

Rhetoric and Reality: Latin Christian Unity during the First Crusade

by

Hannah M. Chamberlain

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This thesis focuses on Latin Crusader unity, or the lack thereof, during the First Crusade. Letters written during the First Crusade show that crusaders used rhetoric of unity to affirm superiority over their enemy, to dissolve differences between one another, and to justify the warfare. The reality of the First Crusade, however, consisted of disunity between crusaders and amongst the leadership. This division developed after a drawn out battle over the city of Antioch and the death of the religious leader and papal legate, Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy. The emotional trauma in 1098, along with supply shortages and survival mentality, altered crusader attitudes and motives during the last year of war. Crusaders reclaimed Jerusalem in 1099 and used new territory to project political, military, and cultural influence in the eastern Mediterranean region. This thesis argues that the rhetoric of unity outlasted the disunity crusaders experienced and formed a new identity by which Latin Christians would use to justify future Crusades. Over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Church would engage in over a dozen more Crusades against cultural and political enemies.

Key Words: First Crusade, Crusade, Crusader, Rhetoric, Unity, Reality, Disunity

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INTRODUCTION

When constructing his famous speech at the Council of Clermont in 1095, Pope Urban II relied on the theological foundations that had been laid before him. Consciously or not, Urban's call for the First Crusade was rooted in early Christian theology and particularly in the teachings of the fifth-century Church father Augustine of Hippo. It is likely that Urban's clerical audience was familiar with Augustine's theology of "just war," which articulated that some wars were deemed righteous and obedient in God's eyes.

Historian Frederick H. Russell describes the just war theory as an attempt to "reconcil[e] the evangelical precepts of patience and the pacifistic tendencies of the early Church with Roman legal notions."¹ Augustine was able to intertwine violence with the Old Testament scriptures to create a version of religious warfare that not only avenged injuries, but "also avenged the moral order injured by the sins of the guilty party regardless of injuries done to the just party acting as a defender of that (moral) order."² From this perspective, God sanctioned religious war against unjust peoples and also allowed violence that could go beyond the defensive response in order to execute the necessary moral retribution against the enemy.

Despite the aggressive tones, Augustine's version of just war, however, was articulated as a defensive strategy. According to Russell, the "transgressions were both a crime against the law and a sin against righteousness" and "where there was no righteousness there was no true justice."³ Augustine was working to theorize just war within a religiously acceptable and sanctioned framework, as well as for the spiritual

¹ Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 16.

² Russell, *The Just War*, 18, 29.

³ Russell, *The Just War*, 29

redemption of Christendom. Both Augustine and Urban II were primarily concerned with protecting the moral order through Church policies.

Pope Urban II utilized this theory as a next step to the Truce of God movement around 1027. Similarly to Augustine, Urban was working to reconcile Church teachings with a military culture in Latin Christendom. The Truce of God was a series of declarations circulated by the Church that banned violence between Christians on “Sundays, Fridays, apostles’ days, and the vigils of the apostles, and on every day set aside...for fasts or feasts.”⁴ Anyone who broke these laws was not only subject to physical consequences, but spiritual, as well. Without repentance a Christian criminal who repudiated these laws would be excommunicated from the religious social circle and threatened with eternal damnation. The criminal, along with their possessions, would also be unprotected by the same laws they had broken and they could be treated as the “enemies of justice” that Christians would be allowed to commit violence against.⁵ These laws demonstrate how the Church attempted to gain social control in Christendom by outlawing co-religionist infighting. Unable to prevent the militarization of society or violence between co-religionists, the Crusades signal a period of papal influence by Christianizing the militarism that had not been otherwise controlled.

In terms of adhering to the Church’s non-violent stance and the limitations of violence, the health of Christendom in the eleventh century was poor. Urban rearticulated just war was based upon Augustine’s theory so that Crusade participants’ spiritual character could be sanctified through penitential action, “for in the trial of their patience, and the chastening of their spirit, and in bearing fatherly correction, they are rather

⁴ “Declaration of the Truce of God,” in *The Crusades: A Reader*, eds. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 25.

⁵ “Declaration of the Truce of God,” 26, 27.

benefitted than injured.”⁶ Augustine referenced early Christian martyrs in his attempt to encourage Christians to become participants in justified religious warfare. He avoided the naturally negative reactions to death and struggle by emphasizing the hope and glory in martyrdom.⁷ Augustine’s teachings that correctly enacted war could be potentially cleansing, as applied to the First Crusade by Pope Urban II, would propel many Christians towards joining the Crusade. These men hoped for glory through spiritual “chastening” and also desired material gain through participation in just war against the Seljuk Turks during the First Crusade.

Unfortunately, the reality of the First Crusade would not fit a more romantic image of just war. Augustine used language of sending disciples, “as sheep into the midst of wolves,” where the majority would miraculously emerge more “benefitted” than before.⁸ Many Latin crusaders would perish as martyrs in battle, but many would also die from starvation and disease. Anselm of Ribemont, a crusader who almost survived the First Crusade, dying in battle in April 1099, wrote to the Archbishop of Reims about his experience. Anselm underwent the kind of spiritual trials to which Augustine alluded in his theory of just war and, in July of 1098, wrote that God “so chastised us that our army could muster only seven hundred mounted knights...because almost all our horses had died from starvation or cold.”⁹ While understanding the physical situation, Anselm acknowledged God’s control of the physical conditions. But he also conveyed the

⁶ “Augustine of Hippo on the Just War,” in *The Crusades: A Reader*, eds. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 6.

⁷ “Augustine of Hippo,” 7.

⁸ “Augustine of Hippo,” 7.

⁹ “Anselm of Ribemont to Manasses, Archbishop of Reims (July, 1098),” in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims, and Settlers in the 12th-13th Centuries*, trans. Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 27.

practical need for more material equipage: horses, food, and proper protection from the weather in order to prevent the crusader population from declining further. Anselm and Augustine agreed that just war depended upon faith—in God’s ordination of war, in provision, and in victory—but Anselm’s remark points at a practical need for supplies.

Thus, there were both theoretical ideology and practical needs subsisting side by side during the First Crusade. It is this connection between ideological rhetoric and pragmatic reality that is the subject of this thesis. The emotionally taxing struggle for survival during the Crusade disrupted the social stability between crusaders, clergy, and the leadership, which complicated the social organization within the army during the end of the Crusade. Religious sentiments and shared experiences were merely temporary adhesives to keep the social structure between Latin crusaders somewhat organized and respectful. Indeed, letters and memorials written during and after the First Crusade reveal a serious problem within crusader ranks: infighting. While not the same as warfare between distinct and opposing groups, the tensions between crusaders resulted in a less cohesive bond within the Latin Christian contingent.

This thesis argues that the rhetoric of unity within the sources is undermined by the stark reality of disunity that disorganized and divided the Latin Christians on the First Crusade. Although crusaders often wrote letters and chronicles with rhetoric of unity based on racial, religious, and cultural similarities, the reality of the First Crusade did not meet such idyllic hopes. Disunity and dysfunctions arose during the critical turning point in 1098, after the Battle of Antioch and the death of Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy, and created a vacuum for infighting, distrust, and disorganization in the Crusade leadership. A close reading of the sources suggest that, for crusaders, the last phase of the First

Crusade was executed out of survival instincts rather than for God and greater Christendom.

With the examples of disunity within sources, I challenge the assumption that the First Crusade was a complete success, a claim made both by contemporary perspectives and by the descendants of crusaders and Crusade sympathizers. In contrast to this common view, the primacy of the First Crusade and victory in Jerusalem did not establish long-lasting success. In this case, I conclude that the First Crusade was successful because of its acquisition of holy territory, and not as a fulfillment of God's will or for unity across Christendom. The infighting culture in Christendom may have redirected to aggression towards enemies rather than co-religionists, but the haste in which the First Crusade concluded in 1099, for reasons I outline in Part III, shows the widespread disunity. But the rhetoric of unity outlasted the reality of disunity, which was merely blanketed over by the rhetoric, rather than the reality, of unity.

An understanding of the fundamental social situation of the First Crusade is important because the First Crusade is viewed by historian Andrew Jotischky as a “blueprint for a successive series of wars following more or less the same pattern.”¹⁰ Within five years after the Crusade, Bohemond of Taranto, a First Crusade leader, and the new papal representative in the eastern Mediterranean Crusader States “formally proclaimed a new crusade, with the support of Pope Paschal” and they “described it in First-Crusade terms.”¹¹ Although the Crusade officially ended in 1099, it appears to have not concluded in the minds of crusaders still in the east, as evinced by Bohemond's

¹⁰ Andrew Jotischky, *Crusading and the Crusader States* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 7. The wars following the First Crusade certainly follow a pattern similar to the progression, language, and execution of Pope Urban II's Crusade. I am challenging the reasons and mindset behind repeating the qualities and strategy of a war that might not have been as just or righteous as assumed.

