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**Beyond the Battlefield: The Lasting Legacy of the Medieval Crusades on the Holy Land**

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**Abstract**

Throughout the medieval era, conflicts endorsed and spearheaded by Western Christian clergy unfolded to reclaim sacred territories. Among these endorsed conflicts were expeditions to Palestine, which targeted reconquering Jerusalem and adjacent lands from Islamic governance. The campaigns culminated in the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, and numerous subsequent military undertakings were launched, marking a significant and protracted era in European history. These expeditions, from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, left an enduring and complex legacy on Palestine and the Holy Land. The initial Crusader incursions aimed to establish Christian control, establishing Crusader states in the Levant. While the intensity of these campaigns diminished after the 15<sup>th</sup> century, coinciding with the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople,

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their impact resonated through the formation of national legends, valorous accounts, and geographical nomenclature. Furthermore, the historical context of these medieval engagements has been invoked in modern times, shaping perspectives within political Islam and secular nationalism. By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Crusader influence in Palestine collapsed, especially after the loss of Acre. However, the legacy of these medieval invasions endured far beyond their physical presence. The Crusades profoundly affected the region's history and identity formation. Therefore, this paper aims to venture beyond the Holy Wars and determine the legacy of the medieval Crusades on the contemporary geopolitical events in Palestine and the Middle East.

**Keywords:** Palestine, Medieval Age, Crusades, Jerusalem, Holy Land.

### **Savaş Alanının Ötesinde: Ortaçağ Haçlı Seferleri'nin Kutsal Topraklar'daki Kalıcı Mirası**

#### **Öz**

Ortaçağ boyunca, genellikle Batılı Hıristiyan din adamlarının destekleyip öncülük ettiği bir dizi dini çatışma, kutsal toprakları geri almak amacıyla ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu çatışmalar arasında, Kudüs ve civarındaki toprakları yüzyıllardır burada hüküm süren İslam hakimiyetinden geri almayı hedefleyen Filistin seferleri de yer almaktadır. Seferler, 1099'da Kudüs'ün ele geçirilmesine ve Avrupa yıllıklarında önemli ve uzun bir döneme işaret eden çok sayıda askeri girişimin gerçekleştirilmesine tanıklık etti. 11-13. yüzyıllar arasında gerçekleşen bu dini içerikli seferler dizisi, Filistin ve Kutsal Topraklar üzerinde kalıcı ve karmaşık bir miras bıraktı. İlk Haçlı akınları, Doğu Akdeniz'de Haçlı devletleri kurarak Hıristiyan kontrolünü tesis etmeyi amaçlıyordu. Bu seferlerin yoğunluğu 15. yüzyıldan sonra, Osmanlı'nın İstanbul'u fethiyle birlikte azalmış olsa da, etkileri ulusal destanlar, kahramanlık hikâyeleri ve coğrafi isimlendirmeler yoluyla yankı buldu. Dahası, bu ortaçağ çatışmalarının tarihsel bağlamı, modern zamanlarda siyasal İslam ve seküler milliyetçilik içindeki perspektifleri şekillendirerek yeniden gündeme taşındı. 13. yüzyılın sonunda, 1291'de, Akka'nın düşmesiyle birlikte Filistin'deki Haçlı etkisi fiilen sona erdi. Ancak bu Ortaçağ akınlarının mirası, fiziksel varlıklarının çok ötesine geçti. Haçlı Seferleri bölgenin tarihini ve kimlik oluşumunu derinden etkiledi. İslam dünyasında ise Haçlı Seferleri kroniklerde ve din kitaplarında bir direniş ve şehitlik anlatısı olarak korundu. Haçlı Seferleri'nin etkisi ortaçağın ötesine geçerek sonraki algıları ve olayları şekillendirdi. Dolayısıyla bu makale, Kutsal Savaşların ötesine geçmeyi ve Ortaçağ Haçlı Seferlerinin Filistin ve Orta Doğu'daki çağdaş jeopolitik olaylar üzerindeki mirasını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Filistin, Ortaçağ, Haçlı Seferleri, Kudüs, Kutsal Topraklar.

## Introduction

Defining a Crusade requires several historiographical methods that distinguish between the pluralist, traditionalist, and generalist approaches; therefore, it is essential to view the Crusades' historians based on two groups, the Purists and the Pluralists. For the Purists, a Crusade is defined based on the First Crusade of 1095, a military expedition to Jerusalem guided by Pope Urban II<sup>1</sup>. Thus, this expedition established the structure for all future expeditions to follow. According to the Purists, this structure is marked mainly by the destination of the First Crusade, Jerusalem. Jerusalem changed the Crusades into pilgrimages and granted them indulgences, as it allowed popes to award holy blessings on these sacred expeditions; such a destination was able to market the Crusades as holy and religious wars of defense against non-Christians (Muslims and Jews)<sup>2</sup>. These historians also believed that a Crusade's characteristics (papal blessing, pilgrimage, martyrdom, the sign of the cross, etc.) were taken from the expedition's original goal, which was liberating and defending the Holy Land. Based on the Purists' perspective, Flori<sup>3</sup> defined the Crusade as a holy war to reclaim Christian sacred sites in Jerusalem. All later expeditions initiated with papal endorsement are better realized as abuses and distortions of the First Crusade and would be more accurately discussed as mere missionary wars. The Purists' flaw was their attempts to find pure historical forms and examine their conversion regarding distortions or decline. The 13<sup>th</sup>-century Crusades were neither in essence nor in form similar to the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>-century Crusades. Yet the establishment that created the Crusades, the papacy, backs the changes. Therefore, the pluralists focused on studying the reasons and nature of these changes, instead of observing intermediate advancements as distortions of the original concept of the Crusade<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Giles Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*. Ashgate, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Marek Tamm, "How to justify a crusade? The Conquest of Livonia and New Crusade Rhetoric in the Early Thirteenth Century", *Journal of Medieval History* 39/4 (2013), 431-455.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Flori, *Pour une redéfinition de la croisade [For a Redefinition of the Crusade]* (Cahiers De Civilisation Médiévale, 2004), 252-265.

<sup>4</sup> Rebecca Rist, *The Papacy and Crusading in Europe, 1198-1245* (London: Continuum, 2009).

