

The crusades in the Near East

1095	November 27: Urban II proclaims the crusade (Council of Clermont)
1096	Spring/summer: pogroms against Jews along the Rhine Late summer/fall: annihilation of the "People's Crusade" in Asia Minor Late fall 1096–May 1097: armies of the second crusading wave meet at Constantinople
1097	July 1: Battle of Dorylaeum
1097–98	Siege and conquest (June 3) of Antioch
1098	Baldwin of Boulogne seizes control of Edessa
1099	July 15: conquest of Jerusalem; massacre of the populace August 12: Christian victory over a Fatimid army (Ascalon)
1101	Summer: destruction of the third crusading wave in Asia Minor
1109	Conquest of Tripoli
1123–24	Venetian crusade
1127–46	Rule of Imad ad-Din Zengi, emir of Damascus
1145–48	Crusade against Damascus ("Second Crusade")
1146–74	Rule of Nur ad-Din, emir of Damascus
1171	Saladin ends the Fatimid caliphate of Egypt
1174	Saladin assumes power in Damascus
1187	July 3/4: Battle of Hattin
1190–92	Crusade of Frederick I Barbarossa, Richard I of England, and Philip II of France ("Third Crusade")
1197	Crusade of Henry VI
1202–04	Crusade against Constantinople ("Fourth Crusade")
1204–61	Latin Empire of Constantinople
1212	Children's Crusade
1215	Fourth Lateran Council. Crusade bull <i>Ad liberandam</i>
1219–21	Crusade against Damietta ("Fifth Crusade")
1227–29	Crusade of Emperor Frederick II
1239–41	Crusades of Thibald of Champagne and Richard of Cornwall

1244	August 23: Khorezmian conquest of Jerusalem October 17: Battle of Forbie (Gaza)
1248–54	First Crusade of Louis IX of France
1260	September 3: Mamluks under Sultan Baibars defeat the Mongols at the Battle of 'Ain-Jalut
1270	Second Crusade of Louis IX
1291	May 18: Mamluk conquest of Acre
1332–34	First "Holy League"
1365	Crusade of King Peter I of Cyprus
1396	September 25: Battle of Nicopolis
1453	Ottoman conquest of Constantinople

The First Crusade

Proclamation, "People's Crusade," and pogroms

The historical context discussed in the previous chapter laid a foundation not just for the rise but for the longevity of the crusade movement. Factors such as medieval world-views, piety, and theology, as well as socio-political circumstances, were historical agents that worked over long periods of time. Still, the actual beginning of the "First Crusade" was a specific act that can be fixed at a particular historical moment. On November 27, 1095 Pope Urban II, speaking in an open field outside of the city of Clermont in the Auvergne, gave an impassioned speech in which he called his hearers to take part in a military expedition to the East. This event is properly regarded as the beginning of the First Crusade.

Urban II: Unfortunately, nobody copied Urban's proclamation down word for word. What we have is four later versions of his speech. These differ noticeably from one another in wording, but taken as a whole they allow us to see the nature of the pope's argument. Three of the authors were very probably at Clermont and heard the pope's speech with their own ears. These are the monk Robert of St Remi in Rheims (d. 1120), Abbot Baldric of Saint-Pierre de Bourgueil (later archbishop of Dol, 1045–1130), and finally the canon Fulcher of Chartres (d. 1127), who actually took part in the crusade (as a chaplain). Their chronicles were composed after the crusade had been brought to a successful conclusion, a point that should be borne in mind when interpreting them. Nonetheless, despite certain differences, in general they agree in their report of Urban's address.