¹¹ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 118.

attempt to call another Crusade around 1104. The First Crusade would remain the blueprint for centuries to come. Historian Simon Lloyd argues “the First Crusade provided a model, however rudimentary, by which would be progressively elaborated and extended upon in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the attempt to maximize the impact of the crusade call.”¹² The First Crusade began a trend of a particular rhetoric, motivation, and strategy for religious warfare that continued to adjust for particular circumstances as Latin Christian presence and supremacy in the region advanced and adapted over the course of the following two hundred years. The First Crusade marked the beginning of new social ideology, religious authority, and cultural conflict and mixing that would project into the future. Understanding the mentality of the First Crusade is thus essential for understanding the Crusades as a wider phenomenon.

The Initial Memory of the First Crusade

Both participants and supporters during the First Crusade were unable to execute the just war intentions of the Crusade as articulated by Augustine of Hippo’s theory. If the First Crusade was a “blueprint” for continued military presence and aggression in the eastern Mediterranean region after 1099—in terms of continued battling and future Crusades—then we can assume that the methods crusaders used to reclaim the Holy Land were deemed acceptable enough to justify repetition. The crusaders’ descendants and others who traveled or moved to the Crusader States reveled in religious victory and continued to Crusade in the twelfth century and beyond. The Crusade, to these men, was both a

¹² Simon Lloyd, “The Crusading Movement: 1096-1274,” in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 44.

moral and military success that was justified on the tenants of holy war—by God’s will and favor.

Indeed, by remembering and emphasizing success, crusaders and later memorializers ignored the crimes and atrocities committed during wartime. During the twelfth century, the memory of the First Crusade shined a narrow spotlight on the righteous and holy behavior and ignored the greed, perversion of God’s will, and original purpose of the mission. Following victory in Jerusalem in 1099, a “selective” memory of the First Crusade developed, which put forth a narrative of Christian victory and pious sacrifice, but neglected to highlight impious and unjust behaviors. The First Crusaders also massacred Jews and withheld reclaimed Byzantine territory for Latin Christian benefit. Modern study of Jewish accounts of the massacres that occurred in 1096 offer a less glamorous memory of the crusade, one which emphasizes bloodshed and inhumane treatment.¹³ Latin Christian memory, however, has downplayed this Jewish narrative in part because the aggressors were part of the Popular Crusade.¹⁴ An army of peasant soldiers—as opposed to the papally sanctioned crusaders—were considered unofficial participants and, therefore, their actions were not considered a reflection of the papally sanctioned intentions of the Crusade.¹⁵ The “princely” Latin crusaders, however, established Crusader States along their path to Jerusalem and instituted a Crusader State society. This society bonded over a collective memory of pious, just war in the valiant service of Christ. Conveniently, crusaders and their descendants participated in collective

¹³ For primary sources on the Jewish massacres during the First Crusade, see, *The Crusades: A Reader*, eds. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

¹⁴ Robert Payne, *The Crusades: A History* (Great Britain: Wordsworth Editions, 1998), 37. These “popular” crusaders were “aroused” also by “the sermons of itinerant preachers,” like a man named Peter the Hermit, who believed “they would overcome the Turks by faith alone.”

¹⁵ These non-nobles would eventually be killed off as soon as they reached Asia Minor and the noble crusaders were arriving in the east. See Payne, *The Crusades*, 44-46.

forgetting by neglecting to remember the pain and turmoil crusaders faced or inflicted upon their enemies.

In order to explore the rhetoric and reality of unity among Latin Christians during the First Crusade, I use letters written between 1095 and 1099, as well as chronicles composed afterwards that memorialize the authors' experiences. Part I provides the context of the First Crusade by considering the medieval and present meaning of the term "crusade," briefly outlining major events during the war, and evaluating the methods by which Crusade chronicles spread and included a variation of perspectives. Part II illustrates how rhetoric unified Latin Christians and motivated them to Crusade against a common enemy. This explains how the language and repetition of religious or unifying themes helped establish a Crusade ideology and culture. Finally, Part III argues the extent of crusader disunity that occurred both for practical reasons and as a result of the key events that altered the morale, leadership, and, therefore, the final execution of reclaiming Jerusalem in 1099. In the end, despite a reality of division and dislike within the crusader ranks, it was the rhetoric of unity that lived on. It was the rhetoric of unity that enabled the First Crusade to broaden the concept of Christendom into a cultural ideology that, beyond religious influence, also held political, military, and social power.

PART I:
CONTEXTUALIZING THE FIRST CRUSADE

Calling a “Crusade”

In 2009, historian Jonathan Phillips wrote an article for *History Today* entitled “The Call of the Crusades” in which he documented almost a millennium of “crusades.” Phillips’ narrative began in 1095 when Pope Urban II called for the First Crusade and it continued through twenty-first-century tensions between Christian and Islamic nations. While scholars have labeled and numbered the First Crusade to the Sixteenth Crusade (almost 800 years after Urban II), the meaning of “crusade” has accumulated centuries of political, religious, and social baggage. Phillips refers to the term as “either a toxic byword for conflict between Christians and Muslims or a shorthand for what people believe to be a good and worthy cause.”¹⁶ The generalization of a “crusade” as religious or cultural conflict or a synonym to just religious war demonstrates the complexities and long history behind the term “crusade” that has given it a rather negative and controversial meaning.

Although Phillips’ article focuses on former president George W. Bush’s reference to “crusade” in his response to the September 11th attacks and the controversy that developed over the word’s use, neither definition that Phillips offered represents the meaning that “crusade” carries within this analysis.¹⁷ Rather, I utilize the temporally appropriate definition given by historian Andrew Jotischky, who describes crusading as “above all a religious activity, governed by the expectation of spiritual reward.”¹⁸

Jotischky differentiates the First Crusade from prior wars based upon the development of

¹⁶ Jonathan Phillips, “The Call of the Crusades,” *History Today* 59 (2009): 11.

¹⁷ Phillips, “The Call,” 16-17.

¹⁸ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 4.

a virtually contractual exchange where participants receive religious penance and guarantees of salvation in exchange for military action. The First Crusade is special in this sense; it is a reflection and expression of recently centralized papal power over Christendom and the overwhelming response by the papacy's faithful allies.¹⁹ As this paper delves into the divisions and rivalries within Christian contingents, it is important to continue setting aside contemporary understandings when analyzing the First Crusade in a medieval context. For the purposes of my research, a "crusade" will be used in reference to the new spiritual dimension of the military and as a series of wars that follow similar patters of calling, promoting, and executing religious warfare.

Thus, it is also useful to consider the world these Christian armies came from: Latin Christendom. While hard for many modern people to imagine, "European" has not always been recognized as a distinct cultural or identity marker.²⁰ During the First Crusade, it was the Christian nature of Western Europe—known as Latin Christendom—that crossed the geographic and cultural borders that divide present-day Europe. At this time, the Holy Roman Empire, Norman principalities, and other kingdoms dominated the political sphere. But while Christianity theoretically united individuals through a common religious identity, eleventh-century Christians participated in a staggering amount of destabilizing internal bickering, "petty disputes between neighbors, albeit on a larger scale."²¹ At the dawn of the First Crusade, this culture of infighting in Christendom was one element that convinced the pope to use his authority to call his flock to leave on a Crusade in 1095. Pope Urban II was recorded as having called "those who, for a long

¹⁹ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 30.

²⁰ In light of this, this analysis will consistently refer to crusaders from contemporary France and surrounding areas as "Latin Christians" in order to avoid improperly labeling crusaders as "European" per contemporary understanding.

²¹ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 31.

time, have been robbers, [to] now become knights. Let those who have been fighting against their brothers and relatives now fight in a proper way,” against a distant and common enemy, rather than fighting their co-religionist neighbors.²² As previously mentioned, this violence between Christian neighbors corresponded with the Church’s inability to regulate it.

In addition to internal fighting amongst Latin Christians, there was another division in the wider Christian world. Although the enemy was officially the Muslim Turks who had invaded eastern Christian territories, Christianity in the east had evolved into its own distinct culture long before 1095. The form of Orthodoxy that had evolved in the Byzantine Empire contrasted with Latin Christianity. The distinction between the eastern and western Churches lies in the perception of papal authority. As Andrew Jotischky explains, “in claiming headship over all Christians, the popes undermined the traditional view of the Church’s hierarchy held by eastern Christians.”²³ Theological and cultural differences arose between the Churches but the First Crusade began in a period when Pope Urban II had maintained political relations with the Orthodox Byzantines. Thus, he called Latin Christendom to the aid of its religious “brethren.”²⁴ The Crusades would weaken the Byzantine Empire before its total destruction in 1453 by the Ottoman Empire, but in 1095 the Greek Christians controlled present-day Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean region under the rule of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos. Not only did the crusaders destabilize Byzantium, but also the relationship between crusaders and the

²² Fulcher of Chartres, “The Speech of Urban II at the Council of Clermont, 1095,” in *A Source Book for Medieval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Ages*, trans. O.J. Thatcher and E.H. McNeal (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905), 516.

