, a mother-son team of serial killers; they were Muslims who invited Franks to dinner, only to poison them.
- ◆ Both Franks and indigenous populations resided in the Crusader States, but they were not on equal social or legal footing.
 - ◆ The laws of the kingdom of Jerusalem, as compiled in the 13th century, distinguished residents on the basis of religion and ethnicity: There were residents who were obedient to Rome, meaning Catholics, and residents who were not obedient to Rome, meaning most Eastern Christians, Jews, and Muslims.
 - ◆ The second group had to pay a special head tax as a sign of their subservience; those belonging to the second group could be enslaved, could not hold fiefs, and could not serve in the royal government of the kingdom of Jerusalem.
 - ◆ One exception to this lumping together of Eastern Christians, Jews, and Muslims concerned residence in Jerusalem; Eastern Christians could live there legally, but Jews and Muslims could not, although the law was not actually enforced.
- ◆ The neat legal division between those of Roman obedience and all others might have expressed an ideal vision of how the Crusader States were supposed to be in the 13th century rather than a description of how they actually were. It's also possible that matters had been different in the 12th century, soon after the First Crusade.

- ◆ At that time, one finds in the Crusader States knights and even a royal officeholder whose names indicate that they were Armenians and indigenous residents rather than Franks.
- ◆ It's not certain, however, whether those 12th-century Armenians and other indigenous residents retained their own religion or whether they had converted to Catholicism.
- ◆ Theoretically, those who converted to Catholicism and accepted papal supremacy escaped legal restrictions; in practice, conversions were so few that the disabilities applied to the local population almost in its entirety.
- ◆ Because the foundation of the Crusader States led to the establishment of societies in which the ruling class differed from the local population in terms of language, religion, and ethnic composition, one can, to that extent, describe these societies as colonial.
- ◆ Similarly, much of the ruling class lived off the labor of the indigenous population, in the form of rents and rights of lordship; that, too, looks rather like colonialism.

Eastern Christianity

- ◆ Despite the legal lumping of non-Catholics into a single category, settlement in the East required Franks to come to grips with the great religious pluralism of Outremer, especially the many types of Christians residing there.
- ◆ There is no way of knowing how many Franks resided in the Crusader States at any given time, but Frankish settlement in the countryside was limited. As a result, most villages experienced little if any change following the First Crusade. Muslim and Eastern Christian village officials continued to manage local affairs as they already had been doing.



Crusading as Colonialism

- ◆ If the Crusader States can fairly be described as developing colonial societies, we must keep in mind that the eastern crusades were, in many respects, very different from later colonial ventures in the Americas, Asia, and Africa.
 - ◆ Admittedly, some of that later colonial expansion was improvised and sometimes even accidental, but not as improvised and accidental as the foundation of the Crusader States was. Those who participated in the First Crusade seem to have set out with the intention of returning everything they conquered, including Jerusalem, to the Byzantine Empire.
 - ◆ Only after Byzantine-crusader cooperation had broken down during the First Crusade did crusaders decide to disregard Byzantine claims and establish their own states.
- ◆ The internationalism of the crusades and the Crusader States also stands in stark contrast to the very national orientation of later European colonialism. The kingdom of Jerusalem was not the responsibility of any single European kingdom; it was a freestanding kingdom whose protection was the responsibility of all Christendom.

- ◆ In addition, the centrality of Jerusalem, of capturing it and of holding it, made the eastern crusades rather different from what would happen during later periods of European colonialism. The kingdom of Jerusalem was not established to provide economic benefits to any European kingdom or to Europe as a whole. It was established to keep Jerusalem under Christian rule, and even such episodes as the invasion of Egypt during the Fifth and Seventh Crusades were undertaken with an eye toward making the conquest of Jerusalem possible.
- ◆ A final difference sets the crusader East apart from some later episodes of European colonialism: the lack of any significant epidemiological or technological advantage for the Europeans.
 - ◆ Europeans, Byzantines, Arabs, and Turks are all part of the same Eurasian disease pool; they have all been in contact with one another over extended periods of time. The arrival and settlement of crusaders did not unleash devastating pandemics among the indigenous population, as happened in the Americas.
 - ◆ In fact, climate and disease in the Crusader States worked to the advantage of the local population and against European settlers. In contrast, crusaders lacked any military advantage that would compensate for the epidemiological disadvantage.
- ◆ In qualifying the idea that the crusades were a colonial venture, one does not want to go too far in the opposite direction. Italian merchants from Genoa, Pisa, and Venice took advantage of the establishment of the Crusader States to better their economic position and secure commercial advantages. Genoese, Pisan, and Venetian quarters in the cities and towns of the Holy Land took on an increasingly colonial character over time, as the Italian mother cities exercised tighter control over those quarters in the East.
- ◆ Europeans who settled in the Crusader States adopted many of the trappings of Eastern life and became far too Eastern for the tastes of newly arrived Western crusaders but legally distinct from the religiously diverse local population. Relations between *pullani* and locals could be friendly enough, but elements of cultural disapproval and the tension that characterizes all colonial societies never disappeared.

Reading

Friedman, *Encounter between Enemies*.

Kennedy, *Crusader Castles*.

MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East*.

Prawer, *The Crusaders' Kingdom*.

———, *The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*.

Questions

- 1 How does life in the crusader East compare to life in other frontier societies?
- 2 Is the term “colonialism” so ideologically loaded and emotionally fraught that it no longer constitutes a useful category of historical analysis?



Cultural Contact and Exchange

In our last lecture, we examined life in the Crusader States. We saw how relations between Frankish settlers and local peoples could be sometimes cordial and sometimes tense. We saw the legal distinctions drawn between the Catholic Franks who settled in the Crusader States and their descendants, on the one hand, and the non-Catholic indigenous population, on the other hand. But the settlers' legal exclusivity did not prevent them from adopting Eastern lifestyles, and what happened in the crusader East also happened on a broader geographical scale. The crusades continued centuries of episodic, violent conflict between Christians and Muslims, but they also brought these groups into closer contact, fostering cultural curiosity and exchange.

