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First Crusade

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**Number as a Numerical Reminder, a Signifier, among  
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**Birinci Haçlı Seferinin Müslüman ve Hristiyan  
Kaynaklarında Edebî İfadenin Rakamsal Biçimleri  
Arasında Rakamsal Bir Anımsatıcı ve Gösterge Olarak  
Sayı**

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### Abstract

This article provides a brief excursus on some use of number in literature, on the vexed matter of misreading recorded numerical hyperbole, of the use of number as a literary form of expression, numerical figures of speech, and as signifiers, numbers which - perhaps more often than one might think, have been and are being misread - read in a modern literal fashion as a measure of quantity, rather than as an understood Medieval form of literary expression concerning not only the expression of hyperbole but also of relative numbers and sizes, common to both Christian and Muslim authors-chroniclers, numbers representing the concepts of relatively many, relatively very many and relatively, a multitude, as also for relative lengths of time.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** First Crusade, Literature, Holy Places, Numerical Reminders - Signifiers, Hyperbole

### Özet

Bu makale, kaynaklardaki rakamların çeşitli kullanımlarını, bu kaynaklardaki sayısal abartıların yanlış yorumlanması ile ilgili tartışmalı konuları ele almaktadır. Bu bağlamda sayıların edebi bir ifade biçimi olarak kullanıma, sayısal mecazi anlatıma ve belki de çoğu zaman tahmin edilenden daha sık yanlış-doğru okunan abartı ifadelerine odaklanacaktır. Bu kapsamda hem Hıristiyan hem Müslüman yazar ve tarihçilerin aşına olduğu göreceli miktar ve ölçüler ele alınacak, göreceli olarak çok, abartılı ve aşırı rakamların anlamları dönemleri de göz önünde tutularak ortaçağ edebî dilindeki nicelikleri incelenecektir. Böylelikle niceliğin bir ölçüsü olarak modern ve gerçekçi bir şekilde nasıl ele alınacakları hakkında kısa ama kapsamlı bir inceleme sunulacaktır.

**Keywords:** Birinci Haçlı Seferi, Edebiyat, Kutsal Mekanlar, Sayısal Anımsatıcı, Abartı

The Medieval sources recording the numbers of populations, armies, numbers of participants in battles, numbers of bath-houses, castles, churches, cities, lengths of time etc., found in the contemporary works of geography, history, chronicles and literature can be read by the credulous at face value, read in a literal fashion and understood as presenting contemporary accurate recorded information concerning numbers, but credulity is of doubtful value in this matter. The use of hyperbole to explain, or highlight certain images employed in a text in order to attract the reader's attention, rather than the author or copyist deliberately expressing a false quantity, can be assumed as standard practice in Medieval literary works unless there is credible evidence to the contrary in a particular case. This contrary evidence seems to be of two types, firstly, and rarely, where an exact figure seems actually to have been established, a tally taken, the actual number of vessels employed recorded in a contract, etc., and, secondly, where a number is employed by the author, Christian or Muslim, to itself serve the reader as a specific numerical reminder, a signifier, rather than being either an example of hyperbole, or to be read literally. In addition there was the expression of relative number or size, numbers to be read as indicating some/some time, many/a long time and very many/a very long time.

### **The practice of Hyperbole: of Numberless Locusts and (grains of) Sand, of Sheep and Persians, Castles and Cities, Days and Years, Men and Mules**

The idea of the countless/numberless multitude finds expression in the Bible, both in the form of analogy, as for example of locusts and sand, *Then he went forth and all his power to go before the king Nabuchodonosor in the voyage, and to cover all the face of the earth westwards with their chariots, and horsemen and their chosen footmen. A great number also (from) sundry countries came with them like locusts, and like the sand of the earth: for the multitude was without number;*<sup>1</sup> and in the form of numerical expression, *And the booty, being the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep.*<sup>2</sup> If this number of 675,000 sheep is read literally, as a part of the livestock booty from the grazing land in the region of Midian in N.W. Arabia, belonging to the Midianites at the time of Moses, given the arid-semi desert conditions of c. 1300 – 1200 B.C., slightly wetter<sup>3</sup> than today's precipitation of <200 mm/yr. and usually less than 100 mm.,

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<sup>1</sup> Judith 2. 19-20.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers 31.32.

<sup>3</sup> Stage 3 (3.5–2.5 cal kyr BP ACC). After ≈800 years of wetter conditions, inferred from the increases in PdB, classified as forest, a new trend to more arid conditions is initiated in the Syrian coastal area by the fall of WAMX PdB-scores and a renewed increase of XERO PdB-scores dated at ca. 1175 B.C. Kaniewski, David, E. Paulissen, E. Van Campo, M. Al-Maqdissi, J. Bretschneider, and K. Van Lerberghe, Middle East coastal ecosystem

they would have required a considerable range of grazing land to support this number. Can such an area of productive range lands be found within the then territory of Midian to support this number of sheep to lend credence to the statement that this actual number of sheep was taken as booty? Today Al-Bada'/Mugha'ir Shu'ayb, the remains of Midain /Madyan, are within the administrative Province of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. In 1998 this region of 99,306 sq. km. contained 634,507 sheep,<sup>4</sup> mostly fed on imported barley, with much less than 20% of this number range fed. Read in a literal manner this number of 675,000 head of sheep seems impossible for the territory of Midain to support, even if the northern part of Madinah Province with wādī Jizi were included, it appears to be a literal non-sense, but, read as hyperbole, exaggeration for the sake of effect, not intended to deceive, but indicating a very large number of sheep were acquired as booty from the Midianites, is certainly possible. Herodotus, the so-called "Father of History,"<sup>5</sup> employed hyperbole, as had been repeatedly employed in earlier works understood to record historical events and in public inscriptions concerning battles and conquests.<sup>6</sup> In respect to the Battle of Thermopylae of 480 B.C., Herodotus gives a total of 2,641,610 Persian fighting men.<sup>7</sup> And the size of the total force? *The number, then, of those whom Xerxes son of Darius led as far as the Sepiad headland and Thermopylae was five million, two hundred and eighty-three thousand, two hundred and twenty.*<sup>8</sup> While for the Hellenes at Thermopylae, he gives 4,000<sup>9</sup> and also records: *There is an inscription written over these men, who were buried where they fell, and over those who died before the others went away, dismissed by Leonidas. It reads as follows: Here four thousand from the Peloponnese once fought three million.*<sup>10</sup> The 4,000 recorded in the inscription confirming the 4,000 Hellenes given in detail by Herodotus as the total Hellenic force at Thermopylae. The number of Persians differs, but both figures are undoubted hyperbole, the round number 3,000,000 and the muster roll like figure of 2,641,610 are in 5<sup>th</sup> c. B.C. logistical terms simply nonsense, these numbers were employed to magnify and memorialise the scale of the victory at Thermopylae. Likewise Gaius Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.), in his account of his

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response to middle-to-late Holocene abrupt climate changes, PNAS September 16, 2008 105 (37) 13941-13946; <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0803533105> <https://www.pnas.org/content/105/37/13941>

<sup>4</sup> Bourne, David, *Livestock Dynamics in the Arabian Peninsula: A Regional Review of National Livestock Resources and International Livestock Trade*, Environmental Research Group Oxford, 2003, 29.

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, *On the Laws* 1.5.

<sup>6</sup> For some examples see K. Lawson Younger, Jr. *Ancient Conquest Accounts: A Study in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History Writing*, Bloomsbury, London & Oxford, 1990, 190-192.

<sup>7</sup> Hdt. 7.185.1-3.

<sup>8</sup> Hdt. 7.186. 1-2.

<sup>9</sup> Hdt. 7.203.1-2.

<sup>10</sup> Hdt. 7.228.1.

military campaigns in Gaul between 58 and 51 B.C., *de Bello Gallico* gives the very large number of the enemy he said were killed<sup>11</sup>, a death toll in his war in Gaul of about 700,000 people, doubtless hyperbole and doubtless expected in a literary work penned by a successful general. The extravagant number of dead recorded by Caesar himself is surpassed a century later by Plutarch who in *The Life of Julius Caesar* stated, *For although it was not full ten years that he waged war in Gaul, he took by storm more than eight hundred cities, subdued three hundred nations, and fought pitched battles at different times with three million men, of whom he slew one million in hand to hand fighting and took as many more prisoners.*<sup>12</sup> It is evident that Plutarch at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. A.D. was indicating with his use of the number 3,000,000 that the Roman army was the equal of the Hellenes at Thermopylae, as recorded by Herodotus, thereby suggesting Caesar was equal of the Spartan King Leonidas I., writing that Caesar, *proved him to be inferior as soldier and commander to no one soever of those who have won most admiration for leadership and shown themselves greatest therein.*<sup>13</sup> Plutarch used the number three million as a numerical reminder, to be read as a signifier, not as indicating the actual number the Roman army fought against in the course of the Gallic Wars, but in a literary manner, to remind of Thermopylae and to associate Caesar with Leonidas.

### The Forty

In a related manner the use of the number forty in Medieval literary accounts and chronicles, both Christian<sup>14</sup> and Muslim, was frequently to suggest the idea of *many*, rather than being an exact number. Accounts that report the capture of *forty castles*,<sup>15</sup> “*40 kale fethetti.*”<sup>16</sup> or of 40 cities,<sup>17</sup> do not mean that exactly

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<sup>11</sup> BG 1.29.3, 2.28.2, 2.33.5, 4.14–15, 7.28.4–5.

<sup>12</sup> Plut. Caes. 15.5

<sup>13</sup> Plut. Caes. 15.1.

<sup>14</sup> For further on this form of usage of numbers, see for example, *Apocryphal Forties, the historical spuriousness of the number forty*, which cites 19 examples from the Old Testament and 6 from the New Testament including: *forty days and forty nights, hundred and forty four thousand*, etc. and for further examples see, Gliddon, George R. & Nott, Josiah C., *The Types of Mankind*, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1854, 706-713.