²³ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 28, 29.

²⁴ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 29.

Byzantine army contributed both to the Latin army's successes and to the struggles they faced.

Background and Progression of the First Crusade

In 1040, papal authority rarely extended beyond Rome, but during his tenure on the papal throne (and before the First Crusade) from 1088 to 1095, Pope Urban II became the first to accomplish both the centralization of power and the attainment of widespread recognized authority through much of Latin Christendom.²⁵ He befriended secular rulers unlike the previous pope, Gregory VII, whose reformationist tendencies alienated many monarchs, most famously the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV, during the infamous Investiture Controversy.²⁶ During his papacy (r. 1073-1085), Gregory had attempted to instigate a military movement eastward in 1074, but he had poor relations with, and little respect from, the nobility to make the militarization possible.²⁷ The Gregorian Reformation, as it came to be known, represented Gregory's attempt to "emancipate the papacy from dependence on the secular ruler for military aid" by allowing knights to receive penance by following the military commands of clergy, rather than secular rulers.²⁸ Gregory rearticulated just war in the eleventh century context, which would be critical for Urban's success, but had been unable to win over Latin Christendom.

Urban's approach and timing, however, successfully put the Crusades in motion.

In contrast to Gregory, Urban toured Latin Christendom to build rapport and in May 1095

²⁵ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 24.

²⁶ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 25.

²⁷ "Gregory VII Calls for a Crusade, 1074," in *A Source Book for Medieval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Ages*, trans. O.J. Thatcher and E.H. McNeal (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 512-513.

²⁸ Russell, *The Just War*, 35, 34.

held the Council of Piacenza, in northern Italy, where he publicly displayed his growing authority. It was there that the pope became aware of the Seljuk threat to the east, when Byzantine emissaries brought news of Muslim encroachment and possession of Byzantine cities. The Seljuk Turkish state was a militant political power that had derived from Central Asia and, around the ninth century, had been a “species of military slavery.”²⁹ During the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Seljuk Turks migrated around the Mediterranean region as they conquered other Turkic and Muslim groups and instigated conflict with the Byzantine emperor who requested that the west send military aid to stem Turkish conquests of Byzantine land.³⁰

Pope Urban II, however, withheld formally addressing this issue until November 1095 at the Council of Clermont where his official call started the First Crusade.³¹ The half-year between Piacenza and Clermont demonstrates strategic preparation and organization for a Crusade. Urban continued to meet with secular leaders and nobles during that time and, to ensure public support, gathered some princely recruits to take the crusader’s oath even before the formal announcement at the Council of Clermont. There, many more nobles, trained in warfare and eager to use that skill for their own penance, joined the cause and took the cross.³²

The Princely Crusade, those whom the pope had recruited in France, departed in May of 1096 to meet up with eastern Christians in Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. But the princely crusaders were not what the Byzantines had

²⁹ P.M. Holt, *The Crusader States and Their Neighbours, 1098-1291* (Great Britain: Pearson Education Limited: 2004), 6, 7.

³⁰ Holt, *The Crusader States*, 9.

³¹ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 30.

³² “Taking up the cross” is a reference to the commitment crusaders made to the Church to be papally sanctioned participants, which can be found in “Bohemond, Raymond, Count of St Gilles, Godfrey, Duke of Lorraine, Robert, Duke of Normandy, Robert, Count of Flanders, Eustace, Count of Boulogne, to Pope Urban II (11 September, 1098),” in *Letters from the East*, 32.

expected. Emperor Alexios I Komnenos asked Pope Urban II to “recruit western knights to serve in his armies against the Seljuqs,” but the massive response was not only extra manpower, which could be controlled by Byzantine generals, but an entire Latin Christian army.³³ Crusaders overwhelmed Byzantium during the winter months of 1096 and 1097 and set out from Constantinople during the spring of 1097 much to the relief of the people of that city.

Finally on course to meet the enemy, the first major battle took place in June of 1097 when the Turks were defeated at the Battle of Nicaea, not far from Constantinople. The Siege of Antioch (now in southern Turkey near the Syrian border) began in October of 1097 and was prolonged for nine months. It is during this long period of battling that crusaders encountered more hardships and supply shortages than they had previously endured.³⁴ It was an entire year after the victory at Antioch before the crusaders would be able to take back Jerusalem in June of 1099.

This thesis utilizes a collection of primary sources—letters and chronicles—and I have relied on two themes I discovered across multiple authors that wrote between 1095 and 1099. A common phrasing, or rhetoric, to discuss co-crusaders, co-religionists, and the Crusade ideology illuminated the unifying sentiments across the sources, which I have outlined in the following section. After 1098, for reasons that will be made clear in Part III, the tones of these documents shift into the reality of disunity despite theoretical ideals of Christian unity. But first I turn to the rhetoric of unity to establish the sorts of language that was used in the attempt to link crusaders together in a common endeavor.

³³ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 30.

³⁴ In the third section, for the period following Antioch, I outline the social repercussions of such challenges.

PART II: RHETORIC OF UNITY

As we begin to analyze the rhetoric of unity and the ways it manifested in letters and narratives from the First Crusade, let us look back to France in 1095. It was here that Pope Urban II spoke at the Council of Clermont to an audience of clerics and princely notables.³⁵ Two medieval chroniclers, Fulcher of Chartres and Robert the Monk, recorded Urban's speech at Clermont. These are two of the four surviving eyewitness accounts that help historians piece together the call to Crusade.³⁶ In this analysis, I am interested in the way Fulcher and Robert convey racialized and religiously charged language to both unite Christians and to differentiate themselves from their enemies. Chronicles and letters repeat phrases of religious calling, unity, and endurance to remind crusaders of the similarities between them and to argue an end to infighting that had been a problem at home. This section argues that the strong rhetoric of unity acted as an agent to motivate Christendom to Crusade, but also as a reflection of ideal unity because the rhetoric also allowed crusaders to remember their common bonds before their differences and to utilize religion as a unifying subject.

³⁵ Robert the Monk, "The Council of Clermont, 1095," in *A Source Book for Medieval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Ages*, trans. O.J. Thatcher and E.H. McNeal (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 518.

³⁶ *A Source Book for Medieval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Ages*, trans. O.J. Thatcher and E.H. McNeal (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 514. Although Fulcher and Robert's narratives are accounts of the same speech, the sources offer clearly different perspectives. Not only do they highlight different aspects of Urban's speech, but their personal style created differences in the way they approached Urban's main points. The intersection of these sources demonstrates the fundamental similarities and core message of Urban's original call to Crusade. Fulcher and Robert, therefore, are mediated versions of the original speech made at Clermont in 1095. This process of copying original documents or speeches was common during the time period and is also evident through recensions of the *Gesta Francorum*. For recent material regarding Baldric of Bourguiel's recension of the *Gesta Francorum*, see Steven Biddlecombe, *The Historia Ierosolimitana of Baldric of Bourguiel* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014).

The Character of First Crusade Rhetoric

The primary sources are full of unifying language surrounding just war ideology, religious references, and the shared crusader mission. These themes display a common language, or dialogue, between crusaders, clergy, and Latin Christendom that form a rhetoric—a persuasive and effective form of writing—that was embedded within the Crusade culture and also spurred Latin Christians to action.³⁷ Crusaders and chroniclers incorporated this rhetoric into their writings both to propagate and to reflect a desired unity. Pope Urban II’s speech at Clermont in 1095, for example, demonstrated how religious and unifying rhetoric could be used to urge thousands of Latin Christians to join the First Crusade (as will be further explored in this section).

But this rhetoric has two purposes; not only did it function as a platform to elicit action, but it also provided participants with a language to retroactively explain hardships or justify wartime deeds. Count Stephen of Blois was a high-ranking crusader and two letters to his wife, Adela, have survived since 1097. In this personal note to Adela, Stephen’s language demonstrated how the rhetoric was not always an agent for unity or war, but also a reflection of the linguistic culture. In the letter, Stephen narrated a previously fought battle and referenced that “the huge army of God had been engaged in mortal combat...for four weeks.”³⁸ Here, Stephen’s use of religious language is a reflection of the unifying rhetoric rather than solely an agent for further Crusade. He was not trying to persuade his wife to Crusade like Urban had, though the vocabulary is similar. Instead, he used the rhetoric to describe the experience and reflect the attitudes

³⁷ Oxford Dictionaries. Oxford University Press.

http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/rhetoric.

³⁸ “Stephen, Count of Blois, to his wife Adela (June, 1097),” in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims, and Settlers in the 12th-13th Centuries*, trans. Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 16.

and unity of crusaders at the battle. The ability for participants to utilize rhetoric as both motivation for and a reflection of Crusade ideology reveals the importance in recognizing the complexities behind the rhetoric of unity.