The Pluralists' perspective on the Crusades, on the other hand, examined them based on their evolving characteristics rather than just their ultimate outcomes<sup>5</sup>. With this perspective, to label a military expedition a Crusade, it must fulfill certain conditions. A Crusade must involve a penitential religious journey that begins with a pledge to Christ and offers spiritual advantages such as salvation. Lastly, a Crusade must be endorsed or launched by the Pope. By meeting these conditions, a Crusade is not only a military expedition but also a profound spiritual journey with the backing of the highest religious authority<sup>6</sup>. The integration of these elements is seen as a key factor in the Crusades' popularity and success. By applying the Pluralist framework, the campaign to conquer and Christianize Livonia at the close of the 12<sup>th</sup> century fits the criteria and can be considered a Crusade. This perspective sheds light on the intricate nature of the Crusade movement and its historical significance<sup>7</sup>. Such a depiction of the Crusade created a perpetual impact on the societal hierarchy that can be observed today around the world. Riley-Smith<sup>8</sup> categorized social groups with terms such as *minores*, which do not align with their application in original historical accounts from that age. In primary sources related to the Crusades, *minores* typically denoted common people, frequently appearing alongside *maiores* to represent society, from the elite to the general populace.

Dissecting the Crusades' social fabric can also be seen in terms such as *mediocres*, which had a more restricted and context-dependent meaning, not referring consistently to knights under princes, but often to footsoldiers or individuals of the lowest standing in society. Furthermore, *principes* and *maiores* were not synonymous, with *principes* representing a more exclusive segment within the noble class identified as *maiores*. Additionally, *populus* and "plebs" referred primarily to the Christian forces, not a particular group, unless further

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<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 91-120.

<sup>6</sup> Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147-1254* (Leiden, 2006), 52-65.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 11-17.

<sup>8</sup> Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 91-120.

clarified as a unique description. To more accurately represent the lower social orders, contemporary sources more often employed terms such as *vulgus*, *pauperes*, *egeni*, or indeed *minores*<sup>9</sup>. This point is further illustrated by the work of Leyser<sup>10</sup>, a historian of medieval Germany who identified the significant changes in societies throughout the era of the Crusades. These changes continue to influence the social construct long after the Crusades, emphasizing the concepts of societal roles as well as the governing bodies of lands and cities.

The Crusades (1096-1272) gave rise to numerous doctrines of war and obscure narratives, resulting in significant ripples in the social and political fabric of society. The Holy Land was reshaped by the successors of the Crusades, who helped omit or neglect the true identity of the land and Palestine. Since 1096, the Palestinian identity struggled to flourish and was first solidified during World War I. During that era, profound shifts spurred the Palestinian society to embrace a distinct Palestinian national consciousness. Scholars identified several elements that laid the groundwork for this sentiment before the war, such as a deep spiritual connection to Palestine, its established administrative definition from Ottoman boundaries in 1874, and growing apprehension about European and Zionist expansion<sup>11</sup>. Urban, educated Palestinians, feeling abandoned by Britain and France's division of Arab territories, increasingly alarmed by Zionism's rise, and disheartened by the indifference of Arab leaders who considered bartering Palestine for Syrian autonomy, channeled their existing strong communal bonds into a refined Palestinian identity in the immediate post-war years. This emergent identity subsequently propagated beyond urban centers, fueled by the proliferation of newspapers and educational advancements. With this in mind, this article explores the realities of holy wars and analyzes the impact of the medieval Crusades

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<sup>9</sup> Conor Kostick, *The Medieval Mediterranean Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400-1500* (Brill, Leiden, 2008), 9-51.

<sup>10</sup> Karl Joseph, "Money and Supplies on the First Crusade", *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Gregorian Revolution and Beyond*, Timothy Reuter (London, 1994), 77-96.

<sup>11</sup> Selim Tezcan, "Historiography of Palestine in the Arab Press of the Early Mandate and the Question of the Formation of Palestinian Identity", *Filistin Arařtırmaları Dergisi* 17(2025), 173-197.

on contemporary societies in the Holy Land as well as Palestine as a whole.

### **Leaving a Mark: Initiating the Crusades (1096-1272)**

The First Crusade was initiated in 1096 with numerous European nobles and their forces converging in Constantinople, led by the Count of Toulouse, IV<sup>12</sup>. Raymond, the brother of King Philip I, Hugh de Vermandois, the Count of Blois and Chartres, Etienne II, and Godfrey of Bouillon, Robert II. Within the city walls, most of these leaders agreed on their fates as followers of the Byzantine Emperor Alexei I Comnenus and swore oaths to him and Pope Urban II<sup>13</sup>. After a year, the Crusaders crossed the Bosphorus. Nicaea (The Turkish city of İznik) surrendered to the army, which continued to defeat Sultan Kilij Arslan and pass through Asia Minor (Anatolia). The expedition allied with the princes of Lesser Armenia against the Turks, supporting the prince in all manner and need. During the period, when the siege was about to begin and continue, the Byzantine forces attempted to exploit the growing anxiety among the Turks, while other leaders occupied crucial locations such as Edessa and Antioch<sup>14</sup>. With these cities captured, the army rushed to the Holy Land, massacring Muslims and Jews. The army settled in the surrounding lands of Jerusalem, Syria, and Cilicia while fighting over the coastal cities against the Greeks since 1099<sup>15</sup>. This expedition established trade routes with India and China in the Levant. This made transporting goods from Iraq to Europe impossible without passing through these cities. Such developments caused Russia's political center to shift immediately due to international cargo being transferred through these cities. These cities existed for a long time until Europeans ventured to sea, reaching India and China. Following the fall of the Crusader County of Edessa (Urfa) in 1144 into Muslim hands, the Crusader County of Antioch began to be threatened. Muslims' military might was growing, and İmadeddin Zengi, the Prince of Mosul, was closely approaching the four states in the Holy Land. These events created a Second Crusade with the German King Konrad III

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<sup>12</sup> Urfalı Mateos, *Chronicles (952-1136)* (Ankara, 2000), 190-191.

<sup>13</sup> Moskva Zaborova, *The Conquest of Constantinople* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), 34-40.

<sup>14</sup> Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* (London, 1969), 271-274.

<sup>15</sup> Zaborova, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, 34-40.