<sup>15</sup> Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela relates of Yemen, *The province of which Thanaejm is the metropolis contains forty cities*, Thomas Wright, *Early Travels in Palestine: Comprising the Narratives of Arculf, Willibald, Bernard, Saewulf, Sigurd, Benjamin of Tudela, John Maundeville, de la Brocquiere, and Maundrell*, Cosimo, Inc., 2011, 104, that is *many cities*. Likewise, *as nearly everyone has his own dialect*, the forty castles (*quadraginta castella*) of Friar William de Rubruk on the southern coast of the Crimea between Soldaia and Cherson in the Genovese Captainty of Gothia, *The Mission of Frair William of Rubruck, his journey to the court of the Great Khan Möngke 1253-1255*, Trans. Jackson, Peter, The Hakluyt Society, London, 1990, 69. These do not imply any exact number, rather, the idea of many castles/many cities. As likewise, *When the Mamluks laid claim to much of eastern Cilicia in 1337, this region contained 'forty castles*

40 castles, or forty cities were actually captured, but were read and understood at the time to mean that *many* castles/cities were captured. Likewise Robert de Clari after 1205 relates: *Alexios went out with all the army and conquered a good twenty cities and forty castles or more in the land.*<sup>18</sup> A good 20 cities and forty or more castles, expressing the idea of *many cities and castles*, not numbers to be read in a literal manner. Likewise, 40 days as an indication of time, meaning *a long time*, as for example is recorded in 544 of a Constantinople earthquake that lasted for 40 days, and those recorded by Jelal ad-Din as-Soyuti (d. 911/1506), *A.H. 94 (712-13) On the 20<sup>th</sup> of Adar (March) an earthquake in Syria, which lasted 40 days. Many buildings were destroyed in Antiochia. A.H. 98. Again for forty days, during the Khalifat of Omar Ben Abdul-aziz, in Syria. A.H. 346 (957/8). An earthquake at Rai and about that town, it lasted 40 days, then it discontinued for sometime, but it again returned*<sup>19</sup>, meaning a series of seismic events spread over *a long time*, the number forty was an expression, not usually employed to mean exactly five weeks and five days. In Muhammad b. Al-Hasan b. Isfandiyar's *History of Tabaristan*, of c. 1216, the number forty is likewise not necessarily employed as indicating any exact number, but rather a figure of literary speech indicating to the reader *many*, including the expressions, forty days, forty castles, forty mules, and forty men: *When the Mosque (at Amul in A.H. 177) was finished, they desired to ascertain the direction of the qibla but it rained unceasingly for forty nights and days, and they were obliged to have recourse to conjecture.*<sup>20</sup> *Even in the author's time there remained forty castles filled with the gold and jewels and other precious things which he (Bavandid, Shah Gazi Rustam, Nusrat ad-Din Rustam, ca. 536/1142 to 560/1165) had amassed.*<sup>21</sup> *All this tribute (from Tabaristan at the time of the Caliph al-Mansur, r. 754-755 A.D.) was laden on forty mules, on each of which was mounted a Turkish slave or hand-maiden.*<sup>22</sup> *In A. H. 187 (= A.D. 803) Ja'far b. Harun was sent to reorganize the land-tax and to survey the country in the territory occupied by Wandasafan,*

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*and fortresses, each with its own lord'. Molin, Kristian, Unknown Crusader Castles, Bloomsbury, London and New York, 2001, 159, meaning many.*

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Peacock, Andrew C. S., "The Saljuq campaign against the Crimea and the Expansionist Policy of the Early Reign of Ala'al-Din Kayqubad", 133-149 in, *JRAS*, Series 3, 16, 2, 2006, 138, "*the amirs Mubariz al-Din Chavli and Comneus were dispatched to make war on Cilician Armenia, and Mubariz al-Din Ertokuş attacked the coastal region east of Antalya, capturing forty castles.*", indicating the literal reading of forty in the sentence, Bibi 1996, 354, when ibn Bibi was expressing through the use of this number, the word *many*, rather than the number 40, so, not, "*capturing forty castles,*" but, capturing *many* castles.

<sup>17</sup> An Abridged Translation of the History of Tabaristan compiled about A.H. 613 (A.D. 1216) by Muhammad b. Al-Hasan b. Isfandiyar, Trans. Browne, Edward G., Leiden, Brill, 1905, 60.

<sup>18</sup> Robert de Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, Trans. Noble, Peter S., Société Rencèveals British Branch, Edinburgh, 2005, 71.

<sup>19</sup> Sprenger 1843, 741, 743.

<sup>20</sup> Browne 1905, 60.

<sup>21</sup> Browne 1905, 60.

<sup>22</sup> Browne 1905, 118.



who slew him with a blow from his mace while he was thus employed. Forty men who were with him fled to 'Abdūllah and informed him of what had happened, and he communicated the matter to the Caliph.<sup>23</sup> When news of Sayyid Nasir's rising power reached Bukhara, Ahmad the Samanid sent Muhammad b. 'Abdu'l-'Aziz to Tabaristan, but forty days after his arrival there he was defeated by Sayyid Nasir, whose power now became paramount over Tabaristan.<sup>24</sup>

In the same manner, Nasir al-Din Husayn ibn Muhammad b. 'Alī Ja'farī Roḡadī, ibn Bibi (in Konya in 1231- alive in 1284), a man of letters, *mālek-e dīvān-e ṭoḡrā* - Rūm Seljuk chancellery director, in his *El-Evāmirü'l-'Alā'iyye fī'l-Umuri'l-'Ala'iyye* recorded the capture of 40 = *many* castles, as noted above,<sup>25</sup> and, concerning the events of 1230, records the number 40 in respect to a length of time, that if read in a literal fashion appears to give the exact number of days the Sultan spent in Antalya.<sup>26</sup> However, like the forty castles or cities captured, a length of time expressed as forty days (or years) indicated to the educated reader that the sultan spent a *long time* at Antalya, not precisely 5 weeks and 5 days, that is, in the same manner as was used by Muhammad b. Al-Hasan b. Isfandiyar in his *History of Tabaristan*. The number 40 when employed in a medieval source, Christian or Muslim, often indicated *many* or indicated a *long period of time*, not usually any exact quantity.

### Sixty and 60,000

Of similar import, the number sixty was employed to mean a *great many*, not literally the number sixty, and as in "*sittin sene*," 60 years, to mean a *very long time*<sup>27</sup>, or, to express the idea of *very many*, more than was expressed by the numbers 40 or 40,000, as at the Battle of Marj Rāhiṭ in 684 A.D. between Marwān Ibn al-Ḥakam and al-Ḍaḥḥāk Ibn Qays al-Fahrī, who supported and nominated 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-Zubayr to become Caliph. The army of al-Ḍaḥḥāk was said to have been about 60,000 strong, but was defeated by the 40,000 of the army of Marwān Ibn al-Ḥakam. The number 40,000 here meaning *many* and the 60,000 meaning, *very many*, indicating neither numbers of troops nor a 2:3 ratio.

This use of number to present the idea of very many likewise applies to the numbers: 400, 1,200, 4,000, and 40,000, in the statement said to have been made by

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<sup>23</sup> Browne 1905, 141.

<sup>24</sup> Browne 1905, 200-201.

<sup>25</sup> Op. cit. fn. 17.

<sup>26</sup> Peacock, 2013, 218, "...he then goes to Antalya, and after 40 days there continues to Qubadabad."

<sup>27</sup> Edward Said, *Time Magazine*, April 16, 1979, is reported to have said that in the 150 years from 1800 to 1950, "over 60,000 books have been written against Islam by the Christian West.", he gave this number as a figure of speech, indicating a very great number, not as a statement of a numerical fact.

'Amr ibn al-'Ās to the Caliph 'Umar on the conquest of Alexandria in 641 A.D., "I can only say that it contains 4,000 palaces, 4,000 baths, 400 theatres, 1,200 greengrocers and 40,000 Jews."<sup>28</sup>; as likewise the numbers Ibn Khurdāhbīh (d. c. 855) relates of the city of Rome, "a river of yellow copper (the Tiber), 1,200 churches, 40,000 bathhouses...(beyond the walls) there are 1,200 pillars with monks on them."<sup>29</sup> and the estimate of Hilal al-Sabi' (969–1056), that Baghdad at its peak had 60,000 bathhouses.<sup>30</sup> As likewise, frequently the numbers: 70, 700, 900, 1000, 1001, 6,000, 10,000, 900,000, 200,000, or 100,000, tents, people or paces, indicated, *many*, or, *a great many*, or, *a very great many*, or even, *a multitude*, not necessarily however stating how many, misleading in this usage the literal, the credulous and the wishful, then as now, and leading to the mental construction of both the legendary, the fabulous and the quite simply unbelievable, through the misreading of the use of these expressive literary cyphers, as multipliers of literal fact; as also to the scepticism and the rejection of some information presented in such an unfamiliar form for some modern readers of Medieval texts.

In the January 1098 letter to the Church in the West from the Patriarch of Jerusalem (at the siege of Antioch), are the sentences: "Since we are not unaware that you delight in the increase of the Church, and we believe that you are concerned to hear matters adverse as well as prosperous, we hereby notify you of the success of our undertaking. Therefore, be it known to your delight that God has triumphed in forty important cities and in two hundred fortresses of his Church in Romania, as well as in Syria, and that we still have one hundred thousand men in armour, besides the common throng, though many were lost in the first battles."<sup>31</sup> Read as exhortatory literature as was intended, is one thing, read as a statement of numerical fact, quite another. The First Crusade by January 1098 had not taken 40 important cities and 200 castles, and there were not 100,000 men in armour, maybe not even 1,000 by January 1098 at Antioch. The rhetoric, the hyperbole of 100,000, the reality, maybe 1000. Likewise full of outstanding hyperbole is the letter composed after victory at the Battle of Ascalon on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, 1099, addressed in the name of Daimbert, Archbishop of Pisa and Papal legate, Godfrey of Bouillon, Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri, and Raymond of Toulouse, and all the army in the land of Israel, to the Pope (Paschal II.) and the Christian faithful:...*in our army there could not have*

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<sup>28</sup> Sattin 1988, 154. Olav G. Ørum remarks, "The Jewish community were told to have constituted of as many as 40,000 individuals when the Muslims conquered Egypt, however the allegation seems strongly exaggerated (cf. Baron 1967, 90)," Ørum 2017, 90, fn. 4. However, it seems most probable this 40,000 was formerly understood as simply representing *many*, not any census number of individuals.

<sup>29</sup> Newman 2001, 198.

<sup>30</sup> [https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bath/hd\\_bath.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bath/hd_bath.htm)

<sup>31</sup> Krey 2007, 142-144; quoted Peters 2011.

been more than five thousand knights and 15,000 foot-soldiers; in that of the enemy 100,000 knights and 400,000 foot soldiers<sup>32</sup>...More than one hundred thousand Saracens fell by the sword, but their fear was such that at the gate of the city of Ascalon around 2,000 suffocated in the crush...At Ascalon, against the king of Babylon, in which 100,000 knights, and 400,000 foot-soldiers were defeated and destroyed by a small army of Christians. Thanks be to God!<sup>33</sup> That the enemy numbered half a million is hyperbole, followed by the hyperbole of 100,000 Saracens<sup>34</sup> killed by the sword. This echoes the hyperbole of the *Chanson de Roland* at the Pass of Roncesvalles, where, in the destruction by the 20,000 of the French rearguard of the first wave of 100,000 Saracens, only Margariz, survived<sup>35</sup>; and it closes with the small army of 20,000 defeating an army twenty five times larger, of 500,000. There was simply no possibility in high summer of an army of half a million arriving by sea, or crossing 137 miles of the Sinai Desert from Egypt in August 1099. With news of the Franks in Jerusalem, a Fatimid army of 15,000–20,000 under the Vizier al-Afdal Shahanshah had crossed by sea in August and encamped at 'Asqalān/Ashkelon. They were taken by surprise by the army of about 10,000<sup>36</sup> who had left Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August. Written in rhetorical form, the hyperbole of 500,000 defeated by 20,000, 100,000 Saracens killed. The reality, 15,000 to 20,000 encamped, surprised by 10,000 battle hardened pilgrim soldiers.

