

THE CRUSADERS' TRILOGY IN THE LEVANT IN THE 12th AND 13th CENTURIES

A TRILOGIA DOS CRUZADOS NO LEVANTE NOS SÉCULOS XII E XIII

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Abstract

When we study history of the crusaders in the eastern parts of the mediterranean during 12th and 13 centuries, their history gives us Spotlights on three Vital major elements as follow: War, Pilgrimage, and trade, So, this research paper aimed to shed lights on new vision to that big historical movement in history of relation between east and west in the Middle Ages. For sure, after several Centuries we need to recognise That clash objectively.

Keywords: Crusaders. Middle Ages. Relation Between East and West.

Resumo

Quando estudamos a história dos cruzados nas regiões orientais do Mediterrâneo durante os séculos XII e XIII, sua história nos dá destaque a três elementos vitais principais, a saber: guerra, peregrinação e comércio. Portanto, este trabalho de pesquisa teve como objetivo lançar luz sobre uma nova visão desse grande movimento histórico na história das relações entre Oriente e Ocidente na Idade Média. Certamente, após vários séculos, precisamos reconhecer esse conflito objetivamente.

Palavras-chave: Idade Média. Relação entre Oriente e Ocidente.

1 INTRODUCTION

This research paper deals with what is described as a “Trilogy of the History of the Crusaders in the Levant”, represented by War, Pilgrimage, and Trade.

In fact, anyone who has studied the history of the Crusaders from its very beginnings is well aware of the military aspect. They came to the region through a bloody military invasion, and wanted to settle there at the expense of its indigenous inhabitants, especially the Muslims. This was the first time that Islam and its people were exposed to foreign invasion since the seventh century AD, which indicates that we are facing an



unprecedented historical phenomenon in the history of Muslims' relations with foreign powers.

2 WAR

In the beginning, Christianity was considered a peaceful religion, but it was subverted by prominent churchmen, especially St. Augustine (d. 430 AD) in his book “*De Civitat Die*”, or “*The City of God*”, in which he acknowledged the idea of The Holy War, or in Latin: “*Bellum Sacrum*”.

The centuries passed, and by reaching the end of the eleventh century AD, the Crusades set off and swept the Levant. The name “*Crusades*” indicates that they had a clearly military character (Oman, 1970), (Smail, 1956), (Riley-Smith, 1991) (France 1996).

In this respect, we have dozens of battles between the Crusaders, the Seljuks, the Zengid, the Ayyubids, and the Mamluks, such as “*Dhur-l-Yom* “ in 1097 AD, the Battle of the Fall of Antioch after its siege by the Crusaders in 1098 AD, the Battle of the Subjugation of Jerusalem, which fell into the hands of the invaders in 1099 AD, then the Battle of “*the Field of Blood* “ in 1119 AD, the Battle of the Conquest of Edessa in 1144 AD, Anb in 1149 AD, Harem in 1164 AD, Tell al-Jazar in 1177 AD, Hattin in 1187 AD, the Battle of the Siege of Acre (1191-1189 AD), Warsawf in 1191 AD, Faraskur in 1250 AD, the Conquest of Antioch in 1268 AD, the Conquest of Tripoli in 1289 AD, and the last Battle of Acre in 1291 AD.

War was essential to the Crusaders, as it brought them together for a single goal: fighting the Muslims. Through it, they vented their latent energy. It also gained importance by strengthening the international image of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. When news of their victories against their enemies spread to the West, this encouraged many Europeans to come to the East, and some offered gifts and donations to support them, whether in Palestine or in Western Europe.

In fact, we hardly find ten years in the history of the Crusaders passed without noticing a battle between them and the Muslims, especially during the twelfth century AD. This confirms that we are faced with an entity that thrives on the idea of war and, at the same time, was unable to abide by the treaties signed with the Muslims, so they were often violated due to the ambitions of the Crusaders.

It is noteworthy that there were battles in which the Crusaders defeated the Muslims, and vice-versa. The war was a struggle between the two sides. However, The Battle of Hattin in 4th of July 1187 A.D. was a decisive Turning – point in the history of the invaders, due to the disastrous consequences that resulted of it, i.e. the fall of the Crusaders' Kingdom of Jerusalem. Therefore, we can confirm that the history of the Crusaders was divided into two phases, namely, pre-Hattin, and post-Hattin, due to its significant and critical strategic consequences.