Hohenstaufen arriving in Constantinople through Hungary and sending troops to Asia in the same year. French armies, kings, and noble Crusaders marched through Asia Minor, sailed to Syria, and arrived in Accra in 1148. With various defeats and small victories, Eastern Christians suffered greatly, especially after the defeat of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel at the hands of the Seljuk Turks at Myriokephalus<sup>16</sup>. İmadeddin's son, Nûreddin, captured Damascus and part of Türkiye and became a significant threat to the Crusaders<sup>17</sup>.

Maintaining the territories captured after the Second Crusade proved challenging, especially in 1187, when Saladin recaptured Jerusalem; thus, launching the Third Crusade led by Richard of England, Frederick I Barbarossa, and Philip II of France (1189-1192). Created by such events, which spurred a response from Western Europe, the expedition marched to take back Jerusalem. Frederick's campaign through Asia Minor was fraught with hardship, and his death led to the dispersal of his army. Nevertheless, the expedition failed, despite capturing Acre and winning at Arsuf. The siege of Acre was marked by internal conflicts among the leaders. The two parties negotiated a truce in 1192 that allowed Christian pilgrims access but left the city under Muslim control. Saladin's death in 1193 caused internal strife among Muslims, but his brother, Al-Adil, eventually consolidated power<sup>18</sup>.

Subsequent Crusades, including the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204), resulted in the conquest of the Byzantine Empire and the establishment of Crusader states within its territory. The Fourth Crusade's diversion to Constantinople in 1204, influenced by Venetian interests, marked a significant departure. This deviation culminated in the sack of Constantinople. Crusaders, influenced by Venetian interests, overthrew the Byzantine emperor, creating a Latin Empire, weakening unity in the region, indirectly strengthening Muslim powers, and complicating the Crusaders' position in Syria. Meanwhile, the tragic Children's Crusade (1212), headed by a young Stephen, saw thousands of young participants perish or be enslaved, reflecting the era's fervor and

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<sup>16</sup> Gregory Abu'l Farac, *Abu'l Farac Tarihi* (Ankara, 1999), 267-298.

<sup>17</sup> Vesile Şemşek, "An Overview of the Crassus in Terms of World History According to Russian Sources", *Sinop Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 6/2 (2022), 520-548.

<sup>18</sup> Şemşek, "An Overview of the Crassus", 520-548.

exploitation. The Children's Crusade stands as a tragic episode, where these French and German children, driven by piety and naivety, set out for the Holy Land, underscoring the harsh realities and exploitation faced by the vulnerable during these campaigns<sup>19</sup>.

The Fifth Crusade (1217-1221), initiated under Honorius III, targeted Egypt. Despite capturing Damietta, the expedition failed to advance further. A peace offer from Sultan al-Kamil, which included Jerusalem's return, was rejected, leading to their retreat without achieving their goals<sup>20</sup>. This pattern of missed opportunities continued with the Sixth Crusade (1227-1244), and by 1244, Jerusalem and other territories were lost permanently after Khwarezmian forces sacked the city.

The Seventh Crusade (1248-1254) continued the ambitions of conquering Egypt, led by King Louis IX of France. The capture of Damietta was followed by a decisive defeat at Mansurah, with Louis captured and later ransomed. Internal conflicts among the Crusader factions persisted, even as the Muslim forces, particularly under Baybars, gained strength. All of this caused the expedition to fail. The Eighth Crusade (1270) shifted focus to Tunisia, where Louis died sick from an epidemic, concluding with an inconclusive peace treaty favoring his brother, Charles of Anjou. The Ninth Crusades, the latter sometimes considered a continuation of the former, were largely unsuccessful and marked by further losses of Crusader territories. Led by Prince Edward of England, the Crusaders achieved minor successes but failed to reverse their declining fortunes. By this time, internal conflicts and Muslim resurgence under leaders like Mamluk Sultan Baibars had sealed the Crusaders' fate, marking the end of their dominance in the Holy Land. Even with a temporary truce with Baibars, the expedition failed to halt the shrinking of Christian territories, leaving Tripoli as one of the last Crusader strongholds by the early 1270s. This

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<sup>19</sup> Şemşek, "An Overview of the Crusades", 520-548.

<sup>20</sup> Gorelov, *Legendy krestonostsev XII-XIV vekov [The Kingdom of Heaven. Crusader Legends of the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> Centuries]* (St. Petersburg Azbuka-Klassika Publ., 2006), 447-448.

series of campaigns left a complex legacy of cultural exchange, conflict, and shifting power dynamics between East and West<sup>21</sup>.

The Crusades involved a multifaceted mix of political maneuvering, intense religious feelings, and military actions. While these Crusades initially succeeded in establishing Christian territories, their long-term retention of control over Jerusalem and adjacent lands ultimately proved unsuccessful. The economic consequences were considerable, with alterations to trade routes fostering expansion in European commerce and introducing novel knowledge and technologies. The wealth derived from trade networks in the East aided in subsequent cultural transformations such as the Renaissance, while contact with Islamic and Byzantine civilizations enriched European society through advancements in areas like science, medicine, and the arts.

### **The Just War Doctrine and the Narratives of the Crusade**

The ethical warfare in Christianity has its roots in pre-Christian Greco-Roman philosophy. Aristotle introduced the notion of a righteous war, framing the conflict as a tool to foster stability and flourishing through protection against savage conquests. Roman jurisprudence formalized warfare, embedding a legal sense of valid reason as its key legacy to this doctrine. Following the conversion of Constantine in 313 C.E., Christian ethics merged with Roman moral frameworks to guide the Christian emperor in all facets of rule, including warfare. Saint Augustine of Hippo was the first to articulate a thorough Christian Just War framework in the 5<sup>th</sup> century<sup>22</sup>. Augustine aimed to harmonize the New Testament's seemingly nonviolent ideals of serenity and forbearance with the retributive ferocity of the Old Testament. Echoing the Old Testament's theme of divine retribution for transgressions, Augustine declared that righteous wars redress wrongs, which was a cornerstone of later medieval theories<sup>23</sup>. This concept, dubbed the retributive righteousness by Alfred Vanderpol, involves deliberate

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<sup>21</sup> Peter Malishevsky, *Wiegand from Marburg: The New Prussian Chronicle* (Livre Rare Books, 2014), 256-260.