### 330,000 Tents

This is likewise the case when reading the numbers recorded in the text by Abū al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā ibn Sa'īd al-Maghribī (1213–1286) in his *Kitāb al-Jughrāfiyā*:

*"As we have mentioned, there are the mountains of Denizli (Ṭughūzla) [situated] to the north of Antalya (Anṭāliyyā). They say that there are approximately two hundred thousand Turkmen tents in Denizli and the surrounding regions. And they (the Turkmens) are*

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<sup>32</sup> Krey 2012, 337.

<sup>33</sup> Krey 2012, 339.

<sup>34</sup> It was said by George Kedrenos in the 11<sup>th</sup> c., that one hundred thousand Saracens perished in an attempt to recapture Antioch in, 970 A.D.; that the Italians by the persuasion of Pope Victor (III, 1086-87) invaded Africa, where they killed 100,000 Saracens, and overthrew their chief Cities; and it was said, there were one hundred thousand Saracens at the 12<sup>th</sup> c. siege of Acre, Ambroise, *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*

<sup>35</sup> Gerard J. Brault, *Song of Roland: An Analytical Edition: Introduction and Commentary*, Penn State Press, 2010, 190; Roland with his magic sword *Durendal*, gift of his charlelous lord, and with the horn *Oliphant*; at Ashkelon there was the miraculous *Holy Lance* and the *True Cross*.

<sup>36</sup> Asbridge, Thomas, *The Crusades: The War for the Holy Land*, Simon & Schuster UK Ltd. 2010, 104-105 gives 1,200 knights and 9,000 infantry against 20,000 North Africans.

called *al-uj* (i.e. the Turks of the uç)<sup>37</sup>. And he also records 30,000 Turkmen tents around Kütahya-Karahisar Ankara,<sup>38</sup> and a further 100,000 Turkmen tents near Kastamonu<sup>39</sup>. The word employed is *bayt* meaning household, in the case of nomadic Turkmen, a tented household. These numbers given to ibn Sa'îd by some unnamed source, dating from the fourth quarter of the 13<sup>th</sup> c., c. 1280, have been cited by scholars and others countless times over the past 60 years as indicating the size of the Turkmen nomadic population in 13<sup>th</sup> c. Anatolia,<sup>40</sup> but such, from the evidence cited, does not seem to be the case. This same number of 200,000 Turkmen tents between Antalya and in the mountains of Denizli is given by M. F.

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<sup>37</sup> Korobeinikov, Dimitri, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*, Oxford University Press, 2014, 224-225.

<sup>38</sup> Cahen 1968, 44.

<sup>39</sup> Cahen 1968, 48.

<sup>40</sup> E.g.: Wittek, Paul, *Menteşe Beyliği: 13-15 inci asırda garbî Küçük Asya tarihine ait tetkik*, T.T.K., Ankara, 1944, 2; Sümer, Faruk, *Oğuzlar, Türkmenler: tarihleri, boy teşkilâtı, destanları*, Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara, 1967, 160; Cahen, Claude, "Ibn Sa'îd sur l'Asia Mineure Seldjuqide", *Tarih Araşt. Dergisi*, VI/10-11 (1968), pp. 10-11, 41-50, 42-44, 48; Gül, Kemâl Vehbi, *Anadolu'nun Türkleştirilmesi ve İslamlaştırılması*, Toker Yay., İstanbul, 1971, 32; Şapolyo, Enver Behnan, *Selçuklu İmparatorluğu tarihi*, Güven Matbaası, Ankara, 1972, 111; Sumer, Faruk, *Türkler'de atçılık ve binicilik*, 1. Cilt, *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı*, İstanbul, 1983, 17; Mehmet Eröz, *Yörükler*, *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı*, İstanbul, 1991, 15; Sümer, Faruk, *Çepniler: Anadolu'daki Türk yerleşmesinde önemli rol oynayan bir Oğuz boyu*, *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı*, İstanbul, 1992, 10; Korkmaz, Zeynep, *Bartın ve yöresi ağızları*, Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara, 1994, 62; Yapıcı, Mestan, *Beydağ, Balyambolu, Palaiopolis*, M. Yapıcı, İzmir, 1995, 103; Ed. Merçil, Erdoğan, *Türk dünyası kültür atlası: The Seljuk period*, *Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı*, Turkish Cultural Service Foundation, İstanbul, 1996, 266; Aylan, Aydın, *Balıkesir ve çevresinde iskân hareketleri*, Balıkesir Rotary Kulüp, Ankara, 1997, 10; Gökçe, Turan, *Onaltıncı ve onyedinci yüzyıllarda Lâzıkıyye (Denizli) Kazâsı*, T.T.K., Ankara, 2000, 58; Gündüz, Tufan, *Yörükler ve Türkmenler*, *Yörtürk Vakfı*, Ankara, 2000, 244; Özdeğer, Mehtap, *15-16. yüzyıl arşiv kaynaklarına göre Uşak kazasının sosyal ve ekonomik tarihi*, Filiz Kitabevi, İstanbul, 2001, 39-40; Akkuş, Tacettin, *Tanzimat başlarında Balıkesir Kazası: demografik durum, Zağnos Kültür ve Eğitim Vakfı*, Balıkesir, 2001, 5; Turan, Osman, *Türk Cihân Hâkimiyeti Mefkûresi Tarihi*, Ötüken, İstanbul, 2003, 234; Baykara, Tuncer, *Türk kültürü*, 1. Cilt, *IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık*, İstanbul, 2003, 438; Gündüz, Tufan, *Anadolu Selçukluları ve Türkmenler*, 265-274, Ed. Ocak, Ahmet Yaşar, *Anadolu Selçukluları ve beylikler dönemi: I, Sosyal ve siyasal hayat*, T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, Ankara, 2006, 270-271; Şahin, İlhan, *Nomads in the Ottoman Empire*, Eren, İstanbul, 2006, 59; Koföglü, Sait, *Hamidoğulları Beyliği*, *Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu*, Ankara, 2006, 51; Şahin, Naci, *XIX. yüzyılda Karahisar-ı Sahib Sancağı: sosyo-ekonomik ve kültürel yapı*, *IQ Kültür Sanat Yay.*, İstanbul, 2007, 62; Gündüz, Tufan, *Anadolu'da Türkmen aşiretleri: Bozulus Türkmenleri, 1540-1640*, *Yeditepe Yay.*, İstanbul, 2007, 21; Galtekin, Ahmed Nezi, *Kocaeli Körfez İlçesi: tarih ve kültür mirası eserler*, 2. Cilt, *Körfez Belediyesi*, 2008, 106; Peacock, Andrew C. S., 2013, 84-5, 185, 186, 195; Thonemann, Peter, *The Maeander Valley: A Historical Geography from Antiquity to Byzantium*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, 7; Yıldız, Bilal, *Denizli (Lazkiye) sancağı'nda gayrimüslimler (1876-1935)*, *Denizli Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yay.*, Denizli, 2014, 58; Sarı, İbrahim, *Oğuz Boyları: Türkler, Oğuzların Neslindendir*, *noktaekitap*, Antalya, 2018, 241, etc.

Köprülü citing Abū'l-Fidā.<sup>41</sup> These numbers are undoubtedly a literary figure of speech, numerical hyperbole, simply indicative of some very large number, with relatively more of a large number near Үғһүзла-Tunguzlu-Denizli than by Kastamonu, and a relatively much smaller number near Ankara, related to ibn Sa'īd<sup>42</sup>. Halil İnalçik in 2014 wrote, *Although, grossly exaggerated, these numbers can be taken to be an indication of the considerable size of the Turkmen frontier forces.*<sup>43</sup> But this was not a matter of gross exaggeration, this was a literary form of expression concerning relative quantity, indicating respectively, very many, many and relatively few, and only if read in a literal fashion as representing statistics, rather than read in a literary fashion as an expression of relative quantity, do these numbers appear to be a gross exaggeration.

If one approaches this text in a less than credulous, or literal fashion, then certain reasonable questions arise, such as, how many persons can be expected per tented household? The total number of tent dwellers in 200,000 tents by Denizli, at an average of five persons per tent is about one million persons. For some comparisons, the size of this nomad population around Denizli in the 13<sup>th</sup> c. is the same as the entire 19<sup>th</sup> c. Turkmen population of Turkmenistan, an average across the 200,000 Turkmen tents in Turkmenistan estimated at 5 persons per tent: *In 1870 there were some 200,000 Turkmen tents, holding an estimated 1 million people, divided into some twenty-four tribes, scattered across the desert.*<sup>44</sup> This supposed Turkmen population in the 13<sup>th</sup> c. around just Denizli is also the equivalent of the entire nomadic population of the Oirat-Kalmuk Dzungar Khanate in 1760, of four subdivisions, totalling between 600,000 to 1,000,000 people<sup>45</sup> in about 200,000 tents,

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<sup>41</sup> Köprülü, Mehmet Fuat,- Leiser, Gary, *The Origins of the Ottoman Empire*, SUNY Press, New York, 1992, 44, fn.11, citing *Tabaqāt-i nāsiri* (Calcutta, 1864) p. 9.

<sup>42</sup> Linder 1983, 42, fn. 56. *"Ibn Sa'īd's numbers give of course, only the order of magnitude of the nomadic population."* my emphasis.

<sup>43</sup> İnalçik 2014, 474.

<sup>44</sup> Rashid, Ahmed, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism*, Oxford University Press,, London & New York, 1994, 191, derived from Vambéry's figures of 196,500, at 5 persons per tent, Vambéry, Armin, *Travels in Central Asia: Being the Account of a Journey from Teheran Across the Turkoman Desert on the Eastern Shore of the Caspian to Khiva, Bokhara, and Samarcand Performed in the Year 1863*, John Murray, 1864, 309. For an example of an 8 person nomadic family, with a herd of 1,000 (which seems to be a typo for 100) goats, that migrates from Mersin to Konya to Mersin, a round trip of 1200 km every year, see *"Turkey's last nomads roam Anatolia,"* Reuters, July 16, 2018, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkeys-last-nomads-roam-anatolia-134626> For definitions of flock size, of 60 to 200 head, see Linder 1983, 63, a flock of 1,000 is extraordinarily large, impossible to manage for a single nomadic family of 8 persons.

