

The Crusades

1096-1204



Korsfarna erövrar Jerusalem

Källkritiska övningar

The Crusades 1096-1204
Extracted from Higher History Exam (GB) 1993

Study the sources below and then answer the questions which follow.

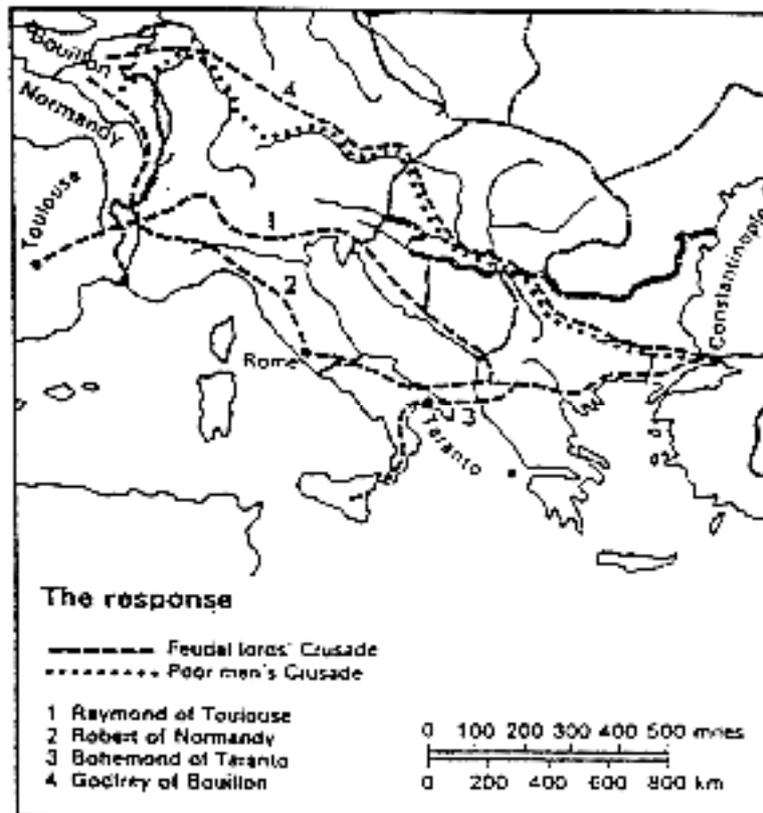
Source A: from Pope Urban's speech calling the First Crusade, according to the *Jerusalem History*, written by Robert the Monk in the early twelfth century.

Let the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, our Saviour, which is possessed by unclean nations, especially move you, and likewise the holy places, which are now treated with ignominy and irrelevantly polluted with filthiness. Oh, most valiant soldiers and descendants of invincible ancestors, recall the valour of your forefathers!...

Let none of your possessions detain you, no concern for your family affairs, since this land (France) which you inhabit, shut in on all sides by the sea and surrounded by mountain peaks,

is too narrow for your large population; nor does it abound in wealth; and it furnishes scarcely food enough for its cultivators. So it is that you murder and devour one another, that you wage war, and that frequently you perish by mutual wounds. Enter upon the road to the holy Sepulchre; wrest that land from the wicked race, and subject it to yourselves. That land which, as the Scripture says, "floweth with milk and honey" was given by God into possession of the children of Israel... Accordingly, undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven.

Source B: a map showing the response to Urban's call.



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Source C: from Norman Cohn, "The Appeal of the Crusade to the Poor", in J.A. Brundage (ed.), *The Crusades* (1966).

To these [poor] hordes the Crusade meant something quite different from what it meant to the Pope. The pauperes⁷, as the chroniclers called them, were not greatly interested in assisting the Christians of Byzantium, but they were passionately interested in reaching, capturing and occupying Jerusalem. The city, which was the holiest city in the world for Christians, had been in the hands of Moslems for some four and a half centuries. Although the possibility of recapturing it seems to have played little part in Urban's original plan, it was this prospect that intoxicated the masses of the poor. In their eyes the Crusade was an armed and militant pilgrimage, the greatest and most sublime of pilgrimages.

Source D: from H.E. Mayer, *The Crusades* (1988).

Despite everything that has been said about pilgrimages and holy war, it would be wrong to hope explain the big part played in the crusade by the knights only in terms of religion, group psychology, and a professional ethos. Dry economic and social factors were also significant, more so indeed than is commonly allowed today...