<sup>22</sup> Frederick Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 4-68.

<sup>23</sup> Louis Swift, "St. Ambrose on Violence and War" *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 101 (1970), 522-543.

actions, potentially violent, to reestablish sacred harmony<sup>24</sup>. Augustine's retributive righteousness skirts the edge of belligerence; though responsive, its defensive nature is dubious. Historian Frank Russell notes that Augustine's framework did not differentiate between aggressive and protective warfare, only between righteous and unrighteous. While safeguarding others out of duty and affection justifies force to counter hostility, aggressive warfare or retributive righteousness gains validity through belief in a divine mandate<sup>25</sup>.

Central to Augustine's retributive Just War are those fighting and secular leaders authorizing it hold the principles of pure motive, and legitimate governance, the ruler who initiates war out of ethical duty aligned with divine will. Per Augustine, a personal vendetta to punish an offender is sinful, driven by individual malice<sup>26</sup>. A retributive justice campaign employs soldiers who act out of submission to divine command, aiming to restore tranquility and fairness. Thus, a heart guided by devotion to God's purpose sanctifies the actions of those waging a Just War, rendering it compliant with the commandment against killing. Warfare and death held no inherent wickedness; the true sin lay in the allure of violence, rage, cruelty, and bloodthirst that corrupted spirits. Pure motive requires that secular authority and combatants act from compassion, striving to limit the suffering of adversaries. Augustine equates the ruler's authority with divine will, emphasizing that lawful wars of justice, initiated by a leader, are vindicated as extensions of God's intent, immune to base impulses<sup>27</sup>.

The question of legitimate governance is the cornerstone of the Just War, as it validates institutional and personal violence in retributive expeditions. This made historians question the wrongs that merit violent retribution. In simple terms, war is warranted when a group or city fails to punish its members' misdeeds or return what was wrongfully taken. In Augustine's and the Church's view, any affront to

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<sup>24</sup> Joachim von Elbe, "The Evolution of the Concept of the Just War in International Law", *The American Journal of International Law*, 33/4 (1939), 668.

<sup>25</sup> James Johnson, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 50-54.

<sup>26</sup> Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 91-120.

<sup>27</sup> Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, 4-68.

Christianity or the Church constituted a violation of earthly moral order, mirroring divine harmony<sup>28</sup>. Augustine's notion of valid reason encompasses punishment or restoration within retributive justice. The three pillars Augustine established were legitimate governance, valid reason, and pure motive. Meeting these criteria ensures *ius ad bellum*, the right to initiate war<sup>29</sup>. Yet, any ethical framework risks catastrophe without overarching constraints or behavioral guidelines. A core tenet of modern warfare is shielding noncombatants, civilians, women, children, and others posing no threat due to their inability to harm. In Augustine's framework, however, noncombatants' incapacity is irrelevant to retributive justice. Even enemy combatant status bears no direct relation to the adversary's wrongdoing<sup>30</sup>. Hartigan<sup>31</sup> clarifies this nuance, stating that though Just Wars permit killing enemy soldiers to restore fairness; this is not because they are culpable, as they may be blameless. Hartigan further explains that this aligns with Augustine's belief that warriors are dispassionate instruments of authority, where the leader's injustice does not implicate subordinates. Since enemies' guilt or innocence is immaterial, so is the distinction between combatants and civilians. While Augustine does not explicitly advocate for protecting noncombatants, pure motive serves as a mitigating factor<sup>32</sup>.

Augustine's role as the pioneer of Western Just War theory is acknowledged retrospectively. His theological influence peaked by the late 5<sup>th</sup> century as Church-driven political agendas took precedence. Around the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Pope Gregory the Great and other Church leaders pursued conflicts against pagans and heretics, following Augustinian principles, to strengthen ecclesiastical authority. The expansive imperial vision of spiritual, ethical, and political dominance drew legitimacy under Emperor Charlemagne (8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries) from Gregorian decrees, implementing militarily enforced justice while

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<sup>28</sup> Johnson, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions*, 50-54.

<sup>29</sup> Swift, "Augustine on War and Killing: Another View", 3.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Hartigan, "Saint Augustine on War and Killing: The Problem of the Innocent", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27/2 (1966), 201.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> H. E. J. Cowdrey, "The Peace of God and the Truce of God in the Eleventh Century" *Past & Present*, 46 (2002), 42-43.

seeking righteousness. The 9<sup>th</sup>-century Pope Nicholas I championed the protection of the homeland as a valid reason, establishing self-defense as an inherent right for individuals, rulers, and religious establishments. Eleventh-century papal edicts advanced Christian wartime ethics through the Peace and Truce of God, prohibiting combat on sacred days and violence against Christians to curb violence by safeguarding the defenseless<sup>33</sup>. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the canonist Gratian integrated Augustine's ideas with Roman concepts of defensive warfare to shield the Church from hostility. Aquinas, a theologian and philosopher, elaborated on defense as part of valid reason in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Johnson notes that Aquinas's contribution to punishing wickedness and recovering what was unjustly taken are two justifications to protect the collective good. Safeguarding the collective good emerged in the Christian traditions of the Just War as a third facet after the Crusades began. Though Augustine recognized defending the homeland and divine order as valid reasons, the requirement for a campaign to be militarily defensive was absent when Pope Urban II rallied European Christians in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>34</sup>.

In the Medieval Era, crusading had no clear concept, ideology, or accepted term, which is reflected to a significant extent beneath the events' surface. Crusades were labelled in vernacular and Latin, suggesting travel or movement, such as *iter*, *expeditio*, *peregrinatio*, and *via*, with other verbs mixed with references to the Holy Land, the cross, or the holy sepulcher. Crusades constantly expressed a desire or engagement (*bellum*, *negotium*, *opus*, *causa*, *crux*, or *voluntas*), which referred to the Crusades' sacred character, Jerusalem, Christ, or God. The early Crusaders were known as bearers of the cross; however, until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the cross was not the crusading mark, distinct from pilgrimage. The earliest use of *crozada* was during the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Spain and France, but it stayed infrequent, as did the equivalent in English, German, and French<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, 4-68.

<sup>34</sup> Myoung-Woon Cha, "The Crusades, their Influence and their Relevance for Today", *University of Pretoria* 1 (2006), 79-114.