Impact of the Crusades on Cultural Contact

- ◆ Cultural contact and exchange between Europe and the Islamic East certainly did not begin with the crusades, but one can make the case that the crusades facilitated and accelerated the process.
 - ◆ First, through the foundation of the Crusader States, the crusades increased the number of points of contact between the Islamic and Catholic worlds.
 - ◆ Second, the crusades increased curiosity about, and thereby knowledge of, Islam. It was not just crusaders who took an interest in the places where crusaders traveled and the people they met; back in Europe, too, scholars who never went on crusade sought out material so that they could know more about Islam.
- ◆ The eastern crusades knew tremendous success with the First Crusade and repeated failure afterward. Ironically, both success and failure spurred cultural investigation and appropriation.
 - ◆ Success did so because, in the 12th and 13th centuries, medieval Europe lost some of the inferiority complex that had previously made it too fearful of Islamic culture to risk consciously borrowing it.
 - ◆ Defeats after the First Crusade provided additional reasons for the study of Islam. Although some Westerners were content to attribute the repeated failures of eastern crusades to the crusaders' sinfulness and God's inscrutable will, others looked for temporal explanations that focused not on the moral disposition of the losers but on the attributes and circumstances of the winners. That meant historical and scholarly examination of Islam.

Western Understanding of Islam

- ◆ At the time of the First Crusade and for some time beyond, Western ignorance of the most basic tenets of Islam was profound. The biggest sticking point was Westerners' hard-to-shake and analogical belief that Muhammad is to Islam as Jesus is to Christianity and that, therefore, Muslims regard Muhammad as a god whom Muslims must worship.
- ◆ Even among the Western chroniclers of the First Crusade, however, one can find a growing awareness that many Western beliefs about Islam were misconceptions. Guibert of Nogent wrote that Muslims did not consider Muhammad to be God, "as some people think," but just a man through whom divine laws were transmitted. About 1127, the Latin author William of Malmesbury wrote the same thing; Muslims did not worship Muhammad as God but regarded him as the prophet of God.
- ◆ A striking sign of growing Western interest in Islam came in the 1140s, when Peter the Venerable, the French abbot of an important monastery in Cluny, put together a team of scholars working in Spain to prepare translations of documents that would illuminate Islamic religious beliefs.
 - ◆ The project lasted for several years; in the end, the team had translated a number of Arabic documents into Latin, including the Koran itself.
 - ◆ It's true that this translation of the Koran did not circulate widely in the West; it's also true that those who read it were not looking to broaden their appreciation of the spiritual and theological subtleties of Islam but, rather, to attack and refute it.



- ◆ Coming to grips with the specifics of Islam and with the realization that it was something other than a mirror image of Christianity took many centuries. In the 1270s, Humbert of Romans still had to argue against the notion that Muslims worshipped Muhammad. That notion, he claimed, was still widespread among laypeople and clerics. Even wilder mistakes were to be found in the writings of the canon lawyer Hostiensis (d. 1270); he claimed that Muslims were polytheists who rejected the Old and New Testaments entirely.

Western Understanding of the Islamic World

- ◆ If, by the time of the fall of the Crusader States, some Westerners had a better notion of Islam's basic tenets, they also had a better notion of the size of the Islamic world and of what lay beyond it. What they learned was sobering.
- ◆ Even as late as the early 13th century, James of Vitry vastly underestimated the number of Muslims in the world and vastly overestimated the number of Christians. He believed that even in lands under Islamic rule, Christians outnumbered Muslims. Further, he believed that to the east of Persia and somewhere in Asia, there were Christian kingdoms, such as that of the legendary Prester John.

- ◆ By the middle of the 12th century, stories circulated in Europe about the existence of Prester John—reputedly a descendant of one of the three magi who had paid homage to Jesus after his birth—and his distant kingdom. Forged letters purporting to be from Prester John promised assistance to crusaders.



- ◆ But when Western missionaries penetrated into Asia in the 1240s to 1260s, looking for Prester John, they could not find him. Instead, they found that there were many more Muslims in the world than they had imagined. That realization began to call into question the feasibility of Christians ever being able to take and hold Jerusalem.
- ◆ By the late 13th century, medieval Western demographers were estimating that Muslims outnumbered Christians 10 or 20 times over. This sense of Christianity encompassing a smaller part of the world and fewer people than had previously been believed did not, however, lead to the abandonment of Prester John. To account for the fact that Prester John had not been found in Asia, authors increasingly speculated that perhaps he was in Ethiopia or East Africa.

Philosophical Exchange

- ◆ Just as Spain was the place where, thanks to Peter the Venerable's initiative, crucial Muslim religious texts were transmitted to the West, so, too, Spain the place where certain key philosophical texts passed to the West by way of the Arabs.
- ◆ Medieval philosophy from the 12th century onward was based largely on the works of Aristotle, but at the time of the First Crusade, very little of Aristotle's corpus was available in the West. During the 12th and 13th centuries, thanks largely to scholars working in Spain and Sicily, there was a massive effort aimed at translating Aristotle's works into Latin either from Greek or from Arabic.
- ◆ Toledo, captured by Christians in 1085, became a particularly important center for translations. One of the most prolific translators to work at Toledo was Gerard of Cremona (d. 1187), an Italian who translated at least 71 Arabic texts of such works as Aristotle's *Physics*.
- ◆ By the end of the 13th century, most of Aristotle's works were circulating in the West; some had been translated multiple times.