Love of adventure, lust for booty—these are the characteristics of individuals. But we know of economic and social problems which touched the knightly class as a whole and taught it to look upon the crusade as a way out. [It has been] argued that there was a crisis in the agrarian economy of south France and Italy beginning about 850 and becoming steadily worse until its climax was reached about 1000. For the years after 1000 we have vivid chronicle descriptions of recurring famines which can be explained in

terms of the failure of agricultural production to keep pace with the rising population.

Source E: the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, from *The Deeds of the Franks*, written by a vassal of Bohemond between 1098 and 1101.

On Wednesday and Thursday we launched a fierce attack upon the city, both by day and by night, from all sides, but before we attacked our bishops and priests preached to us, and told us to go in procession round Jerusalem to the glory of God, and to pray and give alms and fast, as faithful men should do. On Friday at dawn we attacked the city from all sides but could achieve nothing, so that we were all astounded and very much afraid, yet, when the hour came when our Lord Jesus Christ deigned to suffer for us upon the cross, our knights were fighting bravely on the siege-tower, led by Duke Godfrey and Count Eustace his brother. At that moment one of our knights, called Let hold, succeeded in getting on to wall. As soon as he reached it, all the defenders fled along the walls and through the city, and our men went after them, killing them and cutting them as far as Solomon's Temple, where there were such a massacre that our men were wading up to their ankles in enemy blood.

Source F: the defeat of Peter the Hermit's Crusade, described by the Lebanese writer Amin Maalouf, in *The Crusades through Arab Eyes* (1984).

By the time hand-to-hand combat was joined, the Franks were already routed... Kilij Arslan, the Sultan of Asia Minor (Turkey) was jubilant.

And yet, rarely in history has a victory proved so costly to those who had won it.

Intoxicated by his success, Kilij Arslan pointedly ignored the information that came through the following winter about the arrival of fresh groups of Franks in Constantinople. As far as he was concerned— and even the wisest of his emirs did not dissent— there was no reason for disquiet. If other mercenaries of Alexius dared to

⁷ paupers— poor people

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cross the Bosphorus, they would be cut to pieces like those who had come before them. The sultan felt that it was time to return to the major preoccupation of the hour— in other words, to the merciless struggle he had long been waging against the other Turkish princes, his neighbours. It was there, and nowhere else, that his fate and that of his realm would be decided. The clashes with the Rûm⁸ or with their foreign Frankish auxiliaries would never be more than an interlude.

Source G: the early problems of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, from *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem*, by Fulcher of Chartres.

In the beginning of his reign Baldwin as yet possessed few cities and people. Through that same winter he stoutly protected his kingdom from enemies on all sides. And because they found out that he was a very skilful fighter, although he had few men, they did not dare to attack him. If he had had a greater force he would have met the enemy gladly...

Following that, some remained in the Holy Land, and others went back to their native countries. For this reason the land of Jerusalem remained depopulated. There were not enough people to defend it from the Saracens if only the latter dared attack us...

For we did not at that time have more than three hundred knights and as many footmen to defend Jerusalem, Joppa, Ramla, and also the stronghold of Haifa. We scarcely dared to assemble our knights when we wished to plan some feat against our enemies. We feared that in the meantime they would do some damage against our deserted fortifications.

Source H: from the letter of Pope Gregory VIII in 1187, calling for the Third Crusade.

We need not detail here now, when our army was annihilated, Saladin's army later attacked and plundered everywhere, so that only a few places remained which did not fall into their hands...

Accept with thanks, in so far as you can, this opportunity for repenting and doing good. Offer your possessions, and then offer yourselves, and work for the recovery of that land in which the truth was born from the earth for our salvation.

Therefore to those who undertake this journey with a humble and contrite heart, and who die in repentance for their sins and in the true faith, we promise a full indulgence for their misdeeds, and eternal life. Whether they survive or perish, they should know they are to have remission of all sins for which they make due confession...

Furthermore the property and family of all such men, from the time they take up the cross, are to be under the protection of the Holy Roman Church.

Answer all of the following questions.	Marks
1. According to Robert the Monk (Source A), how did Urban try to persuade his audience to join the First Crusade?	7
2. To what extent do the map (Source B) and Cohn (Source C) support the argument that Urban's appeal was very successful?	6
3. Do you agree with the stress which Mayer (Source D) places on "dry economic and social factors" as a major underlying cause of the Crusades?	8
4. How useful are Sources E and F in explaining the success of the First Crusade?	8
5. Did subsequent events in the Latin Kingdom bear out the fears of Fulcher of Chartres (Source G)?	4
6. Is there sufficient evidence in Sources A and H to argue the reasons for the Third Crusade resembled those for the First Crusade?	4
7. Why did the First Crusade succeed but the Third Crusade fail	8

⁸ Rûm— Eastern Roman Empire