<sup>45</sup> 40% of the Khanate's population died of smallpox, 30% were killed and 20% fled to Russia and the Kazakh hordes, Barisitz, Stephan, *Central Asia and the Silk Road: Economic Rise and Decline over Several Millennia*, Springer Nature, Cham, Switzerland, 2017, 201.

before the smallpox, conquest by the Qing Chinese, and depopulation; in a territory that extended from southern Siberia in the north to present-day Kyrgyzstan in the south, and from the Great Wall of China in the east to present-day Kazakhstan in the west, an area considerably larger than that around Denizli. Another 100,000 tents by Kastamonu, another half a million people; and by Ankara 30,000 tents, about another one hundred and fifty thousand. Read in a literal fashion the following question arises, is this number of nomads, of perhaps one million six hundred and fifty thousand persons at 5 persons per tent, combined with their flocks of grazing animals, a population of grazing animals in the very many millions, that is, a total of more than 75% of the nomadic populations of Turkmenistan and the Dzungar Khanate combined, located around Denizli and the surrounding regions, by Kastamonu, and by Ankara in the 13<sup>th</sup> c. any reasonable, possible, or sustainable number? While Mehmet Fuat Köprülü wrote, *Hülegü came with a force based on a people of 100,000 tents, approximately one million people (1253)*,<sup>46</sup> providing an average not of 5, but of 10 persons per tent. Dimitri Korobeinikov in 2012, on the basis of the distance of annual migration and Ottoman tax registers from 1570-1580 suggested a probable figure of 20,000-25,000 nomads<sup>47</sup>. Further, it is worth noting that it is precisely this same number of 200,000 tents, numbering about 1,000,000 or 2,000,000 persons that is reported by Ibn al-Athîr (1160-1233) to have first converted to Islam in 349/960<sup>48</sup>. There should therefore be the presumption that 200,000 tents does not itself represent any precise number of tents around Denizli. Rather, this number itself served as an indication, the signifier of some relatively very large number, not a number to be read in a literal fashion. On this same matter, the fact that a late 12<sup>th</sup> c. Latin source concerning the Third Crusade, relates “*there were about 100,000 nomadic tents in the Denizli and İsparta regions.*”,<sup>49</sup> has likewise frequently been cited<sup>50</sup>. The problem is as

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<sup>46</sup> Köprülü, Mehmet Fuat,- Leiser, Gary, *The Origins of the Ottoman Empire*, SUNY Press, New York, 1992, 46.

<sup>47</sup> Korobeinikov, Dimitri, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*, Oxford University Press, 2014, 231. Korobeinikov 2016, 69-71.

<sup>48</sup> Bartold, Vasilii Vladimirovich, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, Gibb Memorial Series, London, 1928, 255.

<sup>49</sup> İnalçık 2014, 469, references in fn. 10; İlhan Şahin, *The Oghuz Turks of Anatolia*, 228-252, *Journal of Turkic Civilisation Studies*, 1 (2004), Bishkek, 231; Ed. Merçil, Erdoğan, *Türk dünyası kültür atlası: The Seljuk period, Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı, Turkish Cultural Service Foundation, İstanbul, 1996, 266, Devrin kaynaklarına göre, 1190 yılında sadece İsparta-Antalya bölgesinde 100.000 göçebe Türkmen vardı.*; Halil İnalçık, “The Yürüks: Their Origins, Expansion and Economic Role”, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire*, Bloomington 1993, 98; S. Vryonis 1971, 191; O. Turan 1965, 209-210.

<sup>50</sup> Şahin, İlhan, *Nomads in the Ottoman Empire*, Eren, İstanbul, 2006, 59, *Nitekim bir Lâtin kaynağı, XI. yüzyılın sonlarında Denizli bölgesiyle İsparta bölgesindeki göçbelerin 100.000 çadır civarında olduğunu vermektedir.*” Ed. Merçil, Erdoğan, *Türk dünyası kültür atlası: The Seljuk period*, İstanbul, Türk

enumerated above, a literary figure of speech has been read as the expression of a numerical fact. 100,000 nomadic tents taking an average of 5 persons per tent, is half a million persons, at M. F. Köprülü's 10 persons per tent, one million, and certainly many millions of grazing animals. In a similar manner, in terms of relative reality, the recorded relative size of a settlement's population in relation to other settlements may well be correct, city A may well have been smaller than cities B and C, although for a variety of reasons the actual numbers given for the populations of the cities A, B and C, are frequently exaggerated, both in the sources and in modern estimates, as Josiah Cox Russell had remarked upon more than 60 years ago.<sup>51</sup>

Literary conventions may require an army of millions, or at least in the hundreds of thousands on the First Crusade at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, like the 3,000,000 or 2,641,610 Persian troops at Thermopylae, but the state of 5<sup>th</sup> c. B.C., as of 11<sup>th</sup> c. A.D. logistics, meant no army of millions, no army of hundreds of thousands marched through the landscape.<sup>52</sup> The total population of England and Wales in 1086 was 1 to 2 million, of France in 1100, 6 million.<sup>53</sup> To imagine that millions, or hundreds of thousands of *crucesignati*, the able-bodied aged between 16 and 40 departed from Latin Europe, in terms of logistics and the remaining populations is quite simply a modern misreading of medieval literary forms and

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Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı, Turkish Cultural Service Foundation, 1996, 266, *Devrin kaynaklarına göre, 1190 yılında sadece Isparta-Antalya bölgesinde 100.000 göçebe Türkmen vardı.*

<sup>51</sup> "The study of the writing upon population history shows two biases: one in favor of exaggerated estimates and the second a tendency to use the number five as the index for house, hearth, or family. For some reason the number five has a fascination for historians as the index number for family units. The writer thinks in terms of a man-wife-three children family, forgetting that this condition only lasts a few years in the career of families. As will be shown later, the man-wife-children unit was usually about 3.5. If others lived in the same house or there were exemptions, the index number might be larger. While the index number was occasionally five, it is not a "reasonable" figure. Since the index number was usually less than five, the use of that number merely aggravated the tendency to exaggerate population size." Russell, Josiah C., *Ancient and Medieval Populations*, 1-152 in, *Transactions American Philosophical Soc.*, Vol. 48, No. 3, 1958, 12; and, "The tendency to use high figures has persisted despite Beloch's work." Russell 1958, 8. For some problems with Russell's methodology and low estimates, as regarding Edessa see Charanis 1972, 2-3. However, the difference amounts to an increase of about 25%. This difference is entirely insufficient to close the gap between the perhaps low estimates of Russell and the sheer exuberance of others, a difference in stated population of more than 10 million, of between 3.5 and 14 million for the population in Muslim territory in Anatolia in 1300.

<sup>52</sup> A recent guess put the number of fighting men reaching Asia Minor in 1096-7 at between 50,000 and 70,000, excluding non-combatant pilgrims, Tyerman, Christopher, *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, 39; and, *of the upwards of 100,000 who had left for Jerusalem in 1096*, Tyerman 2004, 44. For comparison with this irrational exuberance, the 1203-4 Crusade had about 23,000 armed participants; while the Crusade of Louis IX had an army of 15,000 in 1248, Tyerman 2004, 63.

<sup>53</sup> Grigg 1980, 53; Chevalier 2008, 77.

hyperbole, resulting in a fantasy of medievalism, through a literate literal quoting of the sources. As Thomas F. Madden repeated in his article, *Rivers of Blood: An Analysis of One Aspect of the Crusader Conquest of Jerusalem in 1099, Later stories of the streets of Jerusalem coursing with knee-high rivers of blood were never meant to be taken seriously. Medieval people knew such a thing to be an impossibility. Modern people, unfortunately, often do not.*<sup>54</sup>

To return from literary and numerical hyperbole, today understood by some historians to present accurate accounts and figures, to relative reality recorded, Geoffroi de Villehardouin an informed aware participant records the 1204 sack of Constantinople involved not millions, nor yet hundreds of thousands, but about 23,000 Crusaders.<sup>55</sup> This at a time when London had a population of 25,000 to 28,000,<sup>56</sup> Cologne in 1180, 32,000 rising to 40,000 by 1340,<sup>57</sup> Venice in 1204, 80,000,<sup>58</sup> Bologna in the 1290's a population of around 50,000<sup>59</sup>, and Florence, the largest city of Tuscany by 1180, 30,000,<sup>60</sup> Genoa in 1155, c. 30,000 to 40,000, by 1250, 100,000,<sup>61</sup> Pisa in 1180 perhaps 12,000,<sup>62</sup> and Rome by the 12<sup>th</sup> c. 40,000.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, for example, in respect to Pisa in 1087, one has to wonder at the 30,000 men and 300, or the simply astonishing, 1,000 ships, that were said, according to the near contemporary poem entitled, *Carmen in victoriam*<sup>64</sup> (as likewise the 30,000 men in 300 ships related of this event in the *Rihla* of al-Tijānī of a century later), to have participated in the Pisan led attack in 1087 on Zirid al-Mahdiyya, and the adjacent settlement of Zawīla (founded for the common people in the 920's by order of the Fatimid al-Mahdi), and, that, *They released more than a hundred thousand captives.*<sup>65</sup> There is simply no evidence to suggest a fleet of this size manned by this number could have been mustered by the cities of Pisa and Genoa at this time.<sup>66</sup> The stated 30,000 men consisted of about 10,000 more than the entire adult male population of both cities at this time; nor, that the fleet could

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<sup>54</sup> Madden 2012, 28.

<sup>55</sup> Villehardouin, *Conqu. de Const.* sec. 251, 2: 54.

<sup>56</sup> Williams 2013, 315. (2019, 9 million)

<sup>57</sup> Jewell 2006, 63. (2019, 1 million)

<sup>58</sup> Rosser 2012, 1. (2017 262,000)

<sup>59</sup> Giusberti-Monaco 2017, 162. (2017, 390,000)

<sup>60</sup> Kleinhenz 2004, 349. (2017, 380,000)

<sup>61</sup> Doosselaere 2011, 61. (2017 580,000 people)

<sup>62</sup> Jewell 2006, 63. (2017, 90,000)

<sup>63</sup> Wickham 2015, 448. (2017 2.9 million people)

<sup>64</sup> Grant 2016, 993, v. 39.

<sup>65</sup> Grant 2016, 1008.