- ◆ Translators at Toledo and elsewhere were also interested in what Arab philosophers had said about Aristotle in various commentaries. Among the Muslim philosophers whose work passed into the West during the 12th and 13th centuries were the 11th-century Persian philosopher Avicenna and the 12th-century Spanish Muslim philosopher Averroës.

Cultural Influence in Everyday Life

- ◆ The trading advantages secured by Italians in the East as a result of the crusader conquests increased the supply of Eastern goods to Europe; this greater access to Eastern goods played a role in the development of the European languages. There are numerous Arabic loan words in English, and these tend to be words for the sorts of items that the crusades made even more available in Europe, such as words for spices (saffron, tarragon), agricultural products (spinach, orange), fabrics (cotton, taffeta), trade (tariff), and drinks (alcohol).
- ◆ Although Europe simply borrowed words along with items, in certain cases, it borrowed ideas and made adjustments to them. One example of this is the windmill. The introduction of windmills presented Westerners with a way to harness a new source of inanimate energy for operating both grain and textile mills.
 - ◆ Windmills first appeared in Persia (modern-day Iran), possibly in the 7th century. From there, they spread eastward into China in the 13th century and appeared in Europe at the end of the 12th century.
 - ◆ Differences in the construction of European and Eastern windmills suggest that Europeans did not simply adopt Eastern designs but adapted the idea from the East to suit local conditions.
- ◆ Europe also borrowed profound mathematical ideas from the East, including Arabic numerals (much easier to use for calculation than Roman numerals), the number zero, and the place-value system.



- ◆ This adoption was slow. Even at the time of the Second Crusade, Arabic numerals were still virtually unknown in the West. That changed around 1150, when Robert of Ketton translated from Arabic a work simply called *Arithmetic* by a Muslim mathematician named al-Khwarizmi.
- ◆ Another such mathematical handbook was written in 1202 by Leonardo Fibonacci, a resident of Pisa who had been born in North Africa. Fibonacci's *Book of Calculation* praised the use of Arabic numerals, and with its problems sets that treated merchants going to Constantinople to sell pearls, Fibonacci's treatise reflected the driving force behind the adoption of Arabic numerals: commerce.

Western Influences in the East

- ◆ If the West was changed to some degree by the crusades and increased contact with the Islamic East, to what extent was the Islamic East similarly transformed? Did cultural contact and exchange work both ways? In general, the answer is that in the Middle Ages, the flow of intellectual interest went only one way. If the crusades brought about a heightened interest in the East among Westerners, the Muslim East remained largely uninterested in the West.
- ◆ This fact is not surprising for the simple reason that at the time of the First Crusade, there was not much to borrow. Given that Jesus and Old Testament figures, such as Abraham, are revered figures within Islam, Muslims knew and understood Christianity and Judaism far better than Western Christians understood Islam at the time of the First Crusade.

- ♦ Muslims were also well aware of their economic and cultural superiority vis-à-vis the West and saw little point in learning more about such an area. Such attitudes predated the crusades and lasted for a long time. A 10th-century Arab geographer named al-Mas'udi wrote of the people of Western Europe that “their bodies are large, their natures gross, their manners harsh, their understanding dull and their tongues heavy.” The crusades did little to change this sort of opinion in the East.

Reading

Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*.

Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*.

Laiou and Mottahedeh, eds., *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*.

Lillie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States, 1096–1204*.

Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land*.

Tolan, *Saracens*.

Questions

- 1 At what point in history did European cultural influence on the Islamic world start to eclipse Islamic cultural influence on Europe?
- 2 If the crusades did indeed foster cultural borrowing and exploration, was that an aberrational and exceptional occurrence in global history, or is that what typically happens during wars? If it was aberrational and exceptional, what was it about the crusades that caused them to develop this unusual historical dynamic?



Crusade and Mission

In our last lecture, we saw that the crusades catalyzed cultural contact and exchange in complicated ways. On the one hand, increasing familiarity with the Islamic world triggered demographic pessimism, as Europeans realized that there were many more Muslims in the world than they originally thought. On the other hand, the success of the First Crusade helped Europeans overcome their fears of being overwhelmed by Islamic culture. In the 12th and 13th centuries, Europeans became more open to studying the Koran and Muslim scholars. Another sign of this confidence is the fact that European missionary efforts among Muslims began during the crusades. In this lecture, we will examine the history of the relationship between crusade and mission.

Emergence of Missionizing in the East

- ◆ Christian proselytism is as old as Christianity itself, based on the belief that Christians should make salvation—achieved through baptism and correct belief—as broadly available as possible. But until the 13th century, Christian missionaries did not generally attempt to convert Muslims, focusing instead on pagans living to their north and east: the Irish, some German populations, Scandinavians, Slavs, and Balts.
- ◆ The primary reason that European missionary activity was confined to northern and eastern pagans for so long was that European Christians possessed greater social, political, and economic complexity than those pagans did, which gave the missionaries the confidence necessary for proselytizing. Missionaries believed that northern and eastern pagans might conceivably want to be more like the missionaries themselves.
- ◆ But because the economic and cultural sophistication of the Islamic world was so much greater than that of Europe, missionaries before the 13th century could not believe that Muslims would want to be more like Christians in any respect.
- ◆ In the matter of missionizing and of harnessing the crusades to further missionizing, popular sentiment was ahead of ecclesiastical leadership.
- ◆ At Clermont in November 1095, Urban II called on Westerners to help Eastern Christians, but according to the surviving accounts of his sermon, he did not say anything about crusaders converting the Muslims of the East.
- ◆ Nonetheless, at a more popular level, military success and crusading were linked. *The Song of Roland*, written down around the time of Urban's call, repeatedly speaks of Christian military victory shattering the confidence of Muslims in their religion and of defeated Muslims converting to Christianity.
- ◆ The Barons' Crusade and the Franks in the first decade after the conquest of Jerusalem demanded that Muslims either convert to Christianity or leave conquered towns and cities.