In general, the Crusaders were unable to achieve security for their selves, given their presence in the midst of an Islamic environment full of natural-hostility to them. They were not able to integrate with the Levant's local population. The idea that they were able to create a French-Syrian nation did not come true, and was echoed by French orientalist , such as René Grosset , in order to portray the invaders as the owners of a message that expressed the civilization of France since those Middle Ages , and to set a plea its conquest and colonization of The North African regions (Afrique de Nord) in modern times, despite its massacres , as happened in Algeria , for example.

We do not forget here to note the expansion of the geographical scope of the war by the Crusaders. That scope was not limited to the Euphrates Island in northern Iraq, but it extended to the countries of Syria, and to an African scope through the campaigns of King Amalric I (1163-1174 AD), as well as the fifth campaign (1218 - 1221 AD), and the seventh (1248-1250 AD), and it even reached North Africa in Tunisia , in 1270 AD.

In a matter of fact, we can say that the greatest scope for the expansion of military campaigns of the Crusades throughout the 12th and 13th centuries was represented in a triangle (Edessa - Aizab - Tunisia), the first one, Edessa, is the Crusader Principality which was founded in 1097 AD. As regards Aizab, we refer by which to the campaign of the crusader Knight Renauld de Chatillon (Blois, 1904), (Hamilton, 1978) known in Arabic sources as “Arnat” (1153-1163, 1177-1187 AD), as he attacked Station of Aizab , located in north-eastern city of Halayeb , on the Egyptian coast of Red Sea, to distract the attention of the Ayyubid leadership from his own aims of his perfidious campaign over Al-Hijaz in 1183 AD. As for Tunisia, I mean here the Crusade on it in 1270 AD, which is known scholarly as the Eighth Crusade.

We note in the triangle aforementioned, its diversity between the land and sea sides, and the vastness of its geographical as well as its temporal range. Also, it has

confirmed that the proclaimed religious veil of the Crusades was concealing greed of the fortunes and colonization, distributed between the two continents of Asia and Africa.

In general, the Crusaders suffered from a chronic problem of lack of human resources, as they demobilized their troops from the Levant after they succeeded in capturing Jerusalem in 1099 AD. This problem continued to challenge them continually, especially, the human and labour support from western Europe was not persistent.

One of the manifestations of the warlike aspect of Crusader history; their establishment of the Crusader Castles, which reached about (120) castles, on a way that makes us describe the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem as “The Kingdom of Castles and Fortresses “.

They built these castles in order to face the problem of aforementioned lack of human resources. Also, they sought to fix their own presence in the Arab territories, in order to secure the significant routes of trade located within those lands, as well as their object to control the sources , courses and mouths of rivers located in those territories to secure the availability of water for them , as well as to inform the Muslims that The Crusader’s colonization on their lands will be endlessly , which in turn will lead them to Despair and frustration .

There are several examples of Crusader castles , of them are : Kurdish Fortress (Crac des chevaliers) , Kark, Al-Marqab, Zion, Hunin, Tabnin , Hajar Shaghlen, Darbsak, Bagras , Al-Aal, Al-Darum, Arsof, Beit Gibrin, Athlith, Marqaba, Akkar, Al-Qurin, Kawkab al-Hawaa, Antartus, Safita, Shaqif Ornon , Al-Fula, Al-Sabibah (Nimrod), Harem, Afamiyah, etc. This variation and multiplicity confirmed that the kingdom of Jerusalem was already deserved to be described as “The Kingdom of Castles and Fortresses “.

It is worth mentioning here that these castles led the Muslims to seek to overthrow them, as they realized that they had established the Crusader entity on the land of Levant. There were two stages of their fall.

The first was after the decisive Battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187 AD, where dozens of castles fell into the hands of the Ayyubid army. The second phase was done by the Mamluks, between 1268 AD and 1291 AD, during the reign of al-Zahir Bibars, Mansur Qalawun, and al-Ashraf Khalil Ibn Qalawoon.

This is what does regard the topic of **War** in The Crusaders' Trilogy in the Levant.

3 PILGRIMAGE

As for the Pilgrimage (Palestine pilgrims text Society, 1890-1897) (Savagem, 1989) (Mahmoud, 2020) (Saeed, 2008); It was of utmost importance. However, we do not need to monitor and trace the movement of Christian pilgrimage since the 4th century AD, which is described historically as “ the stage of St. Helena “, the mother of Emperor Constantine the Great, onward.

The pilgrimage has been a fundamental element of Christianity - although not one of its pillars. We note that in the seventh century AD, the Christian holy sites in Palestine were subjected to Muslim control, began with the Rashid Caliphate took over, the Umayyads, the Abbasids successively, then the conflict between the and the Fatimid erupted. Throughout those centuries, Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem was flowing, and no persecution of Christian population justified the launch of the Crusades. If someone said that the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim bî AmrEllah (996 -1020 A.D.), who was semi-psyche, had devastated the Church of Holy Sepulchre, the history confirmed that It was re-built again during the reign of his son, al-Zahir (1021-1036 AD).