<sup>35</sup> Michael Markowski, "Crucesignatus: Its Origins and Early Usage", *Journal of Medieval History* 10/3 (1984), 157-165.

Creating this legal construct for identifying the Crusades allowed historians to provide terms that embrace wars away from Jerusalem, including conflicts in the Balkans, the Iberian Peninsula, Western Europe, the Baltic, and North Africa. For Riley-Smith<sup>36</sup>, the pluralists were concerned mainly with the religious idea behind the movement observable in its authorization, organization, and initiation. Historians find this school of thought appealing due to its centralist position on the concept of the Crusades when compared to generalism or traditionalism. On the other hand, traditionalists believed the original Crusade was the first; thus, excluding expeditions in other wars. While the Pluralists' focus was to include all organized and authorized Crusades, allowing the inclusion of all expeditions that enjoyed indulgences, Popularists focused on the movement's essence as the mobilization and induction of people guided by religious passion. Lastly, Generalists adopted a broader classification of the movement by calling them holy wars. Pushing the debate by demanding a lucid and unambiguous definition of the Crusade. The traditionalist perspective of Mayer<sup>37</sup> indicates that the Crusades directed at the Holy Land were the true Crusades because they sparked a fierce debate among historians. His views neglect the expeditions undertaken to various locations with the mutual aim of defending Christendom.

Tyerman<sup>38</sup> outlined Mayer's opposition to the movements directed away from the Holy Land by stating that the establishment, devised for Jerusalem expedition, was implemented for different aims under the cover of some theoretical association with Jerusalem. The revisionist views of Riley-Smith for an inclusive term for the Crusades were quite a challenge to the Crusade literature and must be evaluated in such a manner<sup>39</sup>.

For Riley-Smith, pluralism presents a gap-filling idea of the Crusade by working on the primary element that created it and the energy that kept its wheels moving, religion. As an obsolete theory, Traditionalism

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<sup>36</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History* (Yale University Press, 2005).

<sup>37</sup> Hans Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge (The Crusades)* (Oxford, 1972), 281–286.

<sup>38</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades, 1099-2010* (Manchester University Press: Issues in Historiography, 2011), 220.

<sup>39</sup> Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, 3-44.

struggles to answer the matter of G. Dickson<sup>40</sup> regarding the state and status of the Crusades. Pluralists also try to reconcile the *crucesignati* of various timelines to the movement they organized, unimpeded by geography. As traditionalists buttress the importance of the Holy Land strictly, they continue to undermine the significance of certain religious indulgences and forms in creating a Crusade. Neglecting the foundations that called upon the people from all sides of the social hierarchy is neglecting the essence of the Crusade.

### **Social and Identity Changes Following the Crusades**

The adaptability of the Crusade, both in concept and in practice, played a role in its sustained appeal throughout medieval Christian society and had a significant influence on social developments over the following years. The specific nature of Jerusalem pilgrimage allowed its core elements – the pledge, the emblem of the cross, complete absolution, and worldly benefits – to be extended to other arenas of religious and political strife, based on an idea of equivalence. These included conflicts in Spain, the Baltic region, against internal opponents of papal authority, and against those deemed heretical. The success of 1099 quelled much of the criticism and shaped subsequent practices. Divinely sanctioned warfare, promising spiritual rewards, remained a potent tool in the arsenal of the papacy<sup>41</sup>. Nonetheless, the Holy Land's Christian template never turned into the sole form of a sacred war, with its limited influence on ecclesiastical law. The Holy Land's most significant innovation emerged after instituting religious orders of the military in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, embodying the paradoxical essence of a holy war with professional sacred warriors within Christian society<sup>42</sup>.

Academics and experts have scrutinized Jerusalem warfare and its offshoots, as the Crusades' tradition continued to fuel the sentimental rigor of Christian combat. These scholars aimed to transform the Crusade into a thorough legal rationalization for war, moving beyond the simple reliance on divine command and the personal piety of participants that characterized appeals for the First and Second

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<sup>40</sup> Gary Dickson, *What are the Crusades?* (Routledge, 2015), 693.

<sup>41</sup> Christopher Izant, *The Crusades and Jihad: Theological Justifications for Warfare in the Western and Islamic Just War Traditions* (Boston College Electronic, 2010), 10-27.

<sup>42</sup> Tyerman, *The Crusades: A Very Short Introduction*, 80-86.

Crusades. Until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of a Crusade or holy war continued to be legally ambiguous. With the integration of Christian warfare with the traditional standards of Just War, the merging with the Augustinian and classical principles of Just War seemed clear, as seen in the suppression of heretics and defending Outremer. In the secular realm, it also became important, from the Church's perspective, to establish a comprehensive assortment of legal standards to identify the legitimacy of warfare as crusading objectives varied. This coincided with the emergence of secular attitudes toward violence, which crystallized into social norms embodied in the code of chivalry<sup>43</sup>.

As warfare gained greater social acceptance, the Church faced increasing pressure to delineate which aspects were sinful and which were not. This development led the mid-13<sup>th</sup>-century canonist Hostiensis to define a Crusade as a Just War authorized by the papacy. The *Tree of Battles* (1387) by Bonet discussed conventional arguments solely arguing for a just cause and papal sanction in case of rebellions against Christian regions. With this method, the Crusade was reunited with the European understanding of just warfare influenced by the sacred war theory and its legal limitations and framework, if any, from the classical theory of the Just War<sup>44</sup>. Consequently, themes, languages, and practices of the holy war spread through conflicts where no clear structure of a Crusade existed; for instance, adopting crosses by civil armies around 1200 with the Danes or in the 14<sup>th</sup> century with the English. The customs and symbols of crusading were so widespread that they could be applied to any ideological or political conflict. During his insurrection against what he believed was the misrule of England's Henry III in 1263, the rebels of Simon de Montfort adopted traditions dating back to previous Crusades to revolt against royalist Crusaders, which included wearing the white crosses of the English kings. The importance given to sacred wars contributed to the European inclination for clashing factions to invoke self-righteous piety to endorse their cause. This inclination, which was exported to European regions from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onward, persists into the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> Cha, "The Crusades, their Influence and their Relevance for Today", 79-114.