From the chroniclers' descriptions it is possible to infer that the pope employed every possible form of symbolic and verbal communication. To start, he described the adversities of the eastern Christians with numerous gestures, loud sighs, cries, and tears; then, acting as God's mouthpiece and supplicant, he called the faithful to take action. He

made his appeal in three stages, attested by all three eyewitnesses. First was the call to take part in the crusade and fight for the good of their religion. Second came the promise of an indulgence. Finally, Urban reminded his audience of their sins and the urgent need for purification—the pope accused the gathered warriors of misusing their military prowess in warfare against one another instead of placing it at the service of their religion. This argument encouraged the hearers to undertake the crusade as an act of personal penance. As we have seen, the foundations for precisely this sort of argument had already been laid.

The response of those assembled was enormous. While the speech was still going on, as response to the appeal itself, the listeners interrupted the pope with the famous cry “Deus vult!” (God wills it). When he had finished, many threw themselves to the ground, begged forgiveness for their sins, and, as outward sign of their vow to go on the crusade, fastened cloth crosses to their chests—they “took the cross.” The army’s departure date was fixed for August 15, 1096.

The pope stayed in southern and western France until the summer of 1096, repeatedly preaching the crusade. But even as he was doing so, his initiative provoked very unforeseen reactions. Apparently the pope’s actual goal had been to recruit a small army of knights, raised locally (in southern France), to support the Christian Church in the East and possibly to free Jerusalem. This goal can be discerned from the extant versions of the speech, as well as by three letters Urban sent to Bologna, Flanders, and the monks of Vallombrosa during the winter of 1095/96. In these letters, the pope tried to keep clerics and, under particular circumstances, also younger warriors from taking part. In the end, though, it was not the intended southern French knightly army that set out, but rather several “waves” of crusaders that headed eastward, composed of people from all social classes. It is possible to distinguish at least three of these waves: a first, unorganized one that set out before the official departure date, the expedition that successfully conquered Jerusalem, and a third wave that set out at the earliest in June 1098 and was for the most part annihilated in 1101.

The most numerous elements of the second wave came from the regions of northern France, Flanders, and the lower Rhine. They were hardly recruited directly by Urban’s words, because the pope did not personally visit these areas. Instead, crusade preachers won them over in large numbers. The most famous of these was Peter the Hermit.

Peter of Amiens (or “the Hermit,” d. c. 1115) was one of the wandering preachers of the late eleventh century who were discussed in Chapter 1. Peter had already gone on pilgrimage to Jerusalem before the First Crusade and there had resolved to lead an expedition to Palestine to free the holy city. He rode around from place to place on a donkey—like Christ—with a letter he claimed had been sent directly from God that urged participation in the crusade, and called the populace to take the

The “People’s
Crusade” of
1096

Sources for the First Crusade

We have excellent sources for the successful expedition of 1096–99. There are a number of crusade chronicles, some composed by actual participants in the expedition. Among these eyewitnesses was an anonymous writer, probably a Norman cleric from southern Italy. His *Gesta Francorum* (Deeds of the Franks, c. 1100/01), strongly partial to the Norman prince Bohemond (1050/58–1111), was widely employed as a source by other authors. Among the “crusader chroniclers” was also a chaplain named Raymond of Aguilers, who sometime between 1099 and 1105 composed a *Historia francorum qui ceperunt Hierusalem* (History of the Franks who conquered Jerusalem) completely from the perspective of Provence. The already-familiar Fulcher of Chartres should also be mentioned in this context. These one-sided eyewitness reports can be supplemented with the works of authors who did not actually take part in the expedition, but rather compiled their own impressions from written and oral sources. We have already encountered two of these, Robert of Rheims and Baldric of Dol. Other important sources of this sort are Guibert of Nogent’s (d. 1124) *Dei gesta per francos*, completed in c. 1109, and the work of the educated Norman knight Radulfus (Raoul) of Caen, who was in the service of the Norman prince Tancred and honored his lord in the *Gesta Tancredi* of 1112. Scholars for a long time unjustly discounted the six-book crusade chronicle of Albert, probably a cleric from Aachen. Albert of Aachen’s anecdote-filled account is the only one composed without reliance on the anonymous *Gesta Francorum* and gives a perspective significantly different from that of the French chroniclers. He writes favorably of Godfrey of Bouillon, within whose duchy Aachen lay, and Albert’s informants for the most part were members of Godfrey’s force. Besides these various texts we have about twenty letters written by participants in the crusade. These are outstanding sources that report first-hand on the crusaders’ troubles, wishes, and state of mind. And finally, the crusaders produced many documents before their departure. By using all these complementary and sometimes contradictory sources it is possible to create a picture of the crusade waves of 1096 to 1101.