<sup>66</sup> Combining the figures from Doosselaere 2011, 61, and, Jewell 2006, 63, the combined 12<sup>th</sup> c. total population of Genoa and Pisa is in the order of 42,000 to 50,000, i.e. roughly 21 to 25,000 males incl. children.



physically have transported 100,000 captives,<sup>67</sup> in addition to the alleged 30,000 members of this raiding expedition, a total of approximately 130,000 people in 300 ships, at an average of 433 persons per vessel over a return distance by sea of more than 1,000 km. These numbers do need to be read as medieval hyperbole, not as reflecting any literal numerical fact, but, in the case of *Carmen in victoriam*, conforming to Pisan expectations in the relation in accounts, in literary sources, of expressed heroic activity. Likewise, Anna Comnena wrote that the Pisans fitted out a fleet of nine hundred ships: biremes, triremes, dromons and other fast vessels, twelve years later in 1099<sup>68</sup>. With this large number, a multitude, Anna indicated a very large fleet, not that the Pisan fleet actually consisted of 900 vessels (at a time when the population of Pisa was about 12,000, with an adult male population of less than 6,000, the Pisan fleet was reported as consisted of about 120 ships<sup>69</sup>, Bernardo Maragone, *Annales Pisani*. For comparison, the Pisan fleet under Archbishop Ubaldo of 1189 at the siege of Acre consisted of 50-60 galleys with 7,500-9,000 men,<sup>70</sup> which seems possible; while the Emperor's fleet sent to help the Crusader States fight Ayyubid Egypt was of 150 ships in 1177<sup>71</sup>. The fleet of the Fourth Crusade that sailed in 1203 consisted "of 50-60 war galleys, 110-150 horse transporting galleys and an unknown number of other ships, around 50 of which were large naves (sailing ship transports)."<sup>72</sup> with slightly over 200 major vessels departing Venice in October 1202.<sup>73</sup> The Venetian Republic had contracted to supply the crusaders with transport for 20,000 foot soldiers, 4,500 knights 9,000 squires, in total 33,500 men, the expected number of crusaders, 4,500 horses, together with 9 months' worth of rations and fodder, and an additional 50 Venetian armed galleys<sup>74</sup>. It is

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<sup>67</sup> Doosselaere 2011, 88, citing Krueger's (1985) analysis of the Genoese fleet from the 1155-66 notarial records gives: seven gallies, fifty navis and numerous smaller boats, the galleys' crews, 100 to 120, and the navis crews of 20 to 30 sailors each. Seven galleys at a crew of 120 and 50 navis with a crew of 30 provides a total crew of 2,300 for the 57 larger vessels of the Genoan fleet at this time. It is simply beyond belief that the Pisan fleet 70 years earlier could mount an expedition with Genoa of 300 or a thousand ships capable of transporting 130,000 people.

<sup>68</sup> The Alexiad of Anna Comnena Trans. E.R. A. Sewter, Penguin, London 1969, 360.

<sup>69</sup> Luzzatto, Gino, *An Economic History of Italy: From the Fall of the Roman Empire to the Beginning of the 16th Century*, Taylor & Francis, 2005, 73.

<sup>70</sup> Pryor, John H., *A Medieval Siege of Troy: The Fight to the Death at Acre, 1189-1191 or The Tears of Salāh ad-Dīn*, 97-116, Ed. Halfond, Gregory I., *The Medieval Way of War: Studies in Medieval Military History in Honor of Bernard S. Bachrach*, Routledge, London & New York, 2016, 101.

<sup>71</sup> Lilie, Ralph-Johannes, *Byzantium and the Crusader States, 1096-1204*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993, 215.

<sup>72</sup> Nicolle, David, *The Fourth Crusade 1202-04: The betrayal of Byzantium*, Bloomsbury, 2011.

<sup>73</sup> Queller, Donald E., Madden, Thomas F., *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, 68-69.

<sup>74</sup> Joinville-Villehardouin 1963, 33.

evident that Pisa's fleet of 1087 of 300 or 1,000 vessels, and Anna's Pisan fleet in 1098 of 900 vessels, are certain figures of speech, examples of numerical hyperbole. As David Ayalon wrote in 1985 concerning trying to estimate the size of populations in the medieval lands of Islam: *Figures look always as a very tangible thing, and, therefore, once there is an estimate expressed by numbers, it tends to be copied and spread quickly, with its dubious origin not always remembered.*<sup>75</sup> These flights of literary numerical hyperbole remain unexceptional, and do reach a wide audience today with the aid of the internet, far beyond those academics involved in the study of medieval history and demography. For example, Milton Rugoff, a finalist for the USA National Book Awards in 1982 for Autobiography / Biography with his book entitled, *The Beechers, An American Family in the Nineteenth Century*, also edited the volume entitled, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, first published in 1961, reprinted 1965, Signet books, 2004, New Word City, 2015, and which repeats a sentence in Milton Rugoff's *Marco Polo's Adventures in China* of 1964, where one reads the line, "*Despite its dilapidation, the city (Constantinople) still was the greatest center of trade in the West and still had ten times the population of Venice.*"<sup>76</sup> Constantinople had ten times the population of Venice, this in the 1270's after the 1204 Crusader sack of the city! Yet estimates of the population of Venice in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. range from 70-80,000,<sup>77</sup> to 120,000<sup>78</sup> to 150,000,<sup>79</sup> *at ten times the size of Venice*, Constantinople in the 1270's is therefore said by Milton Rugoff to have had a population that ranged from between 700,000 to 1.5 million, simply unbelievable modern numerical hyperbole.

### **God's Chosen People and the Expected Number of those Slaughtered by the Righteous**

The contemporary literature of the Crusades is rich in numerical hyperbole as noted above, it was an expected part of the literature of the educated, Christian and Muslim alike. However, some apparent numerical hyperbole seems to serve a rather different purpose. Fulcher of Chartres (1059-1127) chaplain to Baldwin of Boulogne, King of Jerusalem 1100-1118, stated in his *Historia Hierosolymitana*, in its first book completed by 1105, that if all who had signed themselves with the cross had been present at Nicaea, there would have been six million, instead of six

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<sup>75</sup> Ayalon 1985, 1.

<sup>76</sup> Rugoff 1964, 32.

<sup>77</sup> Russell 1958, 111.

<sup>78</sup> Lane 1973, 18.

<sup>79</sup> Vinogradov, 2014, 393.

hundred thousand armed men.<sup>80</sup> Yet there is quite simply no possibility that there were 600,000 armed men at the siege of Nicaea from May the 14<sup>th</sup> to June the 19<sup>th</sup>, 1097, given matters of supply, of provisions and fodder, as both Fulcher of Chartres and his audience of educated would have known full well. But the number 600,000 had been carefully chosen by Fulcher of Chartres, and likewise employed for the number of fighting men by the 12<sup>th</sup> c. historian, Albericus Aquensis, Albert of Aachen-Albert of Aix, in his *Historia expeditionis Hierosolymitanae*. It was employed not to just to express the idea of a large number of pilgrim-*crucesignati* at Nicaea, but to make the association clear to the audience, between The Chosen People, as occurs in the Bible, Exodus 12:37, *And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children*,<sup>81</sup> and the stated 600,000 pilgrim *crucesignati*. Thereby the number 600,000 employed indicated in the context of an educated Roman Catholic readership, “The Chosen People.”<sup>82</sup> This number 600,000 was not employing by Fulcher, as by Albert, to express a quantity,<sup>83</sup> misread as such it has distorted perceptions and understanding of the First Crusade for centuries. Nor was it used to simply indicate a vast host of besiegers<sup>84</sup> - the number 600,000 was instead the means through which the author stated to his readers that the pilgrim *crucesignati* at Nicaea in 1097 were to be understood as being God’s Chosen People, the number was employed as a numerical reminder, a signifier. Likewise, for this same reason the monk Albert von Stade in the *Annales Stadenses* gave this same number,

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<sup>80</sup> Fulcher 1998, 63. Krey 2007, 17, writes, “*six hundred thousand armed men is probably more accurate in its proportions than in its actual figures.*” What proportions are indicated is quite unclear.

<sup>81</sup> Numbers 1:46 *Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.* An increase in male warriors aged 20 and upwards in the second year after leaving Egypt of 3,550.

<sup>82</sup> It was presumably employed knowingly or unknowingly in this same sense, meaning “The Chosen People,” by Tacitus in his History of the first Jewish-Roman War of 66–73 A.D., from the person who related this information to him, “*I have heard that the total number of the besieged, of every age and both sexes, amounted to six hundred thousand.*” Tac. Hist., 5. 6. Often understood in a simple numerical sense, as in Chambers 1867, II., 123, rather than as was intended here, indicating, The Chosen People.

<sup>83</sup> Contra Masson, David M. 1855, 188, *The Crusade was now fairly afoot; a body of at least 600,000 men, exclusive of women, priests, and children, was on its way to Constantinople, some by one route, some by another.* Likewise, *It was on a morning in the summer of 1099 that the 40,000 Crusaders-who were all that war, famine, pestilence and desertion had left out of the 600,000 who, two years before had crossed from Europe into Asia-first came in sight of the Holy City,* idem 190. Watson, Charles Moore, The Story of Jerusalem, J. M. Dent and Co., London 1912, 171, *Each leader brought a large contingent, and it is said that, by the end of 1096, over six hundred thousand crusaders had reached Constantinople.*

<sup>84</sup> Contra, Pernoud, Régine, The Crusaders, Trans. Enid Grant, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2003, 145, *In those days either 60,000 or 600,000 might serve equally well as a number to suggest that a crowd was really enormous.*

indicating God's Chosen People, for the pilgrim *crucesignati* departing on the Second Crusade.<sup>85</sup>

Fulcher of Chartres also relates of the taking of the Masjid al-Aqsa in the Noble Sanctuary Haram al-Sharif, Jerusalem in 1099 that, *When the crusaders finally forced their way in they beheaded ten thousand of the defenders.*<sup>86</sup> The number 10,000 was almost certainly employed by Fulcher, as also by Albert of Aachen regarding the 10,000 killed on Temple Mount on the same day<sup>87</sup>, not as indicating any accurate number of those 'beheaded,' or slaughtered<sup>88</sup>; but rather it was employed to remind, through the use of this number, of righteous slaughter itself, the number 10,000 being employed by these clerics as a meaningful figure of speech, reflecting the number slain by David: I Samuel 18:17, *And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands;* as likewise: 1 Samuel 18:8, 1 Samuel 21:11, and, 1 Samuel 29:5; as also: Judges 3:29 *And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour; and there escaped not a man,* and, Judges 1:4, *And Judah went up; and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men;* as also the number of the slaughtered Edomites, 2 Chronicles 25:11, *And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand.* If one was an educated Medieval Roman Catholic cleric, and was asked how many did the righteous, "God's Chosen

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<sup>85</sup> Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, Frederick Warne and Co., London, Vol. 4, 1890, 236, fn. 2. Struvium, p. 414. *Annales Stadenses*, MGH SS xvi. 351. The "enlightenment" Gibbon of course read the number as hyperbole, rather than as a "Dark Ages" signifier. Silverstein, Adam J. in 2010 wrote "600,000" is actually a Near Eastern topos for 'an enormous group in its entirety.'" *Islamic History-A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York, 2010, 88. It was in this sense that Darius was said by Justin 3<sup>rd</sup> c. A.D. to have had 600,000 troops at the Granicus (11. 6. 11); 600,000 at Issus by Plutarch (Alex. 18. 4.); while at Marathon there were 600,000 Persians Justin (2. 9.). Likewise, Tabari relates under the year 137, that Abū Muslim killed 600,000 in cold blood. *The History of al-Tabari*, Vol. 28: *Abbasid Authority Affirmed: The Early Years of al-Mansur A.D. 753-763/A.H. 136-145*, Trans. McAuliffe, Jane Dammen, SUNY, New York, 1995, 39; while Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Rāvandī's *Rahatū's-Sudur* numbers 600,000 Roman troops at Malazgirt in 1071, likewise, Leiser, Gary *The History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church as a source for the History of the Seljuks of Anatolia 107-128*, Ed. Suleiman, Yasir, *Living Islamic History*, Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 112; as in 1064 it was said an army of Uzes-Ghuz 600,000 strong invaded Thrace and Macedonia (Scylitzes, 815), and in 1237 contemporary observers record an army of 600,000 men crossed the Volga under Sabutai.