Christian pilgrims entered Palestine in large numbers under its Crusader occupation, taking care to visit the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Church of Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, as well as Ain Siloam in the Kadrun Valley east of the Holy City. Multi of them too sought to visit Jordan River and the Lake of Tiberias, from which Jesus Christ ate fishes.

There is no doubt of the importance of the pilgrimage to the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. This appears clearly for us as the kingdom was eager to show itself, in the world of Christendom, as the protector of the Christian holy places in Palestine, and that granted the Kingdom a special and distinguished international reputation and status.

Also, we cannot ignore the long-term and massive funds that the kingdom has earned from the return of hundreds of thousands of Christendom from all over the world, where pilgrims spent on their journey, in their stay, as well as through the gifts they took care to buy to give to their relatives and friends in the West, as a kind of blessing, being came from the Holy Land “Terrum Sacrum”.

The pivotal importance of the pilgrimage is revealed to us by the zeal of the Kingdom of Jerusalem to secure the Jaffa-Jerusalem road, which reached about (70) km, by the establishment of the Order of “The Knights Templars “ (Barber, 1974) (Khamis,

2002) (Furey, 2007) (Maqami, 1994) to counter the resistance movement by the Muslims who were ambushing the Christian pilgrims due to their own support of the Crusaders' Settlement. There is no doubt that securing the flow of pilgrims to the Kingdom of the Crusaders was of special importance to the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

In fact, we have a great tradition in the form of what the Western pilgrims composed, such as the English Saewulf, the Russian Father Abbot Daniel, the German Theodrich, the German John of Wurzburg, the Spanish Petachia of Ratisbon, the Benjamin of Tudela, Fetellus, and the Russian Euphrosine, besides a number of other unknown pilgrims (Awad, 1992) (Saewulf, 1896) (Daniel, 1895) (Theodrich, 1896) (Wurzburg, 1896) (Ratisbonne, 1831) (Tudela, 1848) (Fetellus, 1896).

The records and volumes of Palestine Pilgrims Text Society (Awad, 1996) had contained many of the writings of these pilgrims, whose works are of great importance in shedding light on that era from all its aspects.

4 TRADE

As for trade, we are well aware that the Crusader project itself - as earlier - aimed to end the role of Muslims as trade brokers between the East and West. Therefore, the invaders adhered to subjugate the Syrian coast. It took them more than half a century, and was completed by imposing their control over Ascalon in 1153 AD.

The merchants of Italian cities (Lane, 1973) (Dale, 1947) (Ashour, 1980) (Sabra, 1983) (Al-Tahawi, 1998) (Zaitoun, 1980) such as Genoa, Pisa and Venice received many concessions from the Crusaders in exchange for their own aid to the subjugation of the Syrian coast. Their influence increased greatly economically and politically. The kings of the kingdom of Jerusalem sought to build solid relations with those cities, for their vital role, through the agreements they signed with their lords.

It is noteworthy to say that the city of Acre was the jewel of the Syrian coast and the core of the Levant trade. The crusaders subjugated it in the reign of the founding king Baldwin I (Chartres, 1969) (Tyre, 1943) (1100-1118 AD), and was distinguished by a port which was fit to the anchorage of ships throughout the year, and achieved a prominent position in the Eastern-Mediterranean trade, and no other port was to compete with it.

We note that all European travellers who introduced the kingdom of the Crusaders, pointed to Acre and its very active role in trade. Those views also conformed with Muslim geographers and travellers' who mentioned it as the port of many trade ships, and was as great as Constantinople, the Byzantine metropolitan. It was overcrowded by merchants and visitors as having formed the commercial core of the Crusaders' presence (Ibn Jubair, 1964).

In fact, the period of the Crusades was part of what is described as “ The Era of the Commercial Revolution “ (Lopez, 1976) (Heyd, 1936) (Lombard, 1975) (Lombard, 1990) which extended chronologically from 950 to 1350 AD, during which we found the emergence of participation in the capitals , the availability of deposit and finance, growing markets. We also observed the expansion of maritime transportation by sailing ships or those of oars. During that era, too, we were informed about the massive sea- and-land caravans, as well as the speed of the movement of various goods from its areas of production to consumption markets in Asia, Africa and Europe.

In fact, the Crusaders throughout the period (1099 – 12091) is a very important stage in the history of the economic colonial plunder of the wealth of the Muslims' resources and fortunes, and therefore formed a fundamental part of that commercial revolution.