The Language of Race: Fulcher of Chartres and Robert the Monk

Pope Urban II's call to Crusade was recorded with racialized language that was used to disapprove of co-religionist infighting in Latin Christendom and to unite Latin and Greek sects on the eve of the First Crusade. This Christianized language appeared in Fulcher's and Robert's narratives of Urban's speech at Clermont and intersect with letters from crusaders that clearly illustrate an ideal of Christian unity. This idyllic version of Christendom promoted intentions of just war that was strengthened by religious language.

Chronicler Fulcher of Chartres' account of Pope Urban's call to Crusade characterized the Turks using racial language that served both to divide Christendom from the Turks as well as to unify Christendom against them. According to Fulcher, the pope called his audience "Christ's heralds" and asked them to "destroy that vile race...such a despised and base race."³⁹ There are two layers within the juxtaposition of Seljuks and Christians worth noting, which will be explored in this section. First, Fulcher identified Christians as agents of God and as enemies of the Turks. This phrasing allows Christians who have been fighting amongst each other to identify a common external enemy. Fulcher described Seljuks by derogatory adjectives to characterize their incivility and unsophisticated nature. Second, Fulcher's rendition of Urban's speech creates a racial hierarchy. I suggest that a religious hierarchy is also included in the justification for Seljuks to be racially subordinate. Fulcher suggested that the Seljuks were a "base" race

³⁹ Fulcher, "Speech of Urban," 517.

at the bottom of the racial hierarchy. Fulcher is also conveying that Latin Christians are higher on this racial spectrum, also.

These authors strategically used empowering racial and cultural language to elevate all Latin Christians, regardless of economic or social status, as superior to the Turks on the basis of racial and religious identification. Fulcher's interpretation of Urban's call to Crusade would have indirectly invited all Christians into participating or investing in the religious and moral threat in the east. According to Fulcher, Urban said that to fight in a "proper way" was "against the barbarians."⁴⁰ Racial distinction, in this case, labeled Turks as unruly and less civilized through parallels with barbarianism.

In contrast to Fulcher's negative use of race, Robert the Monk began his account of Urban's speech with an opposite use of the term: "O race of the Franks...people loved and chosen by God."⁴¹ Robert positively identified the Franks as a single race, whose merit is based on correct worship and relationship to God. Robert's stance that Christianity is proper worship parallels Fulcher's message that Christians are a more proper race because of their approach to the Divine. For motivational appeal, and as a biblical scholar, Robert utilizes scriptures to establish the biblical foundation for taking up arms and reclaiming the Holy Land. Robert's account of the speech, however, does not spend as much time describing society's quarrels and fighting as Fulcher's version, which offers motivation to take the fighting mentality elsewhere. Yet even Robert hints at the infighting when he has Urban command that "hatred and quarrels cease...and all your dissensions come to an end."⁴² The fighting between lords and their peasants seems to have disgusted both authors, as it had Pope Urban II, and contributed to Fulcher and

⁴⁰ Fulcher, "Speech of Urban," 517.

⁴¹ Robert, "Council of Clermont," 518.

⁴² Robert, "Council of Clermont," 519.

Robert's urgent advertisement for peace at home and Crusade abroad. These sources emphasize the disorganized social structure in the west before 1095 that would affect stability amongst the crusading leadership. This also demonstrates the improper infighting in Christendom that had provided Urban with an internal motivation to call the Crusade and a reason beyond the external Seljuk threat.⁴³

The speeches as recorded by Fulcher of Chartres and Robert the Monk help us understand the charged language and concepts of "us" versus "them" which existed early in the development of the Crusade. Another key voice, which offers us insight into this mentality from the point of view of the crusading leaders, comes from Stephen, Count of Blois. Stephen (1045 to 1102) was a high-ranking official and one of the leading princes during the First Crusade. Stephen's contemporaries and co-crusaders included: Bohemond of Taranto, Raymond of St Gilles, and Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy, among others.⁴⁴ In 1098, while on Crusade and three years after the Council of Clermont and Pope Urban II's speech, Stephen wrote a letter to his wife in which he referred to Muslims as "enemies of God."⁴⁵ Stephen's letter also demonstrated a more human description. The count calls the Turks "treacherous" and "unspeakable" but also "courageous."⁴⁶ It is striking, however, that Stephen was able to recognize humanity in his enemy by calling them "courageous." Perhaps he could relate to the bravery necessary

⁴³ Fulcher, "Speech of Urban," 517.

⁴⁴ According to Jonathan Riley-Smith, there were eight leaders important enough to identify at the onset of his chapter "Conditions on the March." These include: Hugh of Vermandois, Godfrey of Bouillon, Bohemond of Taranto, Raymond of St Gilles, Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy, Count Robert of Flanders, Duke Robert of Normandy, and Count Stephen of Blois. Riley-Smith includes brief detail on each leader's social status and lineage in his introductory list. Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: The Athlone Press, 1986), 58.

⁴⁵ "Stephen, Count of Blois, to his wife Adela (29 March, 1098)," in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims, and Settlers in the 12th-13th Centuries*, trans. Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 23.

⁴⁶ "Stephen to Adela (March, 1098)," 22-23.

to participate in the battles, but it was not enough to counterbalance the clear religious differences that marked Muslims as the enemy. As the First Crusade evolved, Stephen's experience interacting and battling the Turkish enemy reveals a deeper level of human connection and contrasts Fulcher's and Robert's concepts of the Muslim enemy that lacked Crusade experience or understanding.

Crusader Origins

The language that Fulcher of Chartres used to motivate Christendom for Crusade was unifying. Likewise, Anselm of Ribemont, the crusader who accounted physical suffering and chastisement, wrote a letter to Archbishop Manasses of Reims in July of 1098 about the struggles that the "race" of Franks experienced. This letter referred to the wider army in terms of unifying pronouns (i.e. we, our, their, our).⁴⁷ In using geographical notations, however, his tone did not signal division but instead recognized natural forms of identification for the era. Each prince was called by both his name and place of origin, just as Anselm addressed his letter to Manasses, the "Archbishop of Reims."⁴⁸ Anselm identified the whole army as Christians, but he also differentiated between the Franks, Normans, and forces of other leaders from St Gilles or Flanders.⁴⁹ When Anselm listed the battle lineup, he included the "ethnic" distinction between Normans and Franks, but did not convey a negative perception of the geographical divisions.

Although different groups, or races, were present in the Latin army, a majority of crusaders were actually Frank, or French. In his article, "The State of Mind of Crusaders to the East: 1095-1300," Jonathan Riley-Smith mentions several French provinces with

⁴⁷ "Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098)," 26-30.

⁴⁸ "Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098)," 26.

⁴⁹ "Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098)," 29.

influential crusading families, either because relatives set out on the First Crusade together or multiple generations participated in later Crusades.⁵⁰ This complicated Latin Christian unity because while some crusaders were related by blood, the culture of infighting that they sought to leave behind would have been easily carried with them abroad. It is common for families to disagree and appear to be in disunity and so infighting, in this case, can be connected to disagreements between related noble houses and neighbors who crusaded together. Even if infighting accompanied them, each princely crusader took the crusading oath and would have desired to repent of the infighting they sought redemption for.⁵¹

Although Fulcher of Chartres and Robert the Monk may have articulated racial differences between Turks and Christians very clearly in their accounts of Urban's speech, there is little evidence that the princes and other crusaders used such charged racial distinctions when talking about each other. Ethnic difference was not, at least at this point, a source of disunity. Rather, Anselm used geographical differentiation innocuously to function as a subtle identification marker between the various crusading parties. It seems that racial or ethnic divisions did not play a significant role in dividing the crusading parties from one another.

⁵⁰ Jonathan Riley-Smith, "The State of Mind of Crusaders to the East: 1095-1300," in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 86, 87.

⁵¹ Robert, "Council of Clermont," 521. Robert's narration of Urban's speech included the crusader's oath. He stated "Whoever therefore shall determine to make this journey and shall make a vow to God and shall offer himself as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God [Rom. 12:1], shall wear a cross on his brow or on his breast." This demonstrates that oath was to God and as a promise to fulfill the journey to Jerusalem.

The Army of Christ

If princes or smaller units of the army were identified by casual geographic distinctions, what was the nature or source of the collective identity? Pope Urban II called the First Crusade for what he claimed to be God's will and the repetition of "the Lord's army" and "Christ's army" functioned as unifying language that also illustrated the depth and significance of religious leadership, like that of Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy. Anselm of Ribemont called the crusaders the "army of the Lord" and classified himself along with "us Christians."⁵² Stephen, Count of Blois, attributed favor and fortune to the "chosen army of Christ" and Bohemond of Taranto wrote, "Alive or dead we are the Lord's."⁵³ Similar to Augustine's versions just war and pious suffering, Bohemond's language highlights the glory of martyrdom.