<sup>86</sup> Madden 2012, 30.

<sup>87</sup> Madden 2012, 30.

<sup>88</sup> It has been read as a possible death toll of 10,000: Pringle, Denys, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: Vol. 3, The City of Jerusalem*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 419; Randall, Albert, B., *Theologies of War and Peace Among Jews, Christians, and Muslims*, Edwin Mellen Press, New York, 1998, 227; Grabar, Oleg, - Kedar, Benjamin Z., *Where Heaven and Earth Meet: Jerusalem's Sacred Esplanade*, University of Texas Press, Austin, TX., 2009, 133.

People” slaughter, the answer would almost inevitably be, to the number of 10,000, and, as Fulcher of Chartres and Albert of Aachen had already indicated that the pilgrim *crucesignati* of 1099 were to be understood as being God’s Chosen People, the 600,000, it is hardly surprising that they killed 10,000, it was simply the expected number, confirming expectations, the precedent in this matter of the number of those slaughtered by the righteous being recorded in respect to David, Ehud, Judah, and Amaziah of Judah, who *did right in the sight of the LORD*.<sup>89</sup>

Likewise Ibn al-Athīr (1160-1233) relates: *In the Aqsa Mosque the Franks killed more than 70,000, a large number of them being imams, ulema, righteous men, and ascetics, Muslims who had left their native lands and come to live a holy life in this august spot*,<sup>90</sup> likewise 70,000 in Abū’l-Fidā’s continuation<sup>91</sup>. There is however no evidence to suggest the city of Jerusalem at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> c. had the same great population as Venice and Constantinople in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c.; nor that there could possibly be the majority of this actual number, of *imams, ulema, righteous men, and ascetics* in al-Aqsa at that time. Yet, there are numerous older,<sup>92</sup> and many more recent accounts mentioning this number, by both historians and cited by others as evidence for the actual number of those Muslims slaughtered-massacred-martyred in Jerusalem in 1099.<sup>93</sup> In 1983 Amin Maalouf read Ibn al-

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<sup>89</sup> 2 Kings 22:2; 2 Chronicles 25:2.

<sup>90</sup> Richards 2006, 22; Francesco Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, Trans. E. J. Costello, Routledge, 2010, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Madden 2012, 33.

<sup>92</sup> Ali, Syed Ameer, *The Life and Teachings of Mohammed: Or, The Spirit of Islam*, W. H. Allen, London, 1891, 314; Pool, John J., *Studies in Mohammedanism, Historical and Doctrinal with a chapter on Islam in England*, Archibald Constable and Co., London, 1892, 298; Schaff, Phillip, *Theological Propaedeutic: A General Introduction to the Study of Theology*, (1893) 2007, 434. The figure of 70,000 killed was incorrectly stated in 1893 by Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb as given by Christian sources rather than by Ibn al-Athīr, *About 70,000 people, men, women, and children, were cruelly butchered. And this is the testimony of Christian historians, not Mohammedan*. Webb, Mohammed Alexander Russell, *Islam in America: A Brief Statement of Mohammedanism and an Outline of the American Islamic Propaganda*, Oriental Publishing Company, New York, 1893, 48.

<sup>93</sup> These include: Ghunaimi, Mohammad Talaat, *The Muslim Conception of International Law and the Western Approach*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1968, 78. Ed. Asali, Kāmil Jamīl, *Jerusalem in History: 3,000 B.C. to the Present Day*, Kegan Paul International, London, 1997, 129, editor’s Chronology 127-129, *15 July 1099 Crusaders enter Jerusalem, storm al-Aqsā Mosque and kill some 70,000 persons*; Sarah Searight, John Malcolm Wagstaff, *Travellers in the Levant: Voyagers and Visionaries*, David Brown Book Company, 2001, 114; Cook, Margaret, *Lords of Creation, the demented world of men in power*, Robson, London, 2002, 215; Cline, Eric H., *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2004, 181; Noble, Thomas F. X., *Western Civilization: The Continuing Experiment*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA., 2004, 309; Khan, Nasir, *Perceptions of Islam in the Christendoms: A Historical Survey*, ISBSI, Solum Forlag, Oslo, 2006, 244; Rietbergen, Peter J. A. N., *Europe: A Cultural History*, Routledge, London & New York, 2006, 123; Holt, Andrew P., - Muldoon, James, *Competing Voices from the Crusades*, Greenwood World Pub.,

Athīr's figure of 70,000 as being an inflated body count, contrasting ibn al-Athīr's 70,000, with *Ibn al-Qalanisi, who never reported figures he could not verify, saying only many people were killed*,<sup>94</sup> as though ibn al-Athīr did not have any particular reason for employing this number. The Directorate of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in a historical note concerning the Ma'manullah cemetery sent to UNESCO in 1986 stated, *are buried there, as are some 70,000 Muslim martyrs massacred by the Crusaders who occupied Al-Qods in 1099/492*.<sup>95</sup> Carole Hillenbrand in 2000 noted that Ibn al-Athīr's figure of 70,000, *is not mentioned in the earliest extant Muslim sources and is obviously exaggerated*,<sup>96</sup> but offered no reason as to why this *obviously exaggerated* number should have been employed. Paul M. Cobb in 2016 related, *the Franks are said to have killed (improbably) thousands in the al-Aqsa Mosque*, followed by quoting the rest of Ibn al-Athīr's statement cited above <sup>97</sup>, reading the number of killed as improbable; while Norman Housley in 2008 related, *Ibn al-Athir claimed that more than 70,000 were massacred in the al-Aqsa mosque*,<sup>98</sup> and this is what Ibn al-Athīr appears to have claimed, but only if his words are read in a literal, rather than in a literary sense. But then Ibn al-Athīr was writing *adab* for the educated, he was not copying this number off some surviving Jerusalem city bill of mortality from more than a century after the event, nor was he imagining some exaggerated or improbable death toll in al-Aqsa. Doubtless, if one had asked ibn al-Athīr if the number of Muslim inhabitants of Jerusalem in 1099 was 70,000, he would have said don't indulge in fantasy. Ibn al-Athīr had no conception that people, both Muslims and Christians, would read his work of *adab* nearly 800 years later and read this figure of 70,000 as a indicating a literal fact, exaggerated, improbable or not - when it so very obviously was not to be understood in any literal sense, it was a figure of speech employed as a signifier, like Fulcher of Chartres' 600,000 and 10,000.

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Westport, 2008, 52; Grabar - Kedar 2009, 133, *Muslim chroniclers gave the figure as 70,000 or even 100,000*; Tucker, Spencer, A Global Chronology of Conflict; From the Ancient World to the Modern Middle East, ABC-CLIO, 2010, 250; Sonn, Tamara, Islam a Brief History, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 2011, 82; Laroussi, Farid, Postcolonial Counterpoint: Orientalism, France, and the Maghreb, University of Toronto Press, 2016, 50-51; Museum With No Frontiers

MWNF - Discover Islamic Art [islamicart.museumwnf.org](http://islamicart.museumwnf.org) › e... *The Crusaders conquer Palestine with a huge massacre in Jerusalem; the estimated number of the victims is ca 70,000.* etc.

<sup>94</sup> Maalouf, Amin, *The Crusade through Arab Eyes*, Trans. Rothschild, Jon, Saqi, London 2006, 50.

<sup>95</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000069594> 1986, 125 EX/15 - page 5.

<sup>96</sup> Hillenbrand 2000, 66.

<sup>97</sup> Cobb, Paul M., *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*, Oxford University Press, Oxford & New York, 2016, 101.

<sup>98</sup> Housley 2008, 218.

**So what was the reason for the use of the number 70,000 by Ibn al-Athīr, if it was neither a body-count (correct or incorrect), nor simply exaggeration-hyperbole?**

In 1734 George Sale had noted in his translation into English of *The Korân*, based upon Luigi Marracci's translation from Arabic into Latin, with notes, published in Padua in 1698, in respect to Sura IX (at-Taubah, POENITENTIA, translated as, *The Declaration of Indemnity-Repentance*), concerning 9:80, *Si preceris indulgentiam eis septuaginta vicibus, nequaquam tamen ignoscet Deus eis*.<sup>99</sup> *If thou (Muhammad) ask forgiveness of them seventy times, God will by no means forgive them*, in a footnote that: *It may be observed that the number seven, and seventy and seven hundred, are frequently used by Eastern writers<sup>100</sup>, to signify not so many precisely, but only an indefinite number, either greater or lesser (al-Beidâwi), several examples of which are to be met with in Scripture. (Matth. xviii.22).* The next number in the sequence given by George Sale in his footnote, after 7, 70 and 700, would be 7,000, followed by 70,000, numbers which are likewise was to be read as figures of speech with particular associations, most certainly not to be read and understood in a literal fashion, not, as is unfortunately largely the case today, a claimed, or stated, exaggerated or inflated number of the actual "body count" from the massacre at Masjid al-Aqsa in 1099.

Although Ibn al-Athīr relates 70,000 were killed, and Fulcher of Chartres that 10,000 were beheaded, both were employing in this respect the language of the educated, one that transformed the undoubted numerous dead, not into any random if accurate specific number<sup>101</sup>, itself a numerical fact that was rarely established in the Medieval period by a recorded body count, a tally of the dead, but which, although being a fact had no further significance, into a meaningful number. 10,000 in the case of Fulcher, in respect to the number typical of those slain by the righteous, as recorded in the Bible as noted above, and 70,000 in the case of Ibn al-Athīr's account, employed to indicate to the reader a large number, not a specific number,<sup>102</sup> but a number with both particular resonance and

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<sup>99</sup> Marracci 1698, 313.

<sup>100</sup> Sale includes here the reference to Matthew 18:22, *Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times*, and it has been noted that the use of seven in the Bible denotes either plurality or completeness, as likewise the numbers, 10, 40, 100, were also regarded as giving the idea of completeness. As likewise in fasting for 'Ashūrā, in traditions related by both Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurayra, was equated with worshipping God for 70 or for 40 years, Bashīr 2004, 305.