- ◆ According to Odo of Deuil, the leaders of the French army in the Second Crusade declared that their aim was “to visit the Holy Sepulcher and, by command of the supreme pontiff, wipe out our sins with the blood or conversion of the pagans.” In fact, Pope Eugenius III had commanded no such thing.
- ◆ The First Crusade resulted in only a few Muslim conversions to Christianity. In the aftermath of the crusade, when Europeans began to ponder the proper relationship between crusading and missionizing, some came to the conclusion that the two represented fundamentally different activities that worked to cross purposes.
 - ◆ In his *Summary of the Whole Heresy of the Diabolical Sect of the Saracens*, written in the 1140s, Peter the Venerable emphasized the difference between peaceful persuasion—the approach he uses in his treatise—and the recourse to violence typical of the crusade.
 - ◆ Peter also explains that the love he feels for Muslims is the love that ought to exist between Christians and unbelievers and ought to prevail among all human beings, according to God’s teaching. Implicit in that assertion is the notion that crusading falls afoul of God’s teaching.
 - ◆ On other occasions, Peter wrote differently. For example, before King Louis VII embarked on the Second Crusade, Peter expressed his hope that the king would destroy the Muslims he countered.
- ◆ Whether Peter the Venerable was more a crusading enthusiast or a critic of the crusades is difficult to determine, but he was not alone in claiming that crusading was bad because it would alienate potential converts and, thereby, hinder missionary work. Three 12th-century critics of crusading, Isaac of l’Étoile, Walter Map, and Ralph Niger, all went further than Peter the Venerable in openly decrying the use of violence and espousing the peaceful preaching of the faith as the true Christian approach.

Pioneering Missionaries

- ◆ The pioneers of sustained missionary efforts in the Islamic world were not critics of crusading but, rather, crusading enthusiasts and fellow travelers. This indicates that missionary activity arose not from frustration with the crusades' failures but appreciation for the crusades' accomplishments.
- ◆ One early-13th-century missionary whom we have already met was James of Vitry, the bishop of Acre who was contemptuous of the *pullani* who lived in the Crusader States.
 - ◇ Before becoming bishop of Acre, James had been a successful preacher. When he arrived in the East, he preached to the Eastern Christians, such as the Jacobites, and to Muslims within the Crusader States.
 - ◇ James seems to have wanted to cross the frontier and preach in Islamic territory, but he never did so. Instead, he tried long-distance missionizing; he composed letters exhorting Muslims to convert, had those letters translated into Arabic, and then sent them off. Although nothing came of this postal proselytizing, James's preaching was the first sustained attempt to convert Muslims in the Crusader States.
- ◆ Another pioneering missionary in the East was Francis of Assisi. In 1219, Francis joined the crusaders in Egypt; he secured permission to cross enemy lines and meet with the sultan al-Kamil, whom Francis tried to convert. The sultan gave Francis a hearing but declined to convert and sent Francis back to the crusader camp.



- ◆ In several respects, James of Vitry and Francis of Assisi were quite different. For instance, James had no desire to become a martyr, but it's possible that Francis preached before al-Kamil in the expectation and hope that he would be martyred. Certainly, Francis ran greater risks in the East than James did.
- ◆ Nonetheless, James and Francis had something in common: Neither was a critic of the crusades.
 - ◆ James was an avid supporter of crusading, a crusade preacher before and after going to the East, and a participant in the Fifth Crusade. Francis never seems to have said anything for or against crusading, but the fact that he joined the crusaders during the Fifth Crusade suggests at least a tacit approval of crusading.
 - ◆ Furthermore, both used crusading to further the cause of missionizing. Without the presence of the Fifth Crusade in Egypt, Francis might never have been able to visit al-Kamil or, perhaps, even set foot there. James of Vitry was more explicit about how crusading could help missionizing; he maintained that successful crusades and the establishment of Christian rule would help missionaries to win converts because Muslims who converted would not have to fear revenge by their former coreligionists.
- ◆ Two religious orders, the Franciscans (founded by Francis of Assisi) and the Dominicans, also devoted some of their energy to converting Muslims. Both orders established religious houses in places where there were substantial Muslim populations and instituted language schools where friars could study Arabic.
 - ◆ Most Franciscans and Dominicans preferred to follow James of Vitry's example rather than Francis of Assisi's, preaching to Muslims within Christian territory. Still, the friars were doing something that Christians had not tried to do before: to convert Muslims in substantial numbers.
 - ◆ Even as they pursued this proselytizing, Franciscans and Dominicans were also enthusiastic crusade preachers; indeed, during the 13th century, these two orders assumed the main responsibility for crusade preaching. The Franciscans and Dominicans saw no contradiction or opposition between crusade and mission.

Crusade versus Mission: Resolving the Debate

- ◆ Even as missionary activity among Muslims became more common and more organized in the 13th century, the old debate over the relationship between crusade and mission continued. One person who gave much thought to this relationship was a member of the Franciscans named Ramon Llull (d. 1316).
 - ◆ Llull wrote in Latin, Catalan, and Arabic and established a school for missionaries on the island of Mallorca. He traveled to North Africa three times, and he probably died there, trying to convert Muslims even though he was in his 80s.
 - ◆ Early in his life, Llull preferred preaching to crusading, but as he grew older, he came to view crusading more favorably. By the time he reached his 70s, Llull advocated for missionaries to go to the East and preach Christianity to Muslim rulers. Once they were done preaching, they should inform the Muslim rulers that unless they converted, they would face innumerable crusades until they were destroyed.
- ◆ Others went even further than the elderly Llull in connecting mission and the violence inherent in crusading.
 - ◆ The Franciscan theologian Duns Scotus (d. 1308) argued that rulers in Christian kingdoms had an obligation to forcibly seize Muslim and Jewish children from their parents and have them baptized. He also argued that Christian rulers ought to use violent threats, if not violence itself, to bring about the baptism of parents and other adults.
- ◆ The debate over the proper relationship between missionizing and crusading achieved a degree of resolution during the 13th century, enunciated by a participant in the Fifth Crusade named Oliver of Cologne.
 - ◆ According to Oliver, the Fifth Crusade was justified because Christian missionaries were not able to speak freely before Muslim audiences—insults against Islam were punishable by death. Because of this, crusading became a necessary precondition for preaching; the success of mission depended on the success of the crusade.