The repetition of being "Christ's army" and Christians being part of the superior race over the Turks offered rationale for Christian unity during the First Crusade. These expressions, written by key chroniclers and leaders during the years journeying and battling from Constantinople to Jerusalem, were rooted in an identity that had formed through the events in 1095. Bohemond, in his letter to Pope Urban II in 1098, acknowledged that it was Urban II who began the expedition through "sermons [that] made us all leave our lands and what was in them, [to] follow Christ by taking up the cross and exalt the Christian name."⁵⁴ This language spells out the identity that crusaders took with them and repeated in order to persevere through the turmoil they faced. It

⁵² "Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098)," 27, 29.

⁵³ "Bohemond, son of Robert, Raymond, Count of St Gilles, Godfrey, Duke of Lorraine, and Hugh the Great, to all the Christian faithful (July, 1098)," in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims, and Settlers in the 12th-13th Centuries*, trans. Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 26. "Stephen to Adela (March, 1098)," 22.

⁵⁴ "Bohemond to Pope Urban II," 32.

reminded crusaders that they embarked on God's holy mission as his army on earth and represented God's own hand and desires.

These sources provide evidence of the rhetoric of unity that began with Pope Urban II's call to Crusade and can be traced to leaders like Stephen, Count of Blois, and Anselm of Ribemont in 1098. The authors experienced the Crusade firsthand and, in theory, successfully conveyed concepts of religious unity between each other and submission under God's authority by carrying the cross alongside each other. The rhetoric strongly conveys the ideal and theoretical intentions of unifying Latin Christendom and justifying the warfare they participated in. In contrast, other sources paint a reality of disunity and divisions that were rooted in material shortages and emotional stress. By 1098, crusaders faced a major turning point in morale, leadership, and attitude towards finishing the First Crusade, to which I will now turn.

PART III:
REALITY OF DISUNITY

The rhetoric of unity that surrounded the First Crusade was applicable in theory, but the language and concept of the united Christian race was not successful in settling all of the disputes that arose within the Christian army. This section demonstrates how different the discourse was from the reality, highlighting the destabilizing results of infighting and the division that grew up at the same time that others were recording lofty rhetoric. This section sifts through crusader letters chronologically in order to demonstrate the attitudes during the first years of the Crusade and the leadership structure and unity before and after the Battle of Antioch in order to show the drastic changes in unity at that key moment in 1098. Crusaders were low in energy, funds, and manpower by that time and the death of Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy, the papal representative, proved to be a major tipping point towards disunity, as well.

A Positive Outlook on Provisions in the Early Days

Following Urban's rousing speech, the crusaders left in waves and arrived in the Byzantine Empire towards the end of 1096 and early 1097 and had fared well. From the capital of Constantinople, the First Crusade spread east and won the first major victory at the battle of Nicaea in 1097. Until this point, crusaders had experienced swift victories; Stephen, Count of Blois, wrote to his wife after conquering Nicaea in a positive tone and without mentioning difficult circumstances. This might be attributed to Stephen's agenda and audience; perhaps Stephen would have refrained from complaining or alluding to struggle in order to reassure his wife that the journey had gone well, with bravery and

courage rather than fear or strife. Nevertheless, this complete absence of negative emotion is reflected in Stephen's reaction to a shortage in ships after departing from Constantinople. He explains that after arriving at the Arm of St George, "we did not find enough ships" and simply "solved the problem by continuing on foot."⁵⁵ The count did not signal any frustration or ill planning on the leaders' part and does not engage this topic further. The crusading experience had fared well by the time he was writing; the capture of Nicaea had been victorious and provisions from Emperor Alexios allowed the Latin crusaders to feel fairly well off.⁵⁶

In addition, the crusaders seemed to think their mission was close to complete. In the closing remarks of his letter, Stephen predicted that it would take five weeks to reach Jerusalem on the condition that Antioch would be swiftly captured. He could not have been more wrong on this account, but his hopeful attitude conveys that the First Crusade was, thus far, faring rather successfully in terms of supplies and a sense of unity of purpose and people. The crusaders felt hopeful and in good supply and Anselm of Ribemont wrote in 1097 that at Nicaea, "our princes remained together, not separating their forces" and, prior to Antioch, their "stocks of corn, wine and oil and other goods are larger than one could believe."⁵⁷ Between this account and Stephen's mentioned above,

⁵⁵ "Stephen to Adela (June, 1097)," 16.

⁵⁶ Stephen mentioned that Emperor Alexios had "allotted the more precious spoils of the city of Nicaea" to the crusaders and paid the princes out of his own wealth. This suggests that the emperor and crusaders still maintained a good relationship up until this point, but also the army's reliance on Alexios' provisioning at this point. Perhaps it was a sign of gratefulness for recovering Nicaea from the Turks—maybe a gift—but it could have also been out of crusaders' increasing poverty and external help to fulfill material needs. For further reading from Stephen on this topic, see, "Stephen to Adela (June 1097)," 16-17. See also, "The heavy burdens of the besiegers," in *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen*, trans. Bernard S. Bachrach and David S. Bachrach (Burlington: Ashgate: 2005), 81.

⁵⁷ "Anselm of Ribemont to Manasses, Archbishop of Reims (November, 1097)," in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims, and Settlers in the 12th-13th Centuries*, trans. Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 20.

Nicaea had clearly treated the crusaders well. Anselm, like Stephen, did not expect Antioch to delay the crusaders advancement to the Holy Land.

Council of Leaders: Before Victory at Antioch

Despite Anselm and Stephen's predictions, it would turn out that winning Antioch would take from October 1097 to June 1098.⁵⁸ During this pivotal time, the men would be stripped of supplies, energy, and hope. This intersection of dwindling provision and exhaustion compounded the challenges the leadership would face following the battle at Antioch. The *Gesta Francorum* offers a comprehensive narration of the events that transpired from a survivor's perspective. In a selection that discusses the First Crusade leadership and post-Antioch social structure, the *Gesta Francorum* recognizes crusader unity in the beginning of the Crusade but also mentions divisions that arose later. The author mentions, "All our leaders assembled and held a council to decide how best to guide and lead the people until they should complete their journey."⁵⁹ The princes here gathered together and assessed the conditions of the army because Antioch did not offer the same spoils as Nicaea in 1097. They recognized that many crusaders of all social classes had run out of supplies during the nine months of siege and the princes formed a council to decide how to provide for the survivors.⁶⁰ This remark also identified some of the princes as "all our leaders," suggesting an acceptance of the collective leadership

⁵⁸ Andrew Jotischky agrees that the nine months it took to win Antioch "marked the critical phase of the expedition...after the relatively easy passage through Asia Minor." For more context, see Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 58.

⁵⁹ "The *Gesta Francorum* describes the aftermath of victory at Antioch," in *Chronicles of the First Crusade*, ed. Christopher Tyerman (London: Penguin Books, 2012), 247.

⁶⁰ The difficulty of the Siege of Antioch aside, Emperor Alexios Komnenos I apparently had less interest in supporting the crusaders by 1097. For more information on the declining relationship between Byzantium and the Latin Christians, Bohemond's letter to Pope Urban II in 1098 where he stated that the pope should "separate us from the unjust emperor who has never fulfilled the many promises he has made us...he has hindered and harmed us in every way at his disposal." See "Bohemond to Pope Urban II," 33.

team. The author does not make a distinction between the princes who made up this council nor does he give primacy to any one leader.

Despite the image the *Gesta Francorum* portrayed of solidarity between leaders and followers after Antioch, the council's decision after Antioch would divide the fragile structure. The *Gesta Francorum* suggests that the princes had agreed to allow time to recover before continuing the journey to Jerusalem. Each prince took his followers into different "territor[ies] until it should be time to resume the march."⁶¹ There would have been a shortage of resources, food, horses, and other materials if the entire army stayed together, and so the scattering was necessary. But the results were unexpected because leaders could not have predicted the further divisions and actions that would stem from this physical separation. For example, Raymond of Pilet, Lord of Alais, took advantage of the timeout from the march. The *Francorum* narrates that Pilet set out with the army he had "collected" and took over a Saracen castle as refuge during the waiting period. When other pilgrims spoke to him about other Saracen groups nearby, the enemy was pursued there, as well, to neutralize the threat upon Pilet's castle.⁶²

Pilet's independent conquests exemplify the individual confrontations between crusaders and non-Christian enemies that are often perceived as unilateral warfare and divisive princely leadership. Seen from another angle, the lack of provisions forced princes to separate and provide for their followers individually. From their location, princes and their armies were lured into smaller battles and conquests either for supplies, to create buffer zones from the enemy, or to continue crusading against pagan peoples.

⁶¹ "The *Gesta Francorum*," in *Chronicles*, 247.

⁶² These were easier victories than the battles crusaders encountered with the Turks; in this account Saracens had surrendered in fear before fighting broke out. "The *Gesta Francorum*," in *Chronicles*, 249.

This temporary and fluid leadership structure managed to lead the First Crusade to victory during the first few years of the Crusade.

