

Jerusalem

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JERUSALEM

At the battle of Aizanadin in 633 CE, Khalid ibn Walid - 'the Sword of God' - defeated the Roman army of Heraclius, inflicting the loss of fifty thousand men; it was soon followed by the fall of the great cities of Jerusalem, Antioch, Aleppo, Tyre and Tripoli.¹

On a red camel, which carried a wooden dish, a leather water bottle, a bag of corn and one of dates, Caliph Umar (the second Caliph who ruled during 634-44 CE) came from Medina to take formal possession of Jerusalem. He entered the Holy City riding by the side of the Christian patriarch Sophronius.² These are Caliph Umar's words:

*'In the name of Allah, the Benefactor and Merciful! This is the surety granted to the inhabitants of Aelia (Jerusalem) by the servant of God, Omar, Commander of the Faithful. He gives them protection of their persons, their churches, their crosses, whether these are in good or bad state, and their cult in general. No constraint will be exerted upon them in the matter of faith, and none of them will be harmed. The inhabitants of Aelia will have to pay the Jizya in the same proportion as the inhabitants of other cities. It is up to them to expel from their city the Byzantines and thieves. Those amongst the latter who would like to stay will be allowed to do so on the condition that they should pay the same Jizya as the inhabitants of Aelia.'*³

Under the Emperors of Constantinople, in Asia and Africa subjects used to pay very onerous, excessive and complicated forms of taxes. Under the Muslims, a simple well-defined tribute^{*} of far less amount, in some places only half of the previous tax, was charged. The lower orders were never made to feel the bitterness of conquest.⁴

The Jews, likewise, saw the positive difference Muslim rule could bring. Following Caliph Omar's entry in the city, a grateful Jewish noble man said:

*'The temple remained with Byzantium for 500 or so years and Israel were unable to enter Jerusalem; whoever did so and was found out, suffered death. Then when the Romans left it, by the grace of the God of Israel, and the kingdom of Ishamel was victorious, Israel was given leave to enter and take up residence and the courtyards of the house of God were handed over to them and they were praying there of a time.'*⁵

¹ J.W. Draper: *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*; Vol I; Revised edition; George Bell and Sons, London, 1875. vol 1; p.335.

² J.W. Draper: *A History*; op cit; p.335.

³ Cited by Antoine Fattal: *le Statut legal des non Musulmans en pays d'Islam*, Imprimerie Catholique, Beyrut, 1958. in Yves Courbage, Paul Fargues: *Chretiens et Juifs dans l'Islam Arabe et Turc*, Payot, Paris, 1997; p.15.

^{*} [Editor Comment: The "jizya" means compensation and was paid in compensation for not having to do any military service. Typically this was one dinar (about 4 grams of gold) per year and only applied to men who would have had to fight to defend the community otherwise.]

⁴ J.W. Draper: *A History*; op cit; vol 1; p.337

⁵ Thus said Salman ben Yeruhim (wr.ca 950) in his Judaeo-Arabic commentary on psalm 30. in R.G. Hoyland: *Seeing Islam as others saw it*; The Darwin Press, Inc; Princeton; New Jersey; 1997. p 127.

Under the Muslims, all Christians, Jews and Muslims lived in shared peace and prosperity in the city. Ibn al-Arabi, commenting on Jerusalem remarks that the Christians cultivated its estates and kept its churches in good repair.⁶ Ibn al-Arabi stresses that Jerusalem was the meeting place for religious scholars of all three faiths - Islam, Christianity and Judaism.⁷ The infamous Fatimid destruction of the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem was the act of a mad ruler, Al-Hakem (b.985), whose persecution of the Muslims was much worse than that of the Christians. With the exception of this incident all faiths lived together in the city in relative peace and harmony until the arrival of the crusades.

Jerusalem had been in Seljuk hands before the crusades (which were launched in 1096). But, as the Seljuks were fighting the crusaders pouring through the north, the Fatimid wrested Jerusalem from them in 1097 which was a 'real betrayal of Islam' according to Lamarque.⁸ 'The humour of history', according to Durant, means that when the Crusaders would arrive in front of Jerusalem in 1098, the Turks whom they had come to fight had been expelled from the city by the Fatimids in the previous year (1097)⁹. The Fatimids soon allied themselves to the crusaders against the Seljuks¹⁰. But in July 1099 the crusaders surrounded the city of Jerusalem held for the Fatimids by Iftikhar ad-Daula (The pride of the Nation). Iftikhar, his entourage and his army were allowed to leave the city under safe crusader conduct.¹¹ The population of 70 000 people, on the other hand, was slaughtered in cold blood¹². Draper narrates:

*'The capture of Jerusalem, as might be expected under such circumstances, was attended by the perpetration of atrocities almost beyond belief. What a contrast to the conduct of the Arabs! When the Khalif Omar took Jerusalem, A.D. 637, he rode into the city by the side of the Patriarch Sophronius, conversing with him on its antiquities. At the hour of prayer, he declined to perform his devotions in the Church of the Resurrection, in which he chanced to be, but prayed on the steps of the Church of Constantine; 'for,' said he to the patriarch, 'had I done so, the Musselmen in a future age would have infringed the treaty, under colour of imitating my example.' But, in the capture by the Crusaders, the brains of young children were dashed out against the walls; infants were thrown over the battlements; every woman that could be seized was violated; men were roasted at fires; some were ripped open, to see if they had swallowed gold; the Jews were driven into their synagogue, and there burnt; a massacre of nearly 70,000 persons took place; and the pope's legate was seen 'partaking in the triumph.'*¹³

A contemporary present during the dramatic moments called Abbot Raymond of Agiles of the French town of Du Puy, wrote gleefully:

⁶ I. Abbas: *Rihlat Ibn al-Arabi ila al-mashriq kama sawwaraha` Qanun al-Tawil'*, *Al-Abhatth*; 21/1, 1968. in C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades, Islamic Perspectives*, Edinburgh University Press; 1999; p.50.

⁷ In C.Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*, p.49.

⁸ Henri Lamarque: La Premiere Traduction Latine du Coran. In *De Toulouse a Tripoli, AMAM*; Colloque held between 6 and 8 December, 1995, University of Toulouse, 1997. pp 237-246. P.239.

⁹ W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, Simon and Shuster, New York; 6th printing; 1950. p.591.

¹⁰ Henri Lamarque: La Premiere Traduction; op cit. P.239.

¹¹ B. Z. Kedar: The Subjected Muslims of the Frankish Levant, in *Muslims under Latin Rule, 1100-1300*, ed J.M. Powell, Princeton University Press, 1990, pp 135-174, p.143. On the dumping of corpses, see e.g., *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, ed. K. Mynors, trans. R.Hill (London, 1962), p.92.

¹² Ibn al-Athir: *Kitab al-kamil*; ed K.J. Tornberg; 12 vols; Leiden; 1851-72. X, pp. 193-95.

¹³ J.W. Draper: *A History*; Vol II; op cit; pp 22-3.

'When our men took the main defences, we saw then some astonishing things amongst the Saracens. Some were beheaded, and that's the least that could happen to them. Others were pierced through and so threw themselves from the heights of the walls; others after having suffered in length were thrown into the flames. We could see in the roads and in the places of Jerusalem bits and pieces of heads, hands, and feet. Everywhere we could only walk through cadavers. But all that was only little...'

The abbot's description moves onto the Mosque of Omar, where,

*'there was so much blood in the old temple of Solomon that dead corpses swam in it. We could see hands floating and arms that went to glue themselves to bodies that were not theirs; we could not distinguish which arm belonged to which body. The men who were doing the killing could hardly bear the smoke from the corpses.'*¹⁴

The Christian chronicler, Humbert of Romans, delighted on 'the splendid occasion when the blood of the Arabs came up to the horses' knees, at the capture of Jerusalem in 1099.'¹⁵

The carnage perpetrated by the crusaders when they captured and occupied Jerusalem for 88 years (until 1187) had a permanent destructive effect. The scholars and scholarship that thrived in the city before the crusades were gone for good. The city would witness a certain revival in the late 12th century after it was retaken by the Muslims, but never again would it recover its glory and power after such a murderous onslaught.

Jerusalem: Its Sites, Scholars and Scholarship before the Crusades

Jerusalem prior to the crusades was a place filled with a thriving trade, scholars and madrasas. The crusades destroyed all such wealth and, above all, scholarship. This destruction, which will be considered in some detail in the last part of this article, will show how learning declined in Jerusalem due to the devastation of war inflicted upon Islam. Despite some improvement following the recapture of the city by Salah-ud-din in 1187, the city never recovered its prime scholarly activity, and just like the rest of the Muslim world, also suffering from the same problems, fell into gradual decline.

The thriving character of the city prior to the crusades is caught by the traveller Nasr-ud-din Khusraw who saw the city in 1047 just decades before the crusades. He noted how things were cheap and plentiful and how the city had beautiful markets and high buildings. It had a great number of craftsmen and each craft had its market. The city was large with the number of inhabitants at about a hundred thousand. Nasr Khusraw refers to a great teaching hospital with rich waqfs dedicated to it, from which medicines for its numerous patients were dispensed and salaries for doctors were paid. He also refers to hostels for the Sufis by the mosque where they lived and prayed.¹⁶

Serious patronage of architecture had begun in Umayyad times (661-750). During their rule no single architectural style was used throughout the Islamic world, but monuments associated with the dynasty or its high officials were often well built and elaborately decorated. In structures such as the mosques of

¹⁴ Abbot Raymond of Agiles; in G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*; Syracuse; 1884. p. 249.

¹⁵ N.Daniel: *The Arabs and medieval Europe*; Longman Librarie du Liban; 1975. p.253.

¹⁶ Nasir Khusraw in A.A.Duri; Jerusalem in the early Islamic period; 7th-11th centuries; in *Jerusalem in History*; Edited by K.J. Asali; Scorpion Publishing Ltd; 1989; pp. 105-29; at pp. 118-9.

Medina and Damascus the aim appears to have been to create monuments that would proclaim the power and ideals of the new Islamic state.¹⁷ Even richer and more complex was the decorative and epigraphic program of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, built by Caliph 'Abd al-Malik and completed in 691/692CE.¹⁸ From its plan—a central domed area over the rock proper and a double octagonal ambulatory around it—the commemoration of the rock appears to be the building's main purpose; a door placed where the mihrab should be demonstrates that it was not intended for use as a mosque.¹⁹ Both the inner (circular) and outer (octagonal) zones are formed of piers alternating with columns. Internally the building is notable for its colourful decoration: marble panels on the piers and lower wall surfaces; and mosaic cubes on the arcades of both zones as well as on the drum of the central dome.²⁰



Figure 1. Dome of the Rock²¹

In the early eighth century the Aqsa Mosque (The Further Mosque) was erected adjacent to the south side of the Dome of the Rock. It was also embellished with marble and mosaics.²² In their complex decorative and iconographic schemes the Umayyad religious buildings of Damascus, Medina and Jerusalem are unique. However even more influential was the basic spatial organization of the mosques in those three cities which was often imitated in later buildings.²³

The Aqsa Mosque has been repeatedly described by Muslim scholars. Al-Muqaddasi, who originally came from the city, wrote in 985:

the main building of the Aqsa Mosque has twenty six doors. The door opposite the Mihrab is called the Green Brazen Gate; it is plated with brass gilt, and is so heavy that only a man strong of shoulder and of arm can turn it on its hinges.... On the right hand side of the Court (that is along the West Wall of the Haram Area) are colonnades supported by marble pillars and plasters; and on the back (or north wall of the Haram Area) are colonnades vaulted in stone. The centre part of the

¹⁷P.P. Soucek: Islamic Art and Architecture; *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*; J.R. Strayer Editor in Chief; Charles Scribner's Sons, N. York; Vol 6; pp. 592-614; p. 593.

¹⁸P.P. Soucek: Islamic Art and Architecture; p. 593.

¹⁹P.P. Soucek: Islamic Art and Architecture; p. 593.

²⁰P.P. Soucek: Islamic Art and Architecture; p. 593.

²¹ <http://www.atlastours.net/holyland/jerusalem.html>

²²P.P. Soucek: Islamic Art and Architecture; p. 594.

*main building is covered by a mighty roof, high pitched and gable wise, over which rises a magnificent dome.*²⁴

The mosques played a primary role in disseminating science and culture in Islam. A brief glimpse of the scholarly institutions, which are described in great detail by the late medieval scholar, the Qadi Mudjir-uddin (d.1521), enlightens us on the link between faith and learning.²⁵ Although his outline also includes madrasas built following the crusades, the earliest institutes which saw the best of Muslim scholarship in the city date from before the wars. Inside the Aqsa Mosque, just near the women's area is the madrasa Farisiya founded by Emir Fares-ud-din Albky. There was also the madrasa Nahriye and the Nassiriya. The latter was named after the Jerusalem scholar, Sheikh Nasr, before it became known as the Ghazaliya, after the famed scholar al-Ghazali who resided and worked there. Around al-Aqsa was the Qataniya, the Fakriya, Baladiya and the Tankeziya. The latter, Ibn Mudjir tells, is an immense madrasa situated on the Khatt road, and its founder, the vice ruler of Syria Emir Tankiz Nasri, is also responsible for building the aqueduct for the water supply of Jerusalem.