- ◆ This notion, that crusading should support missionizing wherever missionaries could not operate freely, became the most broadly accepted interpretation of the relationship between crusade and mission.
- ◆ In the middle of the 13th century, Pope Innocent IV made it the official church position: Non-Christians were not to be forcibly converted; however, those who interfered with Christian preaching invited the launching of crusades against them. The crusades and the conquests that followed would make it possible for Christian missionaries to operate freely.
- ◆ Innocent IV thus reconciled the ideal of conversion as an act of free choice, which had always been the church's teaching, with the popular notion that crusading ought somehow to further the spread of Christianity. He also reconciled the ideal of free choice with the fact that Christianity spread most easily in places under Christian political rule. As for whether Christians were also obliged to admit Muslim preachers to enter Christian lands, Innocent IV answered no, because Muslim preachers taught erroneous beliefs.

Reading

Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*.

Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon*.

Questions

- 1 What role did Christian missionizing play in the European colonization of the Americas and in European imperial expansion at the expense of China and Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries? Was the role that missionizing played in later periods of European expansion different from the role it played during the crusades, and if so, why?
- 2 Why did arguments for the compatibility of crusade and mission win out over arguments opposing that compatibility?



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The Crusades and the Course of History, Part 1

The idea that crusading was acceptable when non-Christian rulers interfered with Christian missionizing was invoked after the crusades to justify Spanish conquests in the Americas. The crusades didn't cause these conquests, but Spanish practice in the Americas was shaped by the experience of the Reconquista, and that, in general, is how the crusades changed history—not by spawning events that would otherwise never have happened but by shaping subsequent events, often in ways contrary to the crusaders' expectations. If there is a lesson to be learned from the crusades, it is to respect the law of unintended consequences. This lecture, on the rise of the Ottoman Turks, and the next lecture, on indulgences, seek to illustrate that point.

Byzantine Imperial Challenges

- ◆ The Byzantine Empire of Nicaea captured Constantinople in 1261. This reacquisition of the empire's capital put an end to the Latin Empire that had existed since the Fourth Crusade took Constantinople in 1204. But for the Byzantine Empire, the legacy of the Fourth Crusade extended well beyond 1261.
 - ◆ The emperor of Nicaea's possession of Constantinople strengthened his claim to be the true Byzantine emperor. However, other Byzantine successor states that had sprung up in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade remained independent for some time. Further, substantial territories in Greece and the southern Balkans remained under the rule of French dynasties, and Greek islands and Crete remained under Venetian rule.
 - ◆ Territorially, the Byzantine Empire was much compromised in 1261, and Constantinople itself was not what it had once been. The sack of Constantinople had drained wealth out of the city, and its population started to decline.
- ◆ The threat that most occupied the Byzantine Empire in the two or three decades after 1261 was the very real possibility of a crusade to reinstate Latin rule in Constantinople. That possibility became even greater with the papacy's final triumph against the Hohenstaufen dynasty in 1268.
 - ◆ The papacy's champion against the Hohenstaufen, Charles of Anjou, was interested in leading an expedition against Constantinople. To forestall such an attack, in 1274, the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII Paleologus sent a representative to the Second Council of Lyon in France; there, the imperial representative swore to accept the union of the Orthodox and Catholic churches. In theory, the schism between Byzantine and Catholic Christianity was over.
 - ◆ However, the emperor's submission touched off furious opposition within the Byzantine Empire. Most of the empire's clergy and inhabitants refused to accept the union, and Michael VIII could not

make good on his promises to the pope, who excommunicated the emperor in 1281. Michael VIII died the next year, and his successor renounced the union.

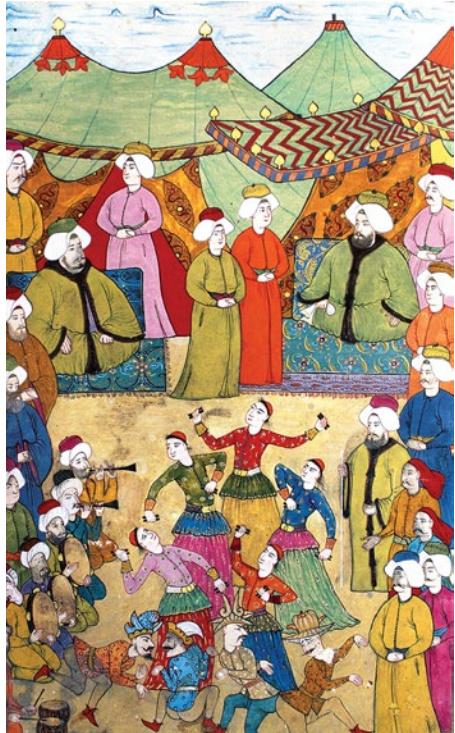
- ◆ Still, Michael VIII's submission lessened the threat of a crusade, at least for a little while, as the pope no longer countenanced an expedition against the Byzantines.
- ◆ Michael VIII also financed Sicilian resistance and Aragonese hostility to Charles of Anjou, which led to the Sicilian Vespers of 1282 and the crown of Aragon's occupation of the island. That, in turn, put an end to Charles of Anjou's dreams of conquering the Byzantine Empire.
- ◆ From Michael VIII onward, the Byzantine Empire focused its efforts on trying to regain lost territory in southeastern Europe, but it did not meet with much success. The restored empire made little if any attempt to take back Asia Minor, notwithstanding the fact that the arrival of the Mongols in the 1250s had upended Asia Minor and led to a proliferation of small Turkish principalities. One of these—the state of the Ottomans—would conquer the Byzantine Empire and much more.