<sup>101</sup> It seems probable that the actual number killed in the Aqsa Mosque may have been about 3,000, as related by Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabī (d. 1148), see Hirschler 2014, 49.

<sup>102</sup> As for example: Al-Ṭabarī 1988, 209, *Then al-Mansur sent his general Khazim b. Khuzayma with a strong army. After prolonged manoeuvring, Khazim, employing a ruse, defeated the rebels and 70,000 of them (followers of the pseudo-prophet Ustadhis in 766-8) are said to have been massacred*, a numerical figure of speech, a very

associations with the Muslim Holy Places. This because 70,000 in Islamic tradition is associated with the Holy Places, with the recorded size of an angelic army, as also the size of an army of martyrs, and with scholars. The examples include the numerous hadith that record 70,000 angels each day visit the Kaaba, pray in it, do *Tawaf* and each day a fresh 70,000 angels come to it;<sup>103</sup> likewise the seventy thousand angels that visit the Prophet's tomb each day that demonstrate its sanctity, as related by Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī (c. 817-875); that is, by the 13<sup>th</sup> c. the number 70,000 had long been associated with the Sacred Places, with the first, the second, and, in the tradition that states that all the prophets of God up to Muhammad came to pray at the Rock which is daily surrounded by a bodyguard of 70,000 angels,<sup>104</sup> this number is also associated with the third most important of the sacred sites in the Islamic world, the Haram al-Sharif, al-Qods-Jerusalem. 70,000 is also employed in one or two variant hadith where the Prophet preferred the graveyard in 'Asqalān (Ascalon), calling it a *ribāṭ* for the Muslims, *from where God would resurrect seventy thousand martyrs*;<sup>105</sup> and a number reminding of the hadith that relates *the seventy thousand members* of Muhammad's community who will go straight to Paradise without a day of reckoning,<sup>106</sup> these including the martyr 'Ukasha bin Muhsin Al-Asadi, and the martyr Ja'far aṭ-Ṭayyār.<sup>107</sup> There is also the carnage of the reported 70,000 Muslims, martyrs on the battlefield of Siffin,

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great number, rather than stating a quantity; as remains the case today, as employed by *Sheikh Abdul-Qader Shehabi, a senior Muslim cleric who spent years studying and working in the Umayyad Mosque, (in Aleppo) said 70,000 books were stolen from a nearby library,....* published January 23, 2017, Bassem Mroue, *Aleppo's landmark mosque bears scars of Syria's war*, The Associated Press, <https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/aleppos-landmark-mosque-bears-scars-of-syrias-war/>.

<sup>103</sup> Burge 2015, 203, Nos. 518, via Abū Hurayra, 519, via Ibn 'Abbās, 520, 521, via al-Bayhaqī. Likewise according to Anas b. Malik, *70,000 angels enter it each day, and they do not return there* (Muslim, Iman, 259); *Then I was shown al-Bait al-Ma'mur* (i.e. God's House). *I asked Gabriel about it and he said, This is al-Bait al-Ma'mur where 70,000 angels perform prayers daily and when they leave they never return to it (but always a new group comes into it daily.* al-Bukhari, 4. 54, No. 429.

<sup>104</sup> Gibb-Kramers 1965, "Kubbat al-Sakhra," 267; Knappert 2005, II., 691.

<sup>105</sup> Bonner 2017, 93; Bashīr 2004, 197-198. Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ja'far Narshakhī in his History of Bukhara relates a hadith concerning Bukhara on the Day of Resurrection, *in each of these three cities (Qāsimīya, Samarkand and Bukhārā) there will be 70,000 banners and under each banner there will be 70,000 martyrs. In the entourage of each martyr will be 70,000 believers,...* Hanaoka 2016, 212.

<sup>106</sup> Al-Bukhari (7.606), Muslim (220), narrated from Ibn 'Abbas; Bashīr 2004, 197.

<sup>107</sup> The elder brother of the fourth Caliph Ali, Ja'far aṭ-Ṭayyār, Ja'far the Flyer, an early paradigm of the religious hero-martyr in Islam. At the Battle of Muthah in 629 against the East Romans (Byzantines), after the leader, Zayd ibn Harithah, the adopted son of the Prophet had been martyred, Ja'far took the flag and lost both his arms and was martyred; *Indeed, God most high has made two wings for Ja'far, that he may fly with them in Paradise!* (related by Asma bint Umais and Ibn Ishāq).



July 26<sup>th</sup> to July 28<sup>th</sup>, 37/657 from Ali's forces 25,000 and 45,000 from Muaviyah's army.<sup>108</sup>

The symbolic rather than literal aspect of this number as employed by Ibn al-Athīr is evident, from these 70,000 being described as: *imams, ulema, righteous men, and ascetics*, related to the hyperbole of the 70,000 Muslims who are said to have studied under Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Bardizbah al-Ju'fī al-Bukhārī, Imam Bukhari's (810-870) collection of hadith, directly from him as his pupils in his lifetime;<sup>109</sup> he is also said by Sulayman bin Mujahid to have memorised 70,000 hadith<sup>110</sup>. Likewise, more than 70,000 people attended Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani's (1077-1166) lectures at any one time,<sup>111</sup> and around four hundred scribes transcribe what he said for the benefit of posterity. It seems evident the number 70,000 employed by Ibn al-Athīr was in this context of the Holy Places, angels, martyrdom and the learned, certainly has its associations, and it would not have been read by the educated, the learned in any literal fashion as the simple expression of the number of those killed in the Masjid al-Aqsa in 1099. Ibn al-Athīr expected his readers to understand the point he was making, concerning the sacred places, angels, martyrdom and the learned, through employing this particular number with these associations in this particular context, it was a matter of *adab*, reading a number in a text for its associations, of recognising a numerical signifier, preventing the reading of a literary device as a literal statement.

This type of educated literary use of number to carry a particular meaning through association with another text(s), as in the examples of 600,000, 70,000, and 10,000 given above, numbers employed not for metaphorical effect, exaggeration

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<sup>108</sup> For 70,000 dead, Samarjani-Nia 2015, 354. Ibn A'tham, Kitāb al-Futūḥ, gives 36,000 dead, Hagler 2011, 67. At the mighty battle of al-Qadisiyah 16<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> November, 636, the Muslim martyrs were 8,500 from a force of maybe 12,000, and it seems most probable that the 70,000 dead is, like the number of dead of al-Aqsa, a figure of speech with its martyr associations, not the number of actual dead at the battle of Siffin.

<sup>109</sup> Ibn Khallikan relates that upwards of 70,000 pupils were taught from this book by the author; the work is based on 600,000 traditions, and took sixteen years to compile. Vámbéry, Armin, History of Bokhara from the Earliest Period Down to the Present: Composed for the First Time After Oriental Known and Unknown Historical Manuscripts, H. S. King & Co., London, 1873, 68.

<sup>110</sup> Ghassan, Abdul-Jabbar, Bukhari, I. B. Tauris, London, 2007, 12. Muhammad bin Azhar Sajistani related Imam Bukhari had memorised 70,000 Prophetic hadiths. Also earlier, *Ibn Rāhwayh is reported to have boasted that he knew 70,000 hadith by heart*, Spectorsky, Susan, Sunnah in the Responses of Ishaq b. Rāhwayh, 51-74, in, Weiss, Bernard G., Studies in Islamic Legal Theory, Brill, Leiden, 2002, 74.

<sup>111</sup> Maclagan, Edward, Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province: Based on the Census Report of the Punjab, 1883, by the Late Sir Denzil Ibbetson, and the Census Report for the Punjab, Vol. I., Amar Prakashan, 1892, 1980, 538.

and emphasis, - hyperbole, and not only for the expression of relative quantity, as indicating one of the several numerous parties of crusaders of 1096, numerous that is, in the sense of 1 Kings 4:26, *Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots*, seems likewise to be the case for the 40,000, given by the 12<sup>th</sup> c. historian, Albert of Aachen-Albert of Aix in his *Historia expeditionis Hierosolymitanae*, for the number of followers of Peter the Hermit. Because the number 40,000 provided by Albert of Aachen is the only near contemporary recorded number for the supposed number of the men, women, and children recruited from England, Lorraine, France, and Flanders, led by Peter the Hermit, that departed from Cologne in April 1096 and which were largely destroyed at the Battle of Civetot-Kibotos, near Nicaea, it was a number that has been often repeated<sup>112</sup> into the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the actual number of these pilgrims-*crucesignati*.<sup>113</sup> But, as with Fulcher of Chartres's use of certain numbers as signifiers, 600,000 and 10,000, the number 40,000 seems to have been deliberately employed, in the same way as the 10,000 killed on Temple Mount by Albert of Aachen. That is, not to suggest the actual number of pilgrims that followed Peter the Hermit, but instead, and much more important than any actual count of the number of pilgrims, real or imagined, it seems to have been a deliberately chosen reference to 1 Chronicles 12:36 *And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel.* And, Joshua 4:13 *About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.* This use of this number as a numerical reminder is made further evident from Albert of Aachen's use of another expression to indicate the actual number of these pilgrims as being as *innumerable as the sands of the sea*,<sup>114</sup> which made explicit this forty thousand was not to be read as indicating any actual count, but which has been repeatedly ignored

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<sup>112</sup> Torsello 2013, 214, *Not long after this, Peter the Hermit led 40,000 Lombards and various others along the same route*; Tyre 2001, 83, *It was not long after that Peter the Hermit came from his country with a large number of people - approximately 40,000*, (The Caxton printed 1481 translation from a French version of archbishop William of Tyre's *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum* of the 1180's).

<sup>113</sup> e.g. Regan 2001, 239, *It is said that 40,000 French and German pilgrims followed Peter, including women, children and the sick or lame*; France 2006, 64, *Peter is said to have had 40,000 men and 2,000 wagons*; Norwich 2007, 79, *and by the time his particular expedition set out he may have had a following of over 40,000*; Lundskow 2008, 87; Richardson 2010, 127, *remnants of the second mob, initially 40000 women, men and children led by Peter the Hermit.*; Rubenstein 2011, 111, *He had left Germany around April 20 with an army estimated by twelfth-century German historian Albert of Aachen as having 40,000 men. He described it as "countless as the sands of the sea"-an echo of the promise that God had made to the Jewish patriarch Abraham five millennia before...*(however the territory of the regnum teutonicorum was not left on April 20<sup>th</sup>, Albert employed Latin, and this expression, "countless as the sands of the sea," employed to indicate a multitude occurs in multiple contexts in the Bible, not only Revelation.), etc.