Deepening Divisions

The motivation behind separation and independent conquests like Pilet's can also be attributed to the infighting noted in the *Gesta Tancredi* written by Ralph of Caen. Ralph wrote a memoir of his experience following Tancred, nephew of one of the Crusade's major leaders the Norman Bohemond of Taranto.⁶³ Ralph's exposé explained divisions and quarrels that rose up between crusaders during and following the Siege of Antioch between 1097 and 1098. The chronicle portrayed "infighting" and demonstrated the factors that led to internal divisions.

The "adherents" of Bohemond of Taranto and Raymond of St Gilles had been sent out from the battle lines to procure grain; a dispute rose up between them "and the grain was divided by the sword," whereby the men returned to camp wounded and "frightened."⁶⁴ More surprising, each prince was "wrought up at the sight of the blood of their vassal host [that is, their soldiers and retainers], and they inflamed the minds of the wounded men to revenge whenever a similar affair should occur [but only outside the camp]."⁶⁵ It is important to note two crusader roles from the passage above: "princes" on one hand, and "adherents" or "vassals," on the other. Leaders during the First Crusade

⁶³ While Ralph of Caen was a less notable figure in the crusading leadership, his lord, Tancred, was the nephew of Bohemond of Taranto. Bohemond is one of the most notable figures from the First Crusade and I will consider his influence and perspective later in this analysis.

⁶⁴ Ralph of Caen, "Another view of the revelation and trial of the Lance," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August C. Krey, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 237. Ralph of Caen on Divisions Among the Crusaders," in *The Crusades: A Reader*, eds. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 63.

⁶⁵ Ralph of Caen, "Another view," 237. The parenthetical remarks in this selection found in "Ralph of Caen on Divisions Among the Crusaders," in *The Crusades: A Reader*, eds. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 63.

were often referred to as “princes” and this term was used to describe their heightened position and role. In contrast, more general crusaders, or “vassals” in this text, are the recruited knights, foot soldiers, and pilgrims that had pledged allegiance to the princes. Some crusaded in submission to their pre-Crusade feudal lords and were obligated to follow the nobility out of continued loyalty.

Ralph of Caen’s narrative also discussed the conflicts that arose over food; the “lesser” or “weaker” party (whether a group of men or an individual) could be challenged to fight and the victor “enjoyed the spoils.”⁶⁶ This passage illuminates issues of starvation, intimidation, and dilatoriness between crusaders and their princes. Ralph’s image of crusader camp brings into question the unity and religious bond between Latin Christians during the 1090s. Ralph mentioned verbal confrontations where “he who understood the tongue of either now lashed with it.”⁶⁷ This demonstrates that crusaders were not only physically confronting each other, but also verbally “lashing out” at one another across linguistic barriers when possible.

Infighting between crusaders and social divisions permeate Ralph of Caen’s testimony as well as other letters and chronicles written during and after the First Crusade. Surprisingly, there were other reasons for division after Antioch between some of the most powerful and significant princes during the First Crusade: Bohemond of Taranto and Raymond, Count of St Gilles. In the year between the capture of Antioch (June 1098) and victory in Jerusalem in (June 1099), the *Gesta Francorum* narrated specific divisions between the two leaders. Bohemond had a long history in the East and

⁶⁶ Ralph of Caen, “Another view,” 237.

⁶⁷ Ralph of Caen, “Another view,” 237.

a bad reputation in the Byzantine Empire.⁶⁸ Raymond, on the other hand, was a new pilgrim but a major leader in the final push to Jerusalem after Antioch. By the end of the Siege of Antioch, the princes' relationship had disintegrated over who would command the city. The *Gesta Francorum* states that Bohemond "daily sought (confirmation of) the agreement which all the leaders had long ago made with him to give him the city [of Antioch]."⁶⁹ Raymond, however, was not inclined to make the agreement because he "feared to perjure himself with the Emperor" by discounting the oath he made to Byzantine Emperor Alexios I upon leaving Constantinople in 1097.⁷⁰ The Crusade was intended to reclaim lost Byzantine territory but, as the *Gesta Francorum* illustrates, Bohemond did not keep his pledge to Alexios I and, instead, desired his own stake in eastern territory.

According to the *Gesta Francorum*, Raymond and Bohemond could not be reconciled and Raymond would leave Antioch unable to appease Bohemond's desire for authority in the city.⁷¹ Unofficially, Bohemond would stay and become the Prince of Antioch because he did not continue crusading to Jerusalem.⁷² In the final year of the First Crusade, both Bohemond and Stephen, Count of Blois, would not accompany the Latin crusaders to Jerusalem. Stephen actually withdrew from the Crusade because, as historian Andrew Jotischky articulates, "matters were so desperate" before victory at

⁶⁸ Further reading on Bohemond's reputation with Alexios I Komnenos can be found in the emperor's memoir written by his daughter, Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad* (London: Penguin Books, 2003).

⁶⁹ "Disputes between Raymond and Bohemond. (November 1, 1098- January 13, 1099)," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August C. Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 204.

⁷⁰ Emperor Alexios I took oaths from crusaders in order to ensure their recognition of and cooperation with his authority. Historian Peter Frankopan writes that Alexios needed to "ensure that they did not turn against the Emperor." See Peter Frankopan, "Kinship and the Distribution of Power in Komnenian Byzantium," *The English Historical Review* 495 (2007): 28.

⁷¹ "The *Gesta Francorum* describes the worsening relations after the conference of 1 November," in *Chronicles of the First Crusade*, ed. Christopher Tyerman (London: Penguin Books, 2012), 260.

⁷² Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 58.

Antioch.⁷³ The first test of endurance and survival at Antioch proved to be incredibly divisive and detrimental to the crusading leadership during the last year of crusading to Jerusalem.⁷⁴

Desperation would lead to animosity among the leading princes. The *Gesta Francorum*, in its comprehensive narration, comments on the bitterness that developed between the princes throughout the Crusade. Similar to Ralph of Caen's narrative, the *Francorum* says that Count Baldwin, a crusader under his brother Godfrey of Bouillon's princely leadership, and Tancred, the nephew of Bohemond of Taranto, "quarreled and disputed" over who would take one of the cities near Antioch after the princes scattered.⁷⁵ While the text praises Baldwin for his willingness to partner in control of the city, apparently Tancred would not share when "the men of this city have chosen me [as] lord over them."⁷⁶ Eventually Tancred departed and his men followed, trusting his ability to provide for them. But the contingents and princes separated without resolving the dispute.

The situation lacked an authority figure strong enough to encourage or force a settlement between them. In contrast to Ralph of Caen's account where a dispute arose between the vassals of Bohemond and Raymond, Bohemond's followers, according to the *Gesta Francorum*, were also at odds with Godfrey's men. The two sources articulate divisions between princes and hold Bohemond and his men as the overlapping provocateurs. The princes may have separated themselves and their soldiers in order to

⁷³ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 58.

⁷⁴ Consideration of the physical conditions will appear later in this analysis.

⁷⁵ "Baldwin and Tancred depart from the main army. (Early September, 1097)," in *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants*, ed. August C. Krey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 120. This selection from August C. Krey is from the *Gesta Francorum*.

⁷⁶ "Baldwin and Tancred," 121.

find resources, but division was also result of tensions and disagreements amongst the elite leadership.

Instability after Antioch and Adhémar's Death

Later in 1098, crusaders would also be shaken by the death of a critical member of the princely council, Adhémar of Le Puy. After crusaders recovered from Antioch, they suffered a blow to the crusading morale and delicate leadership team. Historian Conor Kostick identifies Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy, papal legate of the First Crusade, as a considerable authority figure even though Adhémar was positioned as the ecclesiastical leader. The papal legate was responsible for the Crusade's spirituality and devotion to God and his role was a reflection and reminder of Pope Urban II's authority. Kostick finds Adhémar's command "ambiguous" because primary sources consider the bishop among the princely leadership.⁷⁷ He would play both religious and political roles.

Before Adhémar's death in August 1098, Anselm of Ribemont wrote a letter narrating the events at Nicaea that highlighted Adhémar's broad authority. As Anselm would recount, a portion of the crusader army was "stricken with fear" at the Turkish advancement upon them when the "larger part of the army suddenly appeared...with the count of St Gilles and the reverend bishop of Le Puy not far behind."⁷⁸ Just as Kostick recognizes Adhémar's dual role, this text also suggests the bishop's more comprehensive role within the leadership and, in this case, he was appearing in a moment of battle behind and alongside the princes. Bishop Adhémar did not lead the military, but he was an important presence in matters of both spirituality and warfare.

⁷⁷ Conor Kostick, *Medieval Mediterranean: The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 244.

⁷⁸ "Anselm to Manasses (November, 1097)," 20.