<sup>44</sup> Tyerman, *The Crusades: A Very Short Introduction*, 80-86.

<sup>45</sup> Tyerman, *The Crusades: A Very Short Introduction*, 80-86.

Regardless of its legal structure, crusading functioned as the ultimate expression of conviction-based politics in medieval Western Europe, fostering a narrow cultural and religious exclusivism. When Crusaders captured Lisbon in October 1147, they murdered the local Mozarab Christian bishop alongside his Arabic-speaking Muslim neighbors before putting Gilbert of Hastings as the new English bishop. The Latin Church hierarchy's consistent failure to cooperate or unite with higher-ranking members of the Eastern churches in Outremer (the Crusader States in the East) was notorious. Although inherent in all sacred wars, the demonization of adversaries reached extreme levels in crusading rhetoric, reflecting both a literary style and a worldview that fostered a siege mentality, a form of cultural paranoia often underlying cultural assertiveness. Racism and intolerance toward minorities were not caused by the Crusades. Indeed, in the Baltic and Spain, legal, linguistic, cultural, and blood-based racism intensified in the centuries following the main conquests by warriors of the cross. Yet, in anti-Jewish pogroms and wars against heretics and dissenters, crusading helped shape a virulent aspect of a persecuting mindset that emerged as an almost inevitable consequence of a Church focused on achieving supremacy and uniformity to secure its pastoral objectives, and secular rulers seeking ideological justification for their wars<sup>46</sup>.

As the sacred war addressed fundamental issues of Christian identity and, as was frequently proclaimed, Christian survival, its elements remained ingrained in European society and provided a cutting edge in the expansion of Latin Christendom southward, eastward, and northward. The crusading impulse was deeply rooted; in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, crusading formulas were readily applied to the expansion of European power down the west coast of Africa and into the eastern Atlantic, as well as to the religious conflicts in Bohemia and the defense against the Turks<sup>47</sup>. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century and beyond, the Ottomans kept the images and occasionally the reality of the war of the cross alive, while the internal religious divisions in Europe ushered in a period of religious wars marked by a level of commitment and brutality comparable to anything witnessed in previous centuries. Some

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

historians argue that the period of the Crusades defined Christianity's inclination toward sacred war, but this is far from the truth. The modern world has embraced, with both horror and enthusiasm, ideological, religious, and pseudo-religious violence, as well as racist, nationalist, and anti-Semitic atrocities on a massive scale, all within the context of competing moral justifications. The moral high ground of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, whether claimed under the banner of religion, reason, capitalism, or freedom, remains scarred by the deep wounds of sacred war<sup>48</sup>.

These wars developed the Christian identity and assisted in the expansion of Latin Christendom, while neglecting existing ones in Palestine and the surrounding lands. This would remain the status quo for many years, until numerous papers exploring medieval and contemporary Palestinian history appeared. These papers signaled an early crystallization of Palestinian identity in the immediate post-World War I era. A two-part series on Palestinian history, called Filastīn (Palestine), appeared in 1923 in al-Tabl, a satirical newspaper published in Haifa by Ibrahim Karim<sup>49</sup>. The series noted the burgeoning news about Palestine and Jewish ambitions to restore their ancient kingdom. To accommodate readers interested in the historical trajectory of Palestine and the unfolding of Jewish aspirations for the land, the author presented a concise historical and geographical survey extending to the contemporary period. The first part provided a nomenclatural and historical overview of the region, while the second addressed its physical features, principal cities, and demographic composition. This series conspicuously excluded any discussion of Arab historical presence before the Islamic conquests. Rather, the author unequivocally asserted that the historical record of Palestine commenced with the arrival of the Hebrews, following their forty-year sojourn in the Sinai after the Exodus. The narrative then shifted abruptly to the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem, followed by the Seljuk takeover, which the author credited with provoking the Crusades due to their predatory incursions. The subsequent rule of the Crusaders, the

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<sup>48</sup> Rodney Stark, "The Case for the Crusades", *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 20/2 (2016), 9-28.

<sup>49</sup> Tezcan, "Historiography of Palestine in the Arab Press", 173-197.

Ottoman Empire, and the Allied Powers was addressed only in passing, with minimal elaboration. Moreover, the centuries of Islamic rule were minimally discussed, focusing on the region's geography and concluding with a survey of its major urban centers.

Scholars<sup>50</sup> believe that previous attempts to study the Palestinian identity in history books tend to date the development of Palestinian identity in historiography. These newspaper articles, for example, demonstrate an "unmistakable attachment to Palestine and its history, distinguishing it from the broader Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria) identity. This attachment was coupled with a strong emphasis on the Arab character of the land. These findings corroborate the arguments of historians like Fishman<sup>51</sup> and Rashid Khalidi, who suggest that a Palestinian Arab identity had largely crystallized by the years immediately following World War I. These scholars also emphasize that within this nascent identity, the Palestinian geographical component and the Arab ethnic component were fused without one diminishing the other. For Tezcan<sup>52</sup>, the Palestinian Arab press played a crucial role in shaping public opinion and fostering this Palestinian-Arab awareness while highlighting that even when early historical findings placed Palestinian history within a Syrian context during and after the Crusades, with the practical focus being Palestine. Furthermore, the successive developments and collapses of kingdoms throughout the decades created new perspectives, which suggest that Palestine was perceived as a distinct entity. The emergence of Palestinian historiography during the rule of the Crusaders, Ottomans, and British developed Palestinian identity, and, while much of the previous historical findings have dated the crystallization of Palestinian identity to the 1930s, this identity began to solidify much earlier. These historical papers already reflected a distinct attachment to Palestine as a separate territorial and historical entity, distinct from both Greater Syria and the broader Arab-Islamic identity. Ultimately, even with some methodological limitations and lack of originality in early historical

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<sup>50</sup> Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian National Movement, 1918-1929* (London: Cass, 1974), 306-307.

<sup>51</sup> Louis Fishman, *Jews and Palestinians in the Late Ottoman Era, 1908-1914: Claiming the Homeland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), 67-68, 95-96, 204-5.

<sup>52</sup> Tezcan, "Historiography of Palestine in the Arab Press", 173-197.

pieces, articles, studies, and newspapers reveal a blend of Palestinian patriotism and identity, manifesting as a coherent Palestinian uniformity within this popular medium.