cross. His popularity was so great that, according to Guibert of Nogent, people collected his donkey’s hairs as relics. Soon he had gathered a large and diverse army. Peter recruited participants for the successful second wave of crusaders as well as members of the first expedition. For this first wave, the so-called People’s Crusade of 1096, the French noble Walter Sansavoir of Poissy and the Germans Gottschalk and Folkmar also assembled groups of varying size. They included “simple people” as well as nobles and great lords. That these forces, cobbled together from a broad sector of the populace, had little in common with the requested knightly contingents is also clear from the fact that they did not or perhaps could not adhere to the agreed departure date. Apparently the unrest in “God’s army” was too great. So the first wave of the First Crusade set off southward.

Poor, undisciplined, and badly coordinated, the participants in the “People’s Crusade” of 1096 had to live off the lands they passed through. The populace of the Danube region and the Balkans soon felt the brunt of this: looting and other attacks were the order of the day. The situation did not change when Peter the Hermit’s and Walter Sansavoir’s armies met outside Constantinople. Their plundering quickly convinced the Greek emperor Alexios I Comnenos that it was wiser to ferry the disagreeable mob over the Bosphorus into Muslim territory (early August 1096). Here they paid a terrible price for their lack of military skill and coordination. Half of the People’s Crusade, mostly composed of Germans and Italians, was massacred by the Seljuqs at Nicaea. The other half, mostly French, was decoyed into an ambush and also slaughtered. Peter the Hermit was absent when his army was destroyed; he had remained in Constantinople. All that he could then do was to wait for the approaching knightly armies and join them. The fate of the other forces of the People’s Crusade was hardly better. The depredations of the first group on their journey through Hungary had caught the populace by surprise, but now they were prepared and repelled or killed every one of the next group of intruders to appear. Not a single contingent of the first wave of the crusade made it to the Holy Land.

But before their destruction, parts of this group wrote a page for themselves in the annals of history that has become an inextricable part of the crusades: in the summer of 1096 they destroyed a majority of the Jewish communities along the Rhine in an unprecedented series of massacres. Since the early Middle Ages many Jews had settled in the great Rhineland episcopal cities such as Cologne, Mainz, Speyer, and Worms, as well as in other towns of the region. Under the protection of the local lords, especially the bishops, they had taken part in the economic life of these centers and helped them flourish. They developed a rich cultural life and for a long time lived with the Christians without any great disturbances. This does not imply that there was no sign of anti-Judaism (anti-Semitism is a later phenomenon) before this, but nothing compared to the scale of May 1096. Under the leadership of the preacher Folkmar and Count Emicho of Flonheim, a mob of crusaders stormed into the Jewish quarters of Mainz, Worms, and other cities in the mid-Rhine region, murdering men, women, and children. Christian chroniclers report the events, as does Albert of Aachen. But no group of sources provides as moving and shocking a description of the atrocities as the Jewish chronicles, such as the account written by Salomon bar Simson of Worms. They tell that at first those under attack sought and often received assistance from their lords, the Christian bishops. But it soon became clear that the bishops were not able or willing to protect the Jews with armed force. Many Jews died at the hands of rampaging crusaders; others, recognizing the hopelessness of their position, killed their families and themselves. After the pogroms of the middle

The end of the
“People’s
Crusade”

The Jewish
pogroms of
1096

Rhineland, splinter groups of crusaders attacked the Jewish communities in Cologne, Metz, Trier, and on the lower Rhine. Attacks are also recorded in Regensburg, Prague, and southern France.