Bishop Adhémar of Le Puy was able to provide critical leadership for a majority of the Crusade, but his death was a significant setback. The *Gesta Francorum* mentioned that the bishop's death was mourned because of the loss of a "helper of the poor and a counselor of the rich" who "used to keep the clergy in order and preach to the knights."⁷⁹ The stability he brought may have shifted once Adhémar passed. Adhémar had functioned as the religious figurehead and, in keeping crusaders' morality and spiritual life in check, had a large influence in unifying crusaders under God for the common mission. The leadership struggled without the bishop's esteemed religious representation and princes were reluctant to establish a secular prince as commander-in-chief once their spiritual leadership was weakened.⁸⁰ God was recognized as the supreme leader and the pope's primary representative on the Crusade, Adhémar, had passed away.

Tracking backwards, before Adhémar died in August 1098, Stephen, Count of Blois, had written his wife that, "all our princes with the unanimous consent of the whole army appointed me as their leader and commander of all their military actions up until now."⁸¹ But in September 1098, only one month after the Adhémar's death and tensions between princes building, Bohemond and other distinguished princes wrote to Pope Urban II. Five other princes are mentioned in the greeting but Bohemond is mentioned first among them and, within the first paragraph, Bohemond takes on sole authorship by stating, "I, Bohemond."⁸² Initially, this ordering reflects what was probably the hierarchy of princes, an order in which Bohemond was the most prominent and involved. Historian

⁷⁹ "The *Gesta Francorum*," in *Chronicles*, 248.

⁸⁰ The *Gesta Francorum* references the death of William, Bishop of Orange after victory at Antioch. The editor's footnote comments, "after Adhémar of Le Puy's death he tried to fill his spiritual role." This is the only reference to the William I have seen in my research; his role seems to have been insignificant except a brief attempt to replace Adhémar. "*Gesta Francorum* describes the worsening relations," 260.

⁸¹ "Stephen to Adela (March, 1098)," 22.

⁸² "Bohemond to Pope Urban II," 30-31.

August C. Krey remarks that after Adhémar's death and Stephen of Blois' withdrawal from the Crusade, Bohemond of Taranto stepped in as acting military leader.⁸³ As we have seen, however, Bohemond's preoccupation with Antioch prevented him from leading the First Crusade to the Holy Land with Raymond, Count of St Gilles.

The letter reflects the quick devolution of the army's unity only one month after papal legate, Adhémar of Le Puy, died of disease. Out of desperation and dysfunction, they urge Urban to "personally complete the war which [was his] own" and provide leadership, resources, and more men to the final leg of the Crusade.⁸⁴ The princes speak of themselves as "orphans" pleading to their "spiritual father" who is the only human authority that could fill Adhémar's position. At this time, Bohemond used unifying pronouns and phrases similar to Anselm when he stated that "all of us, foot- soldier and knights alike," prepared for battle.⁸⁵ Unfortunately, the crusaders would continue to fight another year without the physical presence of religious leadership and the desperation expressed in the letter to Pope Urban II would go unanswered.

From the beginning of the First Crusade, Urban had urged men to journey eastward and help poorer crusaders pay their way; in many ways, this appeared to be a fundraising plan for the expedition. In contrast to that understanding, Urban did not plan to be the crusading commander or take on active responsibilities even though he had created the concept, strategy, and rules for crusading. This miscommunication and different expectations created a vacuum of unsatisfied leadership and fragility.

⁸³ August C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-Witnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 19.

⁸⁴ "Bohemond to Pope Urban II," 32.

⁸⁵ "Bohemond to Pope Urban II," 32.

But the division and chaos caused by Adhémar's death existed not only at the upper levels of leadership. Historian Jonathan Riley-Smith has argued that his death in 1098 also had a devastating effect on organization at the lower social levels of the army. Riley-Smith suggests that after the death of Adhémar, ordinary crusaders, "disgusted by their leaders' dilatoriness, took matters into their own hands...threatening revolt in Antioch."⁸⁶ Without an overarching religious leader, the cohesion amongst crusaders and their leaders was destined to crumble beyond the emotional struggles and physical shortages that had already manifested. Once the Crusade expenses caught many princes off guard and moneyless, they scattered in search for food and supplies and looked to clerics and others still in the west to send any form of provision to them. Unclear leadership threatened the balance and peace amongst the crusaders who relied on unifying elements like their Christian beliefs and passion to reclaim the Holy Land.

The army was low on patience and beginning to revolt because leaders were unable to agree with each other. The language barriers mentioned in Ralph of Caen's narrative highlight linguistic diversity that created barriers between crusaders. The language from Fulcher of Chartres' and Robert the Monk's testimonies of Pope Urban II's speech used more racialized content, however it was particularly influential in shaping how crusaders perceived the enemy rather than language used against each other. Either way, the First Crusade began with pre-formed divisions within the ranks that would only be magnified by the conditions crusaders experienced.

⁸⁶ Riley-Smith, *Idea of Crusading*, 59.

The Problem of Supply and Demand

Provisioning failures significantly exacerbated the reality of disunity. Following the perils of Antioch, Anselm of Ribemont had remarked, “there is no point in describing all the difficulties as they are fairly obvious even if not spelled out.”⁸⁷ He wrote at the moment crusaders separated in order to find food and supplies and had not yet continued the march to Jerusalem. Anselm listed the sufferings and hardships the crusaders continued to endure and he spelled out the turmoil that followed the crusaders until the end of the pilgrimage. He reported that God chastised the “army of the Lord” due to overconfidence at Antioch; the chastisement manifested in the army’s inability to mount over seven hundred knights because “almost all [of the] horses had died from starvation or cold.”⁸⁸ At face value, this remark highlighted the shortage of resources including food for the soldiers and the horses. On two occasions, and in a season of desperation, he mentions the necessity to consume the animals available.⁸⁹ The lack of food forced crusaders to turn to their other supplies and would have made horses more valuable for either battle or consumption.

In Bohemond’s call for Pope Urban II to be the Crusade commander-in-chief and to take the place of Bishop Adhémar, he begged the pope for aid. Bohemond referred to himself and the other princes as “orphans” in need of direction and provision. The letter affirmed that “many would have died from starvation and various other causes if they had not killed and eaten their famished horses and mules.”⁹⁰ Starvation also led Bohemond to acknowledge his own weakness as a leader; the crusaders desired the hope that would

⁸⁷ “Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098),” 28.

⁸⁸ “Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098),” 27.

⁸⁹ “Anselm to Manasses (July, 1098),” 29.

⁹⁰ “Bohemond to Pope Urban II,” 31.

come if Urban II joined their journey, as they would be “strengthen[ed] by our arrival and that of all the good men you can muster.”⁹¹ In the final moments before taking Jerusalem, the crusaders were downtrodden and unmotivated to continue on; they lacked manpower, provisions, and a central leader to finish the First Crusade with strength and power.

The physical conditions paired with tensions within the leadership and prevented crusaders from fully applying the rhetoric of unity on the ground. The rhetoric proclaiming superiority and unity discussed in Part II would have been part of Bishop Adhémar’s religious vocabulary and encouragement for crusaders. His role, as we have seen, was not only as the moral judge, but almost similar to a coach. Adhémar could encourage bravery, rebuke bad behavior, accompany in battle—even if from the sidelines—and remind crusaders of their unity to each other. The legate’s role was critical and the timing of his death altered the final execution of the First Crusade.

⁹¹ “Bohemond to Pope Urban II,” 33.

CONCLUSION

Survival Instincts and Individual Benefits

As the primary sources have shown, already in its earliest moments, the First Crusade began with slight divisions between crusaders, as evinced through racial language used to unite them, and the broad network of princely leadership meant to keep the project united. But these slight divisions grew wider and wider over the course of the first few years. But poverty—and the starvation, disease, and death that accompanied it—was the most important factor in dividing crusading parties. It was out of survival that the crusaders separated after Antioch in search of supplies and this issue magnified the disjointed leadership and concepts of identity during the First Crusade. The rhetoric of unity, through Christian themes, acted as the strongest counterbalance to the physical conditions experienced between 1097 and 1099.

As historian Andrew Jotischky points out, “the disunity of the Islamic Near East has often been cited as a reason for the Crusade’s success.”⁹² What is striking is that he suggests that Seljuks (and the broader Muslim populations) struggled with disunity and it accounts for their loss. This analysis of success, however, neglects the persistent disunity that afflicted crusaders during the pilgrimage between 1095 and 1099 and that a less organized and unified foundation for later Crusades. I have shown that success of the First Crusade could not have been measured successful through God’s will, religious unity, or compassion for struggling Byzantine Christians. The Crusade was, after all, a religiously sanctioned contract between the Church and participants. The spiritual benefits through physical suffering and refining, along with the rhetoric of Christian

⁹² Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 61.

unity, would soon fall to the wayside after crusaders secured Antioch, Jerusalem, and other Crusader States for long-lasting benefits.