### **The Crusading Legacy and the Scattered Identities**

After generations of European endeavors to reclaim Palestine, Britain seized the moment when conditions were favorable. Leveraging both Zionist and Arab aspirations, as well as rival colonial interests, it secured its objectives. While some within Britain's elite entertained notions of Jewish repatriation as a precursor to messianic prophecy, official policy prioritized imperial strategy. The Jewish population was viewed as an asset, facilitating commerce, securing military footholds, and aligning with expectations<sup>53</sup>. From Britain's perspective, Jewish people represented a valuable asset for imperialist designs, serving purposes of commerce and military support within the region, in addition to potentially fulfilling biblical prophecies. The British entered Jerusalem, driven by apprehensions regarding the devastation of the sacred city. Many guards were seen representing various contingents: English, Irish, Indian, French, and others. British strategy mirrored Napoleon's tactics of dissimulation to advance its aims; official communications stressed the need to downplay crusading themes. However, an inadvertent remark by a General called Allenby, omitted from Western accounts, provoked the ire of the Jerusalem Mufti, who departed from the ceremony. According to Arabic sources, Allenby declared that the conflicts of the Crusades had drawn to a close<sup>54</sup>. Yet, in an attempt to mitigate a Muslim backlash, assurances were given that Muslim holy sites would be protected, with the Al-Aqsa Mosque placed under the exclusive administration of Muslims and guarded by Indian

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<sup>53</sup> Khalid El-Awaisi - Emine Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration in the Holy Land during the Late Ottoman Period: The Role of Britain", *Journal of Islamic Jerusalem Studies* 20/1 (2020), 1-18.

<sup>54</sup> Mohsen Saleh, "جهود بعض علماء فلسطين في رعاية المقدسات الإسلامية في القدس وحمايتها". [The Effort of Palestine Scholars in Preserving and Protecting Islamic Holy Sites in Jerusalem: 1918-1931]" *Journal of Islamic Jerusalem Studies* 1/1(1997), 19-46.

Muslim soldiers. This propaganda was directed at a Muslim audience, while within Britain, crusading ideology was promoted vigorously<sup>55</sup>.

Historical analysis of World War I in the East indicates that British soldiers framed their campaign against the Ottomans as a holy war against Islam. Given the resonance of the crusading concept for General Allenby's troops, contemporary records describe the British campaign in Palestine as a Crusade. Despite official directives to avoid crusading rhetoric due to concerns about Muslim reactions, the British, upon their arrival in Jerusalem in 1917, did not entirely refrain from alluding to the crusading legacy<sup>56</sup>. This neo-crusading sentiment was evident in British media coverage of Allenby's entry into Jerusalem, which spoke of the city's liberation from oppressive Turkish control after 673 years of Muslim dominion<sup>57</sup>.

This occupation received even more vivid portrayal in powerful imagery featuring King Richard the Lionheart gazing upon Jerusalem, stating that it was the final crusade, and the Lionheart's ambitions were realized<sup>58</sup>. Such rhetoric underscores the connection drawn between the Crusades and the British liberation of Jerusalem within the context of their imperialistic mindset. As the crusading zeal for reclaiming the Holy Land for Christians waned, it was succeeded by Christian and, later, Jewish Zionism. Both ideologies emerged from the residual influence of the Crusades in Western societies, intertwining the reconquest of the Holy Land with apocalyptic beliefs about restoring the Jewish people to Palestine as a prelude to Jesus's Second Coming. This also presented a potential resolution to the Jewish question in Europe; paradoxically, many proponents of Jewish restoration harbored anti-Semitic sentiments<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 98-105.

<sup>56</sup> James Kitchen, "Khaki Crusaders: Crusading Rhetoric and the British Imperial Soldier during the Egypt and Palestine Campaigns, 1916-1918", *First World War Studies* 1/2 (2010), 141-160.

<sup>57</sup> Khalid El-Awaisi, "The Continuation of The Colonialist Project From The Crusades to Zionism" *The Journal of SDE Academy* 1/3 (2021), 178-228.

<sup>58</sup> Kitchen, "Khaki Crusaders", 1(2),

<sup>59</sup> Khalid El-Awaisi, "The Origins of the Idea of Establishing a Zionist Client-State in Islamic Jerusalem", *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 14/1 (2019), 13-26.

During its three-decade control of the Holy Land, Britain laid the groundwork for the establishment of a Zionist state. The mandate system was structured to accommodate the objectives of the Zionist project, in contradiction to British promises made to the Palestinian population. This involved permitting extensive Jewish immigration, altering the demographic composition of Palestine, and allocating fertile lands for the creation of settlements, facilitating domination and, ultimately, the territorial conquest. By the time the British prepared to depart in 1948, the Zionists possessed a well-established apparatus, cultivated under British supervision for decades. The remaining task was to secure sovereignty over the territory and formally declare the state's establishment. This declaration occurred on the same day as the British withdrawal from Palestine, May 1948, coinciding with the commencement of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine while British forces were still present. By the war's conclusion, Zionist forces had forcibly expelled 700,000 Palestinians from their homes and gained control of 80% of mandatory Palestine. Since its inception, the Zionist state, drawing parallels with the Crusader state, has enjoyed Western support<sup>60</sup>.

Indeed, Israel portrays itself as a Western stronghold in the region, emphasizing the unique bond between Israel and the West through the adoption of Western cultural practices (such as democratic systems). It also accentuates its military function in safeguarding Western interests in the area. Furthermore, the Zionist state capitalizes on the historical antagonism between Western and Muslim civilizations. Consequently, it can be argued that Zionism is the successor, albeit an illegitimate one, of the Crusader movement. Conversely, Zionist scholars have devoted considerable attention to Crusader studies, undertaking extensive research on the subject to avoid replicating its errors and, consequently, evade a similar fate<sup>61</sup>.

One of the Crusader states' vulnerabilities was its dependence on Arab agricultural workers, a reliance that Zionists sought to avoid by

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<sup>60</sup> Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020), 38-72/247-254.