<sup>114</sup> Allen-Amt 2014, 44, *Not long after these events, Peter and his large army, innumerable as the sands of the sea - an army which he had brought together from the various realms of the nations of the Franks, Swabians, Bavarians, and Lotharingians were making their way to Jerusalem.* Peters, 2011, 105; Krey 1921, 51.

instead of understanding that Albert of Achen had explicitly written it was an innumerable number. The analogy between (grains of) sand and a vast number would have been understood by Albert of Achen's readers, being an expression that with slight variants is repeatedly employed in both testaments of the Bible, to indicate a countless multitude, as for example: Genesis 22:17, *in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore*; 32:12 *And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude*. And 41:49 *And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number*; and, Romans 8:27 *Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved*.<sup>115</sup>

It was in its implicit references, respectively to the Bible, as to hadith, that the logic of expression employed was at that time of course of far more importance than presenting accuracy in temporal numeration, as the chosen number, a signifier, gave the mass of followers, or the number of dead, a meaning, thereby changing quantity, a throng, a host, a horde, mounds or heaps of dead bodies, into a reminder for the educated of a quality, the warriors of Asher, and of Joshua and of the miraculous crossing of the Jordan,<sup>116</sup> as likewise, of the sanctity of the Holy Places, of martyrs, angels, and the learned. The medieval chronicle writer and its

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<sup>115</sup> Also: 2 Samuel 17:11 *Therefore I counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person*. Jeremiah 33:22 *As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured*: Hosea 1:10, *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered*; Joshua 11:4, *even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude*; Judges 7:12, *and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude*. 1 Samuel 13:5 *and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude*: 2 Samuel 17:11, *as the sand that is by the sea for multitude; and that thou go to battle in thine own person*. 1 Kings 4:20, *Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude*, 1 Kings 4:29, *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore*. Job 29:18 *Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand*. Isaiah 10:22, *For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return*: Jeremiah 15:8, *Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas*: Hebrews 1:12, *so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable*. Revelation 20:8, *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea*.

<sup>116</sup> As likewise later with the use of this number to characterise an army, of *forty thousand men* assembled in 1233-1234 with the assistance of a crusade declared by the Pope to destroy the Frieslander, Stedinger; as likewise the reported *forty thousand* members of the "crusade" of the Pastoureaux of 1320, who, aged around 16 without any clearly defined leader, marched through France from north to South, its members reaching Spain, killing Jews and others. Forty thousand in these contexts at this time, when most cities had far less than 40,000 inhabitants, did not just mean a multitude, it was a number that reminded, within the context of Roman Catholic "crusade," of the army of the understood to be righteous warriors, of Asher and Joshua.

medieval readers was largely uninterested in the exact enumeration of quantity *per se*, as meaningless information, notwithstanding the modern somewhat obsessional interest in quantifying<sup>117</sup>, rather, there was considerable interest in the meaning that was to be given by the educated to a particular quantity through the use of a particular number, a matter of signification through indication.

Likewise, it was for this reason that the number of pilgrim *crucesignati* who are said to have arrived at Jerusalem on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1099 are recorded as numbering 40,000 in the Latin sources and subsequent accounts.<sup>118</sup> Although there were in physical number certainly far less than 40,000, perhaps, 1,300 knights and 12,000 able bodied men, a total of 14,000,<sup>119</sup> or 13,300 has been suggested,<sup>120</sup> following the losses in the siege of Antioch in 1098. No source indicates between 1098 and 1099 the arrival of enormous reinforcements totalling 26,700 pilgrim-*crucesignati*, and the Pisan fleet arrived later<sup>121</sup>. This number was not given because a tally was taken in June 1099 of each pilgrim-*crucesignati* arriving to besiege Jerusalem, and not because the number 40,000 was only employed to suggest to the reader a great many. Rather, this number seems to have been deliberately employed because of the Biblical associations of 40,000 warriors and the Holy Land, as was noted above, in respect to the numbers of Peter the Hermit's crusade given by Albert of Aachen.

However, the length of the 1099 siege of Jerusalem is given as 40 days in both Christian and Muslim sources,<sup>122</sup> and this number is a fair approximation of

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<sup>117</sup> On this aspect of modernity, see for example, *Among the features characteristic of the modern mentality, the tendency to bring everything down to an exclusively quantitative point of view will be taken from now on as the central theme of this study.* Guénon 2001, 3. Number however was not always understood or employed in the past with this modern desire to quantify with exactitude.

<sup>118</sup> "on the 7th of June, 1099, the crusading army appeared before the walls. ... The crusaders, 40,000 in number, but with little more than 20,000 effective troops, reconnoitred the city," Smith 1861, 1017; "On July 7, 1099, the army of the Crusaders, 40,000 in number, appeared before the walls of Jerusalem," Chambers 1867, II., 123; *It was on a morning in the summer of 1099 that the 40,000 Crusaders-who were all that war, famine, pestilence and desertion had left out of the 600,000 who, two years before had crossed from Europe into Asia-first came in sight of the Holy City, The Churchman*, Vol. LXXVI, July 24<sup>th</sup> 1876, 101, reprinted from, Masson David M. 1855, 190; Stevenson 1907, 33 and fn 3., likewise accepting the numbers given in the medieval sources as factual, as likewise, "al-Sha'm," H. A. R. Gibb, EI<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV, Part 1, Brill, Leiden, 1934, 296; Phillip Khuri Hitti, *History of The Arabs*, Macmillan and Co., London, 1937, 639, *On June 7, 1099, some forty thousand Crusaders, of whom about twenty thousand were effective troops, stood before the gates of Jerusalem.* Edward 1964, 570; Paine 1974, 20.

<sup>119</sup> Tyerman 2004, 44.

<sup>120</sup> France 1994, 130-131; Asbridge 2005, 300.

<sup>121</sup> Luzzatto, 2005, 73

<sup>122</sup> Fulcher 1998, 278, gives Ibn al-Athīr's text in al-Kāmil fi al-ta'rikh as: "and besieged it for more than six weeks" i.e. more than 42 days; Phillips 2013, 25, "nearly 40 days." In the Crusader sources 38 or 39 days,

the length of time that the siege of Jerusalem in 1099 took. But the number of silver lamps<sup>123</sup> in Muslim sources that the Franks are said to have taken from the Dome of the Rock on its sack, was likewise forty, each of them weighing 3,600 dirhams, and, although the 40 days of the siege of Jerusalem seems to have been about the length of the siege, the 40 lamps in the Dome of the Rock is, in all probability, to be read as simply meaning *many*.

While for the numbers of the Second Crusade, Odo of Deuil recorded 900,566 crusaders, while John Kinnamos gives 900,000,<sup>124</sup> and it does in this case seem probable that these were at source accurate figures that have been transformed in the course of copying, from the recorded physical count that was made at the Bosphorus of 9,566, as was indicated as a possibility by Stephen Runciman.<sup>125</sup> An actual tally or indication altered to inform a different set of expectations concerning the numbers undertaking this crusade. From the Latin perspective it was the 'right number,' even if it was inflated by an additional 891,000 crusaders, surpassing the scale of the "600,000" crusaders, the Chosen People, at Nicaea in 1096 by 300,000; and, from the New Roman perspective, the threat presented to the Emperor by 900,000, rather than 9,566 crusaders is self-evident, although this larger number is a literary construct, imaginary.

In mid-October 1189 the size of the army of Frederick Barbarossa crossing Europe was reported by al-Zahir at Aleppo to Salah ad-Din at Acre, as being 200,000 to 260,000 strong, when, in fact it consisted of about 15,000 Crusaders, including about 3,000 mounted knights.<sup>126</sup> The rhetoric, 200,000 to 260,000 in the report, meaning a multitude, and the reality, maybe 15,000. The report received by al-Zahir would have originated from an educated Christian source, who was perhaps consciously referencing 2 Chronicles 17:17, *And next him was Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour, and, more than this number.*

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from the 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> June to the 15<sup>th</sup> of July; T. F. Madden states, *On July 15, 1099, after a hot, difficult and deadly siege that lasted more than a month*, Madden 2012, 28.

<sup>123</sup> Konrad Hirschler remarks on the role of the number 40 in the context of the Muslim accounts of the Crusaders' sack of Jerusalem, relating them to the martyr's souls in the bellies of nesting birds in the lamps hung under the throne of God. Hirschler 2014, 62.

<sup>124</sup> Phillips 2007, 168.

<sup>125</sup> Runciman writes, *according to the Greeks' computation 900,566 German soldiers and pilgrims crossed the Bosphorus. Possibly 9566 is the correct figure*. Runciman 1987, 267, fn. 1.

<sup>126</sup> Phillips 2019, 229.

## Conclusions

The nature of the problem in understanding the numbers recorded in Medieval sources from the above examples is evident - in Medieval historical sources, both Christian and Muslim, the use of number at times varies enormously from both modern practice and expectations. This has resulted in the reading of some numbers as more precise than is the case, numbers that were employed to indicate relative quantity, relative length, or relative periods of time, literary forms of expression, often read today as indicating a literal-precise number, a precise measured length, or an explicit length of time, misleading, insofar as the source itself is then regarded as being unreliable, inaccurate, exaggerated, whereas it is the understanding of the function of number expressed in medieval literature that has been unreliable. Further, the use of number in medieval texts to simply indicate a relative length of time or a relative quantity, often in respect to another number, as in 100,000 to 200,000, or 40,000 to 60,000 has often been read instead as indicating a statistic. In reading medieval texts, works of literature, in a modern manner with modern expectations expecting the use of number to establish quantity, what is ignored is not only the use of hyperbole and the medieval use of particular numbers to indicate relative quantities-proportions, but also the use by both Christians and Muslims of particular numbers which are to be read as indications of a related quality, as signifiers. These signifiers, numerical reminders, have been misunderstood to represent accurate, approximate or exaggerated numbers, read as expressions of quantity *per se*, rather than being understood as considered and deliberate purveyors of indication, relating the event chronicled to religious knowledge, indicators that would have been understood as being of considerable importance, reminders of association through their use, such as 600,000, 70,000, 40,000 and 10,000, as is indicated above. This is not of course to suggest that every 600,000 or 10,000 encountered in Christian Medieval literature is necessarily to be read as signifying the Chosen People or the number of those slaughtered by the righteous; nor that every 70,000 in Muslim Medieval literature should be read as signifying the Sacred Places, such is not the case, it is a matter of context like *idioti topoi*. To rephrase a 1980's computer acronym wysiwyg, in the matter of number in Medieval literature it's more a case of wyrinnwyg *what you read is not necessarily what you get*; and, in this context, it is perhaps of note that Sir Stephen Runciman considered himself *not a historian, but a writer of literature*,<sup>127</sup> indicating that same sense of the importance of literature in respect to recording history as in the *adab* displayed in the work of ibn al-Athīr, and by the chroniclers Fulcher of Chartres

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<sup>127</sup> Andrea, Alfred J.; Holt, Andrew, *Seven Myths of the Crusades*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 2015, xxii.

and Albert of Aix, as earlier by Plutarch, works of literature that require an informed literary, rather than a literate literal reading.

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