It is worth mentioning here that we found several pillars of trade in the form of spices, silk, slaves and gold.

For example, spices (Howe, 1957) (Al-Hamd, 2007) (Kazar, Al-Tawabil,2001) (Fahmy, 1973) were brought from India and South Asia , and then go through a route that extended by sea to the southern Arabian Peninsula and then passed through the Red Sea, then the East Egyptian desert to the Nile River, reaching Alexandria. From there, Italian merchant ships sailed north to Italy, then they go through The Alps to the Baltic Sea in Germany where there were herring fisheries, and spices were used to preserve them in preparation for the fasting seasons of the Christians.

Also, spices were used in the preparation of food and as medications to treat diseases. We do not forget to mention that drinking a warm oriental drink in Europe, where the weather is extremely cold, is a widely - accepted custom in Europe.

In general, a man's wealth in that era was measured by his possession of spices, just as Black Pepper - for example - represented part of a bride's dowry in France; which showed its great value for peoples in Europe.

As for silk, the Chinese were the first to know the extraction of silk by the Goose Worm, and this remained a secret of China until the world knew it. The humanity, then, found and used the Silk Road (Hyde, 1985) (Lombard,1990) (Ghoneim,1993) (Abu Assaf, 1991) (Hamidah,1991) (Farzat, 1991) (Zahidi, 1991) that extended from Shanghai, in China, to Venice in Italy. Thus, it can be described as the goose worm as the worm that united the Old World.

Several cities were located on the Silk Road, as many in China, cities of Transoxiana territory (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan currently) , Iran, Iraq, from then it passes through Mosul, Aleppo, and extended finally to areas in Asia Minor.

The Crusaders aimed to subdue that very section on the Syrian coast of this route, because of its central strategic importance in international trade. Later, the Mongols sought to achieve the same central goal (Gibran, 1991).

From another angle, we must realize the interference of the commercial side in the world of politics at that time, since the Fourth Crusade aimed to end the commercial role of Constantinople in the Mediterranean world and strengthen the role of Venice, in a way that confirmed the commercial economic goal, which was indicated earlier in this research paper.

Now, we have to discuss the relationship between the three elements (War - Pilgrimage -Trade).

It is certain that war was essential for the Crusaders, in order to secure the route of the Christian pilgrims, as well as trade, especially since the crusaders became the trade intermediaries instead of the Muslims. Generally, the war was very critical for them to secure their own presence amidst Islamic region bears hostility to them.

We should also note the close relationship between war and pilgrimage, as the Crusaders considered themselves armed pilgrims, who came to the Levant for performing the pilgrimage and visiting the Christian Holy Places. A matter widely- recognized with the set-off of the 1st Crusader.

On the other hand, we find that there is a close connection between war and commerce; The invaders fought fiercely to maintain their control over the trade routes, especially after they had the privilege of subjecting the Syrian coast to their full control from 1153 to 1187, then to a lesser extent from 1191 to 1291.

They also established their military fortifications on those roads to obtain the returns of traffic from which they made huge profits. There is no doubt they sought to

secure the traffic of trade caravans in the areas under their control, especially with our certainty that the crusade- conflict with the Muslims was for the full control of the land and water. We must not fall into the trap of the vision of the early Crusaders' chronicles which dealt with the crusades on a purely religious view, and portrayed the Crusaders themselves as the pure soldiers of the Christ, while the historical reality was confirmed by the references of their own historians.

Likewise, we note that trade was associated with warfare, through trading in swords, arrows, shields, axes, etc. No doubt that the phase of the Crusades saw a flourishing of using of those weapons, and the mastery of the unparalleled Damask Sword.

Beside that, trade flourished with the Christian religious feasts, as hundreds of thousands of pilgrims made their way to Palestine to celebrate, to visit the Holy Land, and to buy gifts with which they returned to their home countries to be blessed, in an era when the religious phenomenon increased greatly, and caused a big flourishing in trade

5 CONCLUSION

This research paper has concluded the following conclusions:

- 1) There are basic factors in the history of the Crusaders in the Levant, which are: War, Pilgrimage and Trade. Without them we cannot understand their conflict with the Muslims.
- 2) For the Crusaders, War was an axial factor for the Crusaders who set off from their homelands to the Levant, and could not be able to live in peace with their Muslim neighbours.
- 3) Pilgrimage considered a vital base for the control of the Crusaders over the Christian Holy Lands in Palestine. And Trade was a main object to finish the role of Muslims as trade agents between East and West.

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Authors' Contribution

Both authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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