It is tempting but misguided to posit a historical connection between the massacres of the Rhineland Jews in 1096 and the Jewish genocide of the twentieth century: 1096 was not the prelude to 1933 or 1942. The anti-Jewish outrages of the Middle Ages were not based on an anti-Semitic ideology, furthered by a government annihilation program. In cases like this, one must beware of comfortable, simplistic explanations and take the effort to explain events historically, in the context of their own time and thought world.

Motives behind
the pogroms

What motivated some crusaders to attack Jews? Two points must be emphasized. First is that the offenders were mobs of people without means, who were ready or compelled to live from pillage when necessary. The rich Jewish communities seemed to them to be a convenient means to provision themselves. But this is surely only a secondary issue—greed alone cannot explain the degree of violence that was unleashed. As paradoxical as it may seem, apparently the murderers saw their deeds as part of their holy war for the sake of God. One of the most important reasons for the expedition to the East was to avenge Jesus Christ and combat his enemies. Even those ignorant of theology knew that it had been Jews who crucified Jesus. Thus in contemporary understanding the new army of God met the descendants of Christ’s murderers in the Rhineland. Jewish sources too report that the killers seem to have believed that they were taking vengeance for the Crucifixion and thus were accomplishing a work pleasing to God. In this context it is fitting that proselytism also played a major role—several accounts speak of forcible baptism. Finally, the internal situation of the Roman-German Empire may have encouraged the outrages. Because of his conflicts with Duke Welf II (1072–1120), Emperor Henry IV did not visit the provinces of his empire north of the Alps at all in the period 1090–97. So the Rhineland pogroms against the Jews took place during a vacuum of imperial power. However, whether Henry IV’s presence would have made any difference to events is a question that can never be answered.

The expedition to Jerusalem

The armies that set out in August 1096 were very different in cohesion and level of organization from the disordered crowds of the “People’s Crusades.” To be sure, these forces also included women, children, peasants, and clerics, but the proportion of knights among the fighting men was higher and the troops were under the leadership of high-ranking princes with military experience. There were five distinct armies. The first and strongest contingent included people from southern and western France. They marched under the command of Count Raymond IV

of Toulouse (c. 1041–1105). The second troop, from Lotharingia, was led by Duke Godfrey V of Lower Lotharingia (called Godfrey of Bouillon; c. 1060–1100) and his brother Baldwin (after 1060–1118). Normans and Flemings formed the third army, and Duke Robert II of Normandy (c. 1054–1134), Count Stephen of Blois (c. 1045–1102), and Robert II of Flanders (c. 1065–1111). Hugh of Vermandois, brother of Philip I of France, led a fourth contingent, while, last, the south Italian Normans were under Bohemond of Bari (later known as Bohemond of Taranto) (1050/58–1111), the eldest son of the mighty Robert Guiscard (d. 1085). Bohemond's nephew Tancred accompanied him.

Thus the leaders of the First Crusade were not kings but rather major princes and territorial lords of the high nobility, related in various degrees to the royal houses of Europe. Some of them controlled very extensive lordships, like the count of Toulouse, whose possessions were greater than those of the French king. Some of them already had experience fighting Muslims, such as Raymond of Toulouse in Spain and Bohemond in southern Italy. Whether they had fought Muslims or not, all were practiced in the arts of war. It appears that no military commander-in-chief was officially designated. Indeed, this would hardly have been possible, considering the heterogeneous affiliations of several armies, bound together in highly diverse ways by feudal hierarchies and including also some completely independent nobles. The most that can be said is that the count of Toulouse enjoyed a higher degree of authority, based on his particularly close relations with Urban II. A sign of this prestige is that Raymond appears to have been informed about plans for the crusade at a private meeting with the pope before the Council of Clermont. The selection of the campaign's spiritual leader is also a sign of Raymond's importance. The choice fell on Adhémar of Monteil, bishop of Le Puy, which lay within the count of Toulouse's domains. However, Raymond was culturally and linguistically different from many other crusade leaders, who appear in the sources as *franci* (in contrast to Raymond's western and southern French *provinciales*). Raymond's Provençal roots may have had the long-term effect of isolating him from the other princes.