Emergence of the Ottoman Empire

- ◆ The Ottomans take their name from an early member of the Ottoman dynasty, Osman (d. c. 1324). At that time and for many decades afterward, the Ottomans were primarily nomadic pastoralists who roamed and raised herds in northwestern Asia Minor, just along the Byzantine frontier.



- ◆ The Ottomans captured Bursa in 1326, which served for about the next four decades as the capital of the newly emerging Ottoman state, and Nicaea in 1331. The Ottomans also expanded eastward across Asia Minor, subjugating rival Turkish principalities. By 1400, they had taken Asia Minor, with a brief loss of control during the first two decades of the 15th century that did not set them back permanently.
- ◆ What set the Ottomans apart from other Turks in the early 14th century was their location hard against the Byzantine frontier, which created opportunities not available to other Turkish groups. The Ottomans also dealt relatively well with a problem that weakened their Turkish rivals: the problem of succession. They tended not to divide up their state among a late ruler's heirs; instead, one son became the new sultan.
- ◆ The Ottoman Turks first came to Europe in the service of the Byzantines. During a war between two claimants to the Byzantine throne in the 1340s, one claimant brought Ottomans from Asia Minor to southeastern Europe to fight on his behalf. There, the Ottomans fought, from the Byzantine point of view, too well. The Ottomans captured and kept Gallipoli in 1354. In the 1360s, they captured Adrianople in the Balkans, renamed it Edirne, and made it their new capital.



- ◆ The movement of the capital from Asia Minor to southeastern Europe gave some sign of where the Ottomans intended to push forward most forcefully. By the end of the 1370s, they had outstripped the Byzantine Empire to such an extent that the empire became an Ottoman dependency.

Direct Ottoman Rule

- ◆ During the first few decades of Ottoman expansion into southeastern Europe, the Ottomans were not yet looking to create an empire that they themselves would rule but a network of subordinate states ruled by locals. However, those subordinate states often proved uncooperative. As a result, from roughly the 1380s onward, the Ottomans looked to impose direct rule.
- ◆ This new policy entailed further reduction of Byzantine autonomy; the Ottomans captured the Byzantine Empire's few remaining territories in southeastern Europe and sought to capture Constantinople itself. In the 1390s and again in 1422, the Ottomans besieged Constantinople but were unable to take it.
- ◆ As the Ottomans assumed direct rule in southeastern Europe in the later 14th century, they also devised the *devshirme*. The *devshirme* strengthened the Ottomans militarily and, although in a sense punitive, gave local Christian populations a stake in Ottoman success.
 - ◆ This practice required a certain percentage of Christian households to hand over a male youth, typically between the ages of 14 and 17, to Ottoman officials during periodic collections. The selected youths then became imperial slaves; they converted to Islam, were circumcised, learned to speak Turkish, and were given physical and other training for the roles they would henceforth play.
 - ◆ Some of these former Christians were given high positions in the Ottoman administration; most others went into the elite Janissary corps, the Ottomans' most effective fighting force.

- ◆ The Janissaries' military importance and proximity to the sultan made them a potential threat, but as deracinated former Christians drawn from the Slavic population of southeastern Europe, the Janissaries were not likely to ally with other Turks against the Ottomans.

Response to the Ottoman Expansion

- ◆ Faced with the rise of the Ottomans, Byzantine emperors took steps even more drastic than Michael VIII's submission to papal authority in 1274. Now, the emperors themselves traveled to Europe, personally beseeching popes and rulers for assistance. Among others, John VIII traveled to Europe in 1438 and 1439, where he, like Michael VIII, submitted himself and the Orthodox Church to papal authority. As had happened earlier, the bulk of the Byzantine population and clergy refused to accept union with the Catholic Church.
- ◆ It was not just the Orthodox Christians of Byzantium who objected to John VIII's imperial submission to papal authority but also the Orthodox Russians. They considered the Byzantine emperor to have abdicated his leadership of the Orthodox world through his acceptance of Catholic union and Ottoman overlordship. In the mid-15th century, Orthodox Christianity split into Russian and Greek branches.
- ◆ Europe responded to Ottoman expansion and to Byzantine appeals for help with crusades, launched at rather scattered moments; the largest expeditions were launched not in response to Byzantine appeals for help but in response to appeals from Hungary. A few quite small expeditions enjoyed a few small successes, but the largest 14th-century crusading expedition against the Ottoman Turks ended in disastrous defeat.
- ◆ In 1453, the Ottomans besieged Constantinople once again. This time, they had cannons and naval forces superior to those that had been available in the 1420s, along with knowledge gained during earlier sieges.
- ◆ On May 29, Ottoman soldiers forced their way through the city walls. As had happened at Acre in 1291, Constantinople's residents dashed to the harbor, but there were not enough boats to ferry away the city's population.

- ◆ The Byzantine emperor seems to have died during the sack of the city. The Ottomans made Constantinople, or Istanbul, their new capital.
- ◆ Neither Ottoman expansion nor crusades that aimed at checking Ottoman expansion ended in 1453. Despite some successful defenses, Ottoman advance remained the overall trend through the 15th and early 16th centuries.