Beginnings of Geographical Identities

Sixty years after the Crusaders recaptured Jerusalem, John of Würzburg, a German priest, documented his pilgrimage to the Holy City. His journey and background is significant for one reason pertinent to this analysis: John described himself as possessing a German identity. In his guide, John of Würzburg described that “Frenchmen, Lorrainers, Normans...Italians, Spaniards,” and others inhabit the city, made up a culturally diverse community.⁹³ John mentioned these groups to complain about the way they had overrun “German” rule that was initially established in 1099. Duke Godfrey, one of the princes in leadership during the First Crusade and “born of a German family,” was named King of Jerusalem after its recapture from the Turks.⁹⁴ Würzburg reasoned that since fewer German crusaders stayed in the Holy City, the other nations formed a larger portion of the new Crusader States’ populations. The bitterness he expressed suggests that the formation of national identities created distinct loyalties and dividing lines in Latin Christendom even before clear political and geographical boundaries were established.

At the time of the First Crusade, unifying language and consolidated papal authority still held the Latin contingent together. The burdens crusaders faced, however, would be neither resolved nor lightened in time for the Second Crusade in 1145. The First Crusade did not resolve frustrations and schisms between leaders or citizens in Jerusalem or Antioch, as seen in Würzburg’s account. This self-seeking attitude that grew out of

⁹³ “John of Würzburg’s Pilgrim Guide,” in *The Crusades: A Reader*, eds. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 103.

⁹⁴ “John of Würzburg’s Pilgrim Guide,” 103.

poverty cemented attitudes that encouraged and directly led to internal divisions based on differing identities as well as divided leadership.

The Reality of the First Crusade

Andrew Jotischky notes that the Crusade's religious nature led participants and supporters to experience a "confidence imbued by piety."⁹⁵ I argue that religiously inflected confidence, in this case, quickly transformed into a sort of pride and ego that distracted crusaders with a confidence of self rather than of piety. Early on, crusaders and princes had assurance that their methods and actions were justified and sanctified by God through Pope Urban II; they also rested comfortably on their identity as Christ's army. After the battle of Antioch and the death of Adhémar of Le Puy, the confidence of piety would be unable to sufficiently fulfill practical needs, both emotional and physical. Crusaders had previously experienced confidence in the pious and religious aspects of their life; Adhémar had maintained crusaders' relationship to God by mediating guidance from him. God seemed to test crusaders during the Battle of Antioch, or at least that was their understanding, because the battle lasted for nine months and drained materials, morale, and manpower.⁹⁶

This reality—where recovery from the emotional and physical battle was more difficult than previously attempted—elicited the deeply rooted fears within each prince or crusader in regards to supply shortages and disorganized leadership. These fears are

⁹⁵ Jotischky, *Crusader States*, 60.

⁹⁶ This is a reference back to Anselm of Ribemont's letter written in July of 1098 where he acknowledged that God "so chastised us that our army could muster only seven hundred mounted knights...because almost all our horses had died from starvation or cold." This demonstrates God's influence over the crusaders and the emotional burden that accompanies supply shortages. For more information, see "Anselm to Manasses," 27.

expressed in the chronicles and letters of the First Crusade; Bohemond of Taranto's letter to Pope Urban II in 1098, almost nine months before victory in Jerusalem, expresses fears of inadequate provision and leadership and pleads for assistance in those areas.

Benedict Anderson, a modern intellectual historian, first published *Imagined Communities* in 1983 near the end of the Cold War era. He defines the "nation" as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."⁹⁷ The nation is imagined because it often lacks real community, which Anderson suggests is formed by "deep, horizontal comradeship."⁹⁸ The emotional ties within real community resemble the emotional experiences crusaders shared—through the trauma of battle, struggles for survival, and journeying with a common goal of reaching the Holy Land. As we have seen through Anselm of Ribemont or Bohemond's letter, there was a fully real and shared emotional experience between crusaders that included a fear for survival. Anderson discusses that the nation, or a smaller community, unfortunately can fall into an artificially created emotional connection, which encourages imagined community. It is improbable that the crusaders intentionally feigned emotional ties, but clear that it became increasingly difficult to experience a unified identity as Christ's army when leadership and morale was challenged.

The spectrum between real and imagined communities resembles the intentions and execution of the First Crusade. Pope Urban II intended just war as means to reclaim Byzantine territory from the Muslims and unify Christendom under his power in the process. While aiding Christian counterparts, the theory and language of unity developed

⁹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York: Verso, 2006), 6.

⁹⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York: Verso, 2006), 7.

concepts of a real community as emotionally bonded through the Crusade experience and with identities as God's patrons. The prolonged warfare and loss of significant emotional and spiritual leadership in 1098 signals the pivotal moment of trauma and fear that transitioned the First Crusade away from just war, and likewise away from a sense of real unity towards a feigned, rhetorical unity that could not stand up to the physical and psychological tests which faced the crusaders. Even if a real community never fully developed, as it might not have, the crusaders were made more aware of the unlikelihood of maintaining the rhetoric of unity.

The First Crusade was completed through the utilization of rhetoric of imagined community where emotional ties, were claimed rather than experienced or accepted as meaningful bonding. I have argued that infighting amongst princes evoked distrust and acted as a practical reason for disunity amongst Latin Crusaders. Pope Urban II's lack of direct involvement in reclaiming and ruling Jerusalem after 1099 compounded the factors that had already led to internal disunity.

Adhémar's death and post-Antioch struggles are part of the pivotal transition away from the intentions of the First Crusade: just war, reclamation of Byzantine territory, assisting eastern Christians, and fulfilling theoretical unity. The execution, however, consisted of Crusader States, infighting and distrust, and practical reasons for disunity. I do not intend to claim that the First Crusade would have been ideal and just without the presence of fear or physical and emotion struggle; there cannot be violence and war without trauma and suffering. The mismanagement of Crusader States, due to a lack of respected religious authority and divisions Würzburg described, and the disunity near the end of the First Crusade, did not set up the region for peace in the future.

The First Crusade and Lasting Rhetoric

The rhetoric for just war originated with Augustine in the fifth century and, by the turn of the twelfth century, had rearticulated itself through the language of crusaders and proponents of Crusade. Christendom was no longer confined to Rome, but had grown into a political entity with military presence through the established Crusader States. After the First Crusade, Jerusalem fell into Muslim hands in 1187 and the response was the Third Crusade. Historian Jonathan Riley-Smith understands the papal document that called for the Crusade as a demonstration of a new “stage in the development of crusading thought, for the papacy was now associating success in war directly with the spiritual health of all Christianity.”⁹⁹ This understanding of success indicated that the loss of Jerusalem was a reflection of poor spiritual health in Christendom and the necessity of repentance. Penitential violence had been available in the First Crusade and, as Christendom continued to need to sanctification, just war would continue to be utilized for this purpose.

Historian Simon Lloyd points out that the crusading idea influenced Latin Christian identity, “accelerating the process whereby they came to appreciate that they possessed a common identity rooted in a shared cultural tradition, despite their local difficulties.”¹⁰⁰ He goes on to claim that the Latin Christian culture was the “distinctive and unifying characteristic” within this identity.¹⁰¹ Those who did not share in the “western” culture—in relation to the eastern geographic region that was infiltrated during Crusade—were an opposing cultural and religious threat. A lasting outgrowth of the First

⁹⁹ Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 137.

¹⁰⁰ Lloyd, “The Crusading Movement,” 64.

¹⁰¹ Lloyd, “The Crusading Movement,” 64.

Crusade, then, was the rhetoric of unity that consolidated papal power and militarized Latin Christians under God's authority. The rhetoric fostered the new Christian identity and culture that outlasted the disunity crusaders experienced.

Although the First Crusade began in a specific and unique moment—after Gregory VII's revival of just war concepts and a failed attempt to Crusade—the First Crusade falls within a transhistorical trend in which the rhetoric of unity is not unique to the First Crusade, but rather preceded 1095 and continued after the war. Rhetoric papered over prior divisions in Christendom and bonded Latin crusaders throughout and after the journey to Jerusalem. It continued to justify religious warfare into the thirteenth century in spite of the tremendous evidence of disunity and infighting between Latin crusaders during the First Crusade. The theory of idyllic camaraderie and ordained mission would continue to propel Christians to defend their piety through aggression towards those perceived as God's enemies. Historian Tomaz Mastnak agrees that the implications of the First Crusade have been lasting and, more generally, “as a movement, the Crusades had a deep, crucial influence on the formation of Western civilization, shaping culture, ideas, and institutions.”¹⁰² During the First Crusade and through the repercussions, Christendom transformed beyond a religious institution and towards a cultural entity that would dramatically shape the development of identity in Europe, the Near East, and the cultures still present there. The Crusading rhetoric developed through the reality of the time period by shaping the theoretical unity and persisting through pragmatic disunity during the medieval period. The First Crusade set the stage for this

¹⁰² Tomaz Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 347.

reality of powerful rhetoric that resulted in military, political, and cultural influence “long after the end of crusading.”¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Mastnak, *Crusading Peace*, 346.

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