In the months before their departure, the crusaders took legal and financial steps to place the expedition on a secure footing. Questions of inheritance had to be resolved, possessions sold, goods mortgaged. Many private documents still survive that shed light on these transactions and the important role that ecclesiastical institutions played in them. A great many monasteries and churches made the money "flow"—sometimes in the most literal sense of the word by melting down valuable reliquaries—to purchase goods and finance travel. In this preparation or planning phase of the crusade, a multitude of problems arose at the individual as well as the collective level, especially with logistics. Later crusaders would have to confront the same issues (see "The practical problems of a crusade," p. 61).

The leaders of
the First
Crusade

The journey to
Antioch

In the summer of 1096 the various contingents set out, each along its own chosen route. The Lotharingians went overland through Hungary (where they had to give hostages to guarantee good behavior) and along the Danube. The southern French traveled through northern Italy and along the Adriatic coast. The northern French and Normans made their way through Italy to their kinsmen in the south and were then ferried across to Durazzo. Estimates of the total strength of these forces vary widely. Recent scholars speak of anywhere between 30,000 and 70,000 fighting men and perhaps 30,000 noncombatants. The armies met at Constantinople, reaching the city in several waves between late fall 1096 and mid-May 1097. Their gradual arrival gave Emperor Alexios I Comnenos the opportunity to deal with the leaders individually. Through diplomatic and even military pressure he won oaths of fealty from each of them. The oaths included not only a pledge to keep peace with the Byzantines during their residence but also a promise to accept imperial authority over any lands they conquered that had been part of the Eastern Roman Empire. Of the leaders, only Raymond of Toulouse succeeded in limiting his oath to a promise of respect for the emperor's person and possessions.

After all the contingents had assembled on the far side of the Bosphorus in May 1097, the second wave of the First Crusade set out. Their first common military undertaking, conducted with the assistance of a Byzantine fleet, was the seizure of Nicaea. There, where the troops of the People's Crusade had failed, the second force succeeded on June 19, 1097. In the process, the Latins defeated a relief force under Sultan Qilij Arslan (1092–1107) in pitched battle for the first time. After secret negotiations the Muslims finally surrendered the city—to the Byzantines, not to the crusaders, a fact that some of the crusaders seem to have resented. Nonetheless, Emperor Alexios gave the crusaders auxiliary troops, led by the experienced general Tatikios, who accompanied and advised the expedition on its way east. The second, more important test came two weeks later, when the crusaders were able to defeat a Seljuq army commanded by the sultan near Dorylaeum (July 1, 1097). The road through Anatolia to northern Syria via Iconium, Caesarea, and Marash now lay open, although the way was long and painful. Albert of Aachen and the other chroniclers report how most of the saddle horses and beasts of burden died, while men, women, and children suffered in the sweltering heat. In late October 1097 the army, exhausted and reduced to about 40,000 people, reached the large and strongly fortified city of Antioch. After a brief discussion, the leaders decided to lay siege instead of attempting to take the place by storm.

The siege of
Antioch

The siege of Antioch lasted seven long months (October 1097–June 1098), during which many crusaders fell victim to the harsh winter, food shortages, and disease. On top of their suffering, the besiegers discovered that a large relieving army was underway, under the command of Kerbogha, the governor of Mosul. The crusaders were in imminent

danger of being wiped out in the open fields before Antioch's walls. Some fighters deserted, others came up with reasons for a hasty withdrawal. Among these was Stephen of Blois, who on his return journey encountered a Byzantine army personally led by Alexios Comnenos and, according to Albert of Aachen, painted the Latin situation in such dark colors that the emperor thought it was no use advancing any further. The crusaders regarded the Byzantine withdrawal as a betrayal and a breach of the oaths that had been sworn in Constantinople. Now they had no one to rely on but themselves. When their situation appeared hopeless, however, Bohemond persuaded some native Christians to open a gate in the city wall for him. On June 3, 1098 Antioch fell, except for the citadel. The conquerors' joy did not last long, though, because almost immediately Kerbogha arrived and the former besiegers were themselves besieged. Again, there seemed to be no way out. But then help arrived from an unexpected source. A certain man named Peter Bartholomew, from Raymond of Toulouse's camp, proclaimed that he had been granted a vision: St Andrew had shown him where the "Holy Lance" could be found, which, according to the gospels, had pierced Christ's side. Adhémar of Le Puy and others expressed doubt, but when powerful supporters of the visionary started digging in St Peter's Church in Antioch, a lance soon to be honored as a relic came to light. Filled with renewed courage, the crusaders under Bohemond's command attempted to break out on June 28, 1098—and were victorious. The Seljuq danger was dispelled for the moment, the conquest secured; the Lance had demonstrated its miraculous power.

Visions

Several times during the expedition participants reported miraculous occurrences or visions. The discovery of the Holy Lance is only one example of such supernatural phenomena. Also at Antioch, a priest named Stephen of Valence reported that Christ had personally promised to protect both him and the army, and Albert of Aachen tells in his chronicle of a vision of St Ambrose, the great fourth-century archbishop of Milan. In the battle itself, crusaders claimed to have seen various heavenly riders and dead comrades fighting at their side, confirming their belief that they were waging a holy, God-blessed war. Directly before the fall of Jerusalem, too, a vision is supposed to have influenced the course of events decisively in the crusaders' favor. Similar occurrences are also reported from later crusades

The army only continued their journey toward Jerusalem on January 13, 1099. One reason for this delay was the season—the crusaders did not want to make the long journey at the height of summer. Then an epidemic struck the city, killing many crusaders including Bishop Adhémar.

First conflicts between the crusader princes

Finally, the crusade princes occupied themselves during the winter months with smaller expeditions to conquer territory and thus secure their own positions. These are early signs that the goal for some was already to create crusader states independent of Byzantine overlordship. The departure was further delayed because many of the crusader leaders, especially Raymond of Toulouse, opposed Bohemond's demands for lordship over Antioch. Bohemond and his troops had indeed played a decisive role in the conquest and defense of the city, but by keeping Antioch he openly broke the promise he had made to Emperor Alexios. Raymond finally acceded to Bohemond's demands, but only after he had been given chief command of the expedition; Bohemond stayed behind as lord of Antioch.

The conquest of Jerusalem

The journey through Syria to Palestine was accomplished with few difficulties, because shortly before this time the holy city had fallen into the hands of the Shi'ite Fatimids; the emirs of the little states of Syria saw no reason to oppose a crusader passage through their territories, as long as the crusaders promised not to attack them. In fact, most of them provided provisions or money and therefore remained undisturbed. On June 7, 1099 the crusaders finally got their first sight of Jerusalem, from "Mount Joy" (*mons gaudii, Montjoie*). By this time, the army must have been reduced to about 20,000 men. But they were not yet done fighting: the crusaders discovered that the city was well fortified and the defenders had no thought of capitulating. All the Christians had been expelled from Jerusalem to prevent a betrayal like that of Antioch, and a long siege seemed likely. But time was slipping away rapidly, and a Fatimid army was already on the march to raise the siege. After a failed attack on June 13 the situation became critical. But Genoese and English ships, newly arrived at Jaffa, brought tools, with which the crusaders hurriedly built siege towers. Once again, a vision influenced events. The dead bishop Adhémar appeared to a cleric and urged the crusaders to perform penance. The army duly marched three times around the city, barefoot and singing, led by clerics bearing relics. Then, on the night of July 13–14, the attack began.