The Crusades and the Fall of Byzantium

- ◆ It would certainly not be correct to say that the crusades caused the fall of the Byzantine Empire; that was caused by the rise of the Ottoman Turks. Neither did the crusades give rise to the Ottomans. Their rise was due to a combination of geography, policy, and opportunity. However, it would be correct to say that the crusades contributed substantially to the fall of the Byzantine Empire and, thereby, to the rise of the Ottoman Turks.
- ◆ The First Crusade had brought only modest gains to the Byzantines and modest losses to the Turks of Asia. Between the First Crusade and the late 14th century, eastern crusading—with its emphasis on Jerusalem and, as a secondary target, Egypt—brought even fewer gains to the Byzantine Empire and even fewer losses to the Turks of Asia Minor.
- ◆ Most importantly, the Fourth Crusade was very bad for the Byzantine Empire. The sack of Constantinople, followed by nearly two generations of Latin rule, the establishment of the Latin Empire, the division of much of the empire among victorious crusaders, and the emergence of rival Byzantine successor states dealt to the Byzantine Empire a series of reverses from which it never recovered.
- ◆ And without the crusaders' weakening of the Byzantine Empire, it is difficult to see how the Ottoman Turks could have expanded into southeastern Europe as they did. Whatever else Pope Urban II might have said at Clermont in November 1095 when he launched the First Crusade, surely he did not call upon crusaders to pave the way for Turkish expansion to the gates of Vienna, but that is what the crusades helped to bring about.

Reading

Bisaha, *Creating East and West*.

Finkel, *Osman's Dream*.

Harris, *The End of Byzantium*.

Housley, *The Italian Crusades*.

———, *The Later Crusades*.

Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*.

Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium (1261–1453)*.

Questions

- 1 If there had been no crusades, would the Ottoman Empire have assumed the historical form that it did?
- 2 What were the long-term historical consequences of the rise of the Ottoman Empire for southeastern Europe, for the Near East, and for global history?



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The Crusades and the Course of History, Part 2

In the last lecture, we saw how the crusades, through the Fourth Crusade's dismemberment of the Byzantine Empire, facilitated the emergence of the Ottoman Turks. In turn, we saw how the Ottoman Turks brought Turkish and Islamic rule to southeastern Europe in the 14th century and conquered Constantinople and finished off the Byzantine Empire in the 15th century. Ottoman expansion changed the course of Balkan and eastern European history and, thereby, the course of European and world history. But the rise of the Ottomans was not the only unintended consequence of the crusades. In this lecture, we will examine an often overlooked consequence that involves a topic we explored in our first lecture: indulgences.

Indulgence Inflation

- ◆ The plenary indulgence, the remission of all temporal penalties due to sin, provided a substantial spiritual benefit to those who received one. And, for about a century after the First Crusade, the only way to get a plenary indulgence was by going on crusade. The reward was great, but the price was high.
- ◆ Only in rare circumstances was it possible to obtain a plenary indulgence without going on crusade. Crusaders who took vows but were unable to fulfill them could, in some cases, redeem their vows by making a payment theoretically equal to the amount of money they would have spent if they had gone on crusade. The money paid would be used to support other crusaders. Into the early 13th century, ecclesiastical authorities held the line on vow redemption: It was to be done only in exceptional circumstances.
- ◆ In 1213, however, Pope Innocent III initiated a major change in this policy. Instead of making it difficult for people to redeem crusading vows and instead of discouraging those who were unfit for military service from making vows, henceforth, crusading preachers should do the opposite. They should encourage as many people as possible to make crusading vows, and they should make it easy for those who had taken vows to redeem them in return for monetary payment.
 - ◆ In making this decision, Innocent III was trying to solve an old problem: Ever since the People's Crusade of 1096, noncombatants had hamstrung crusader armies and insisted on tagging along because crusading was the only way to get a plenary indulgence.
 - ◆ This new system would increase the effectiveness of crusading armies by ridding them of unwanted members while increasing the financial support for such armies.
- ◆ In theory, the pope's solution was an excellent one, but it also had unintended consequences and generated problems of its own. This new approach made it too easy for people to gain plenary indulgences without going on crusade. As a result, the laity pressured popes and other clerics

for more opportunities to earn indulgences in return for doing less. Within the church, bishops, churches, and shrines also pressured their superiors, seeking the issuance of ever more indulgences.

- ◆ Throughout the 13th through 15th centuries, the number of indulgences in circulation increased.
 - ◆ Some of these were partial indulgences, meaning that they remitted either a specific fraction of the temporal penalties due to sin or remitted a specific amount of time.
 - ◆ The amount of service required to earn a partial or a plenary indulgence decreased, and increasingly, that service had nothing to do with crusading.
 - ◆ Most controversially, the acquisition of indulgences became more a matter of commerce than of service. It looked as though people were being encouraged to buy their way out of penance and purgatory.
- ◆ Technically, the new policy did not involve the selling of indulgences; the person acquiring the indulgence was redeeming a vow, not buying an indulgence. But when the amount of time between the taking and the redeeming of the vow shrank to seconds and when the vow had been taken with no intention of ever fulfilling it, that distinction was hard to maintain.
- ◆ The big break between crusading and the plenary indulgence came in 1300, when the pope declared that to be a Year of Jubilee. All pilgrims who came to Rome in that year and spent a certain amount of time there received a plenary indulgence. The papal grant also decreed that a Jubilee Year would take place every 100 years.
 - ◆ Succeeding popes revised the proclamation to celebrate a Jubilee Year every 50 years and then every 33 years.
 - ◆ When people complained that they could not make it to Rome during a designated year, popes responded by granting the Jubilee indulgence anyway or offering alternatives.