<sup>61</sup> Ziad Asali, "Zionist Studies of the Crusade Movement", *Arab Studies Quarterly* 14/1 (1992), 45-59.

insisting on employing only Jewish farmers from the outset. Another factor contributing to the Crusader state's downfall was internal political fragmentation, intellectual stagnation, and scientific backwardness. While the Zionist state has achieved success in the latter two areas, recent years have witnessed increasing divisions within its communities and political factions, characterized by limited cohesion among its various groups. The Zionist state has also learned from the Crusader experience that the unification of Muslims in Egypt, Greater Syria, and beyond was a significant cause of its collapse. To prevent a recurrence of this, Israel, with Western backing, has pursued dividing neighboring countries and establishing individual agreements with them, ensuring that unity does not materialize. However, the instability of these states, particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, suggests that their collapse could be precipitated. This strategy recently expanded beyond neighbors to include Gulf and North African states, with the signing of normalization agreements aimed at mitigating any threat they might pose to the demise of Israel itself. This is because Israel's regional dominance depends on the maintenance of undemocratic Arab regimes that suppress any movement for the liberation of Palestine<sup>62</sup>.

Overall, Israel, as a settler-colonial state in the region, is actively attempting to learn from historical precedents to avoid repeating past mistakes. Nevertheless, anxieties about this possibility prompted Prime Minister Netanyahu to express concern that Israel might not survive beyond a century, noting that the Hasmonean Kingdom endured for only 80 years. He stated his commitment to ensuring that modern Israel will surpass that milestone and reach its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but acknowledged the need to confront future security challenges. This concern is a recurring theme among Zionists, with some fearing that the collapse of friendly neighboring Arab governments would spell the end of Israel<sup>63</sup>. Western support for Israel remains robust, with unsurprising political, financial, and military aid. American support for the Zionist state reached a new level with the relocation of its embassy to

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<sup>62</sup> Khalidi, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine*, 38-72/247-254.

<sup>63</sup> El-Awaisi – Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration in the Holy Land during the Late Ottoman Period", 1-18.

Jerusalem on the centennial of the Balfour Declaration and the announcement of the Deal of the Century, demonstrating a continuity of Western imperialist perspectives on the colonization of the Holy Land<sup>64</sup>.

### Conclusion

The narratives of the Crusades and the evolution of the Christian Just War theory reveal a complex interplay of religious zeal, political ambition, and moral reasoning that has shaped Western perceptions of conflict for centuries. The Crusades, driven by a blend of spiritual devotion and territorial aspirations, left profound political, economic, social, and cultural impacts, fostering both division and exchange between the Christian and Muslim worlds. Their legacy endures in modern conflicts, where crusading rhetoric is repurposed to frame ideological struggles, often oversimplifying historical lessons for political ends. Similarly, the development of Just War theory, rooted in Augustine's reconciliation of divine justice with violence, established enduring criteria—legitimate authority, just cause, and right intention—that continue to guide ethical debates on warfare. Together, these historical threads underscore a persistent human effort to justify violence through moral and divine frameworks, while their misapplications highlight the dangers of conflating ideological conviction with universal truth, a tension that resonates in contemporary global conflicts.

The consequences of the Crusades, with their events of profound historical significance, continue to have various political ramifications. The Crusader campaigns failed to accomplish their intended objectives; the Byzantine Empire was unable to halt the Turkish expansion. New political entities emerged, specifically the Greek states of Iznik and Trabzon, the Pontus, and the Latin Kingdom of Istanbul. Feudal lords experienced a decline in their former authority, while centralized monarchies gained prominence. These events played a role in the initial stages of global exploration. Furthermore, commerce between Islamic and European societies (East-West trade) saw growth. Ports along the

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<sup>64</sup> El-Awaisi, "The Continuation of The Colonialist Project From The Crusades to Zionism", 178-228.

Mediterranean Sea rose in importance. Numerous agricultural products and fruits from the East began to be cultivated within Europe. The pillaging, destruction, and killings within Anatolia and Syria impoverished the Islamic world. The expansion of European commerce originated largely from the dominance of Italian merchants in the Mediterranean, a consequence of the Byzantine Empire's disintegration.

Faith in European churches and clergy diminished. Turkish resistance to the Crusaders earned them esteem within the Islamic world. Ecclesiastical power lessened, fostering the development of rational and scientific thought. The Christian-Muslim conflict was initiated. Imbalances among societal classes decreased, and traditional class distinctions blurred. The bourgeois class began to acquire influence. The feudal system's power began to wane. Europeans also acquired new technologies from Islamic civilizations, including the compass, paper, the spherical astrolabe, and gunpowder. This knowledge spurred significant advancements in European intellectual, scientific, and artistic fields. Europeans were introduced to the cultural heritage of classical antiquity. The Crusades have had enduring repercussions, with art, literature, and even warfare continuously referencing the imagery, ideals, triumphs, and tragedies of these holy wars into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Figures such as Saladin and Richard the Lionheart were the subjects of veneration, even during the medieval period, celebrated not only for their military prowess but also chiefly for their knightly virtues. In the aftermath of the Reformation, a contrasting trend emerged, with the Crusades largely being relegated to the margins of historical memory as a savage and undesirable facet of the past best forgotten. The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a resurgence of interest in the West, exemplified by novels such as Sir Walter Scott's "The Talisman" (1825). The Allied occupation of Palestine during the First World War in the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the reemergence of Crusader themes, haunting the present through propaganda, rhetoric, and political cartoons. By the time of the Second World War, the term 'Crusade' had, paradoxically, shed its religious connotations and was applied to the campaigns waged against Nazi Germany. General Eisenhower, the U.S. commander of Allied forces, even titled his 1948 memoir of the campaign "Crusade in Europe".



More recently, the 21<sup>st</sup>-century struggle against terrorism has frequently been articulated using the concept of a 'Crusade,' most notably by U.S. President George W. Bush in the wake of the Twin Towers attacks in 2001. Amidst the rise of Arab nationalism, debates concerning the legitimacy and status of the state of Israel, and the continued interventionist policies of Western nations in the Middle East, secular objectives of territorial control and economic dominance have become intertwined and confused with religious divisions. Consequently, terms such as 'Crusade,' 'Christian,' 'Muslim,' and 'jihad' persist, in both Eastern and Western contexts, to be employed with ignorance and prejudice as convenient labels by those who seek to shape historical events rather than derive lessons from them.

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