It took a whole day to roll the siege engines up to the walls, the attackers suffering heavy casualties the whole time. On the morning of July 15 some men of the Lotharingian contingent succeeded in getting over the northern wall, clearing the way and letting the other warriors into the city. While Raymond of Toulouse took the strategically important Tower of David in the western part of the city, a horrible massacre began. It must be acknowledged that the brutal killing of a large number of men, women, and children—both Muslims and Jews—was in accordance with the accepted military practices of the time: the defenders had not surrendered and thus could expect no mercy. We also know that the shocking, repeatedly expressed accounts of the crusaders' atrocities are based on Old Testament models, such as the conquest of

Jericho. The crusaders placed themselves in the biblical tradition by terming themselves the new people of Israel, and the chroniclers did the same in their description of the bloodshed. Here too, a balanced and analytical interpretation of the sources can keep us from overly hasty judgments and interpretations. But all the same, the massacre of July 15, 1099 was an event that provoked horror in the Jewish and especially the Islamic world, and was not forgotten. Two hundred years later it justified similar behavior by the Muslim conquerors when they destroyed the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1291.

The holy city had been taken. Now it had to be ruled and defended. In the course of the expedition Raymond of Toulouse had made a number of enemies, and many of his men wanted to return home. So he renounced any claim to rule over Jerusalem. The lordship was instead offered, with the support of the Flemish and Norman contingents, to the Lower Lotharingian Godfrey. He accepted, but refused the royal title with the words that he was unwilling to wear a golden crown in the place where Christ had borne a crown of thorns. Instead, Godfrey was called *advocatus sancti Sepulchri*, “Guardian of the Holy Sepulcher.” Church leadership also went to a crusader from northwestern Europe, Robert of Normandy’s chaplain Arnulf of Chocques (d. 1118), who was elected principal of the Church of Jerusalem. Almost immediately the conquered land had to be defended, because the Fatimid wazir al-Afdal (d. 1121) was already approaching with a large army. The Christians were outnumbered, but on the morning of August 12, 1099 they caught their enemies in a surprise attack near Ascalon and annihilated them. Thus crusader control of Jerusalem was assured, at least for the time being.

Securing control

The creation of the crusader lordships

After the successful Battle of Ascalon, most of the participants in the First Crusade returned to their homelands. In their eyes, Jerusalem had been brought back to Christendom, the *hereditas Christi* had returned to its rightful Lord. They could regard their mission as accomplished, and more than accomplished. Only a minority of knights remained in the Holy Land, where soon there were changes in both secular and ecclesiastical rule. Godfrey of Bouillon died in 1100, and the throne passed on to his brother Baldwin of Boulogne, who was the first to assume the title “king” of Jerusalem (Baldwin I). Patriarch Arnulf, for his part, had to abdicate his office under ecclesiastical/political pressure.

The crusaders’ return

For the time being, those who remained in the East could hope for speedy reinforcement, since the third wave of the First Crusade set itself into motion in 1100/01. But only a few of the crusaders of this third wave made it to the Holy Land; the troops of this so-called “Crusade of 1101” were slaughtered in several battles.

The crusade of 1101

In the period after the conquest of Antioch, a third great wave of crusaders had been recruited. It consisted of Italian contingents from Lombardy, Frenchmen from Burgundy, Nevers, and Poitou, and Germans under Duke Welf I of Bavaria (d. 1102). There were at least as many fighters in this army as in that of the second wave, but their undertaking had a completely different outcome. The Seljuqs now decided on a “burnt earth” tactic. Disagreements and tactical errors did the rest, so that in the course of several battles the troops were almost completely destroyed. The horrible fiasco of the crusade of 1101 led to it being almost completely forgotten in the Christian world.

The creation of the crusader states

Jerusalem was the most important crusader state, but it was not the only one or even the first. A total of four independent territories were formed (see Map 1): besides the kingdom of Jerusalem were the principality of Antioch, the county of Edessa, and the county of Tripoli. Bohemond of Taranto had stayed behind in Antioch in the summer of 1098. Here he created a state that was designated the principality of Antioch. Despite its exposed position on the border of the powerful emirate of Aleppo and the deaths of several princes in battle, this state remained in existence until the second half of the thirteenth century. Shorter-lived was the county of Edessa, the oldest of the crusader states. Baldwin of Boulogne, Godfrey of Bouillon’s brother, had created it early in 1098, even before the conquest of Antioch. He had left the main army in Armenia with a force of knights and took advantage of the inner turmoil of the mostly Armenian Christian population to drive out Turkish garrisons, eliminate local magnates, and take over the lordship of Edessa for himself. But already in 1144 the city fell to ‘Imad ad-Din Zengi (r. 1127–46), the lord of Mosul. The rest of the county was soon lost.

The region between the principality of Antioch and the kingdom of Jerusalem was the last area the crusaders conquered. The territory had been left undisturbed during the advance, and the Christians only succeeded in subjecting it after 1102, when they took the major port of Tortosa. After his political defeat at the hands of Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond of Toulouse set out to establish his own state here. The count himself died in 1105, but his troops, led by other members of the comital house, were able to conquer Tripoli in 1109 and secure their rule. The enterprising Norman Tancred tried to establish another principality in the Galilee, but it was unable to hold out as an independent state. The four independent crusader states—Jerusalem, Antioch, Edessa, and Tripoli—were often called “Outremer” (the Latin territories “on the far side of the [Mediterranean] Sea”). Crusaders continued to flow to these regions, although Outremer’s inner development was only indirectly

shaped by the crusades. The history, institutions, structure, and composition of these “crusader states” will therefore be discussed elsewhere from an internal perspective (Chapter 3). In the following, we will trace the course of the crusades themselves.

The crusades of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries

The crusades to the Battle of Hattin, 1187

The First Crusade has assumed a preeminent position both in medieval texts and historical research. It created the crusader states of the Near East, and it was marked by motivations, political alignments, and military problems that would also affect later crusaders. The expedition of 1096 to 1099 was the spectacular prelude to a long series of military undertakings to defend or win back the Holy Land. The practice of numbering some of these crusades is not medieval but rather a modern device; the Second Crusade, and the Third, etc. have by now become accepted terms. These numbers, however, are problematic. They were not necessarily applied to the largest or the most successful expeditions, but often to those led by kings or that ended in the creation of new polities. To blame is a modern fascination for medieval rulers. This numbering system has placed a few of the expeditions in the limelight and thus disguised the fact that there were in reality a great many crusades in the high and late Middle Ages. It is for that reason that these numbers will not be used in this book. Nonetheless, due to space constraints, it is necessary to be selective. The following is only a rough sketch of the most important ventures undertaken by Christians in the Near East.

Counting the
crusades

There were periods of greater and lesser fascination with crusading. At first, interest was high: there were several expeditions in the first twenty-five years after the conquest of Jerusalem. For example, from 1107 to 1110 the Norwegian king Sigurd (r. 1103–30) crusaded, taking part with his fleet in the conquest of the port city of Sidon. Similarly, there was a Venetian crusade in 1123/24, which destroyed a Fatimid fleet and conquered Tyre. After that, the crusader states were fully established and relatively stabilized. Perhaps this comparative security explains why there was a pause of nearly a generation before the next really significant undertaking, the crusade of 1145–48.

The cause for this crusade was the fall of Edessa on December 23, 1144. The loss of the oldest crusader state and an appeal for help from Palestine persuaded Pope Eugenius III (r. 1145–53) to proclaim a crusade on December 1, 1145 with the bull *Quantum praedecessores*. But what the pope had in mind was not merely support for the threatened crusader states of the Levant: he planned a broadly conceived offensive for the defense and spread of Christendom on several fronts. Besides an

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