Theology of Indulgences

- ◆ The extent to which popular desire for indulgences drove indulgence inflation, ecclesiastical policy, and even theology is apparent in the doctrine of the Treasury of Merits.
 - ◆ In the 1230s, theologians posited that there existed a Treasury of Merits, consisting of an inexhaustible supply of merits earned by Jesus and the saints. When popes and bishops issued indulgences, they dipped into the Treasury of Merits and paid off the temporal punishment due to sinners.
 - ◆ In 1343, this doctrine received papal approval, well after indulgences had become commonplace. With the Treasury of Merits, as with Islamic jihad, theology retroactively explained and sanctioned what had already happened.
- ◆ Even more controversial than the Treasury of Merits was the question of whether indulgences could be applied to those who had already died, and here, too, the influence of popular expectation on theology is evident.
 - ◆ Praying for the dead and performing works of charity on behalf of the dead in the hope that God would lessen the amount of time that the deceased had to spend in purgatory were not controversial practices. God could choose to respond or not to respond to those prayers and to do as he saw fit with those in purgatory.
 - ◆ But the application of indulgences to the dead was controversial because indulgences involve compulsion rather than supplication. Where indulgences were concerned, God had to lessen the amount of purgatorial time.
- ◆ In the early 13th century, preachers told their listeners that indulgences could be used to benefit those who were already dead and in purgatory. Thomas Aquinas found the process by which indulgences could be applied to the dead baffling, but he still seemed to accept it. He argued that preachers already taught that indulgences could be applied to the dead and that it would be impious to say that the church did anything in vain; thus, indulgences for the dead must be valid, at least in some cases.

- ◆ Not everyone agreed; the canon lawyer Hostiensis and the theologian Bonaventure asserted that indulgences could not be applied to the dead because the dead had passed from the jurisdiction of bishops, cardinals, and popes to the jurisdiction of God. Further, as Bonaventure noted, indulgences worked only for sins to which a sinner had confessed. Those in purgatory or hell had no opportunity to confess their sins and have penance assigned to them; thus, they could not benefit from indulgences.
- ◆ In the end, Aquinas's position won out because the practice of issuing indulgences for the dead was so popular and commonplace. Eventually, the upper ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy followed the lead of its preachers in the trenches. In 1476, Pope Sixtus IV issued an indulgence for the dead, signifying papal approval of the practice.



Motives behind Indulgences

- ◆ The issuance of indulgences for the dead was both humane, accommodating the desire of people to do something on behalf of their departed loved ones, and profitable, opening a large market to the papacy. In many cases, it was impossible to disentangle the humane and the profitable motives in papal calculations.
 - ◆ In some instances, particularly with devotional indulgences, the humane predominated. Whoever put this type of indulgence into circulation seems not to have expected financial compensation for doing so. Instead, devotional indulgences merely provided believers with another means of increasing the likelihood of salvation and greater comfort than an ordinary partial indulgence.
 - ◆ In other instances, financial motives predominated. Indulgences came to be used as bond issues are used today: to finance public works, road building, bridge repair, and so on. Although these indulgences were partial rather than plenary, they tightened the association between payment and remission of sin.
- ◆ Because the amount of time that one would have to spend in purgatory was known to no one, the demand for partial indulgences was theoretically infinite. As for plenary indulgences, they applied only to sins committed and confessed at the time one acquired the indulgence. For sins committed after that point, another indulgence was needed. Popes could and did generate new demand for plenary indulgences by annulling all existing plenary indulgences and requiring their possessors to acquire new ones.

The End of Indulgences

- ◆ Of course, in many instances, the system of indulgences generated criticism and resentment. Popes were aware of problems with the system, but even those popes who were inclined to rein in indulgences failed to do so for more than brief periods. Too much money came from indulgences, and too many livelihoods depended on them.

- ◆ The end of indulgences in some parts of Europe came surprisingly quickly. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther produced his Ninety-five Theses, in which he hammered away at indulgences, believing that they represented the antithesis of Christian life. As Luther developed his doctrine of justification by faith, he slashed away at the theological underpinnings of indulgences: There was no purgatory.

- ◆ The Protestant Reformation ushered in an age of religious wars. During the 16th and 17th centuries, wars between Protestants and Catholics and between different Protestant sects touched, directly or indirectly, every part of the European continent: civil wars in Germany and Switzerland, the French Wars of Religion between Catholics and Huguenots, the Dutch Revolt against the Catholic Hapsburgs, war between Catholic Spain and Protestant England, and so on.

- ◆ During the period of the crusades, people from all these places had taken up the cross because they shared a common faith.

- ◆ During and after the Protestant Reformation, people from these countries found themselves fighting wars against one another and for different faiths.



- ◆ As we've seen, the crusades, launched to bring Jerusalem under Christian rule, facilitated Turkish and Islamic expansion into southeastern Europe. The crusades, launched to aid the Byzantine Empire, weakened that empire. The crusades, launched to promote the reunification of the Eastern Orthodox and Western Catholic churches, gave rise to grievances that made reunification even more difficult to achieve. Our consideration of indulgences brings us to one last irony: Thanks to the indulgence and the controversies it generated, the crusades, launched to reunify the Christianities of Byzantium and Europe, contributed to the dissolution of European Christendom itself.

Reading

Armstrong, *Holy War*.

Stark, *God's Battalions*.

Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*.

Questions

- 1 If crusading had not made indulgences so central to the religious life of medieval Europe, how might the Protestant Reformation have developed differently? Would there have been a Protestant Reformation at all?
- 2 What broader lesson do you draw from the history of indulgences? Might and should the church have changed course as regards the proliferation of indulgences? At some point, did it become prohibitively difficult for the church to undo what had already been done or even to stop doing what it had been doing?
- 3 Can you think of other historical movements and events whose unintended consequences exceeded their intended consequences? Are there any historical movements and events whose unintended consequences did not exceed their intended consequences?

Map of the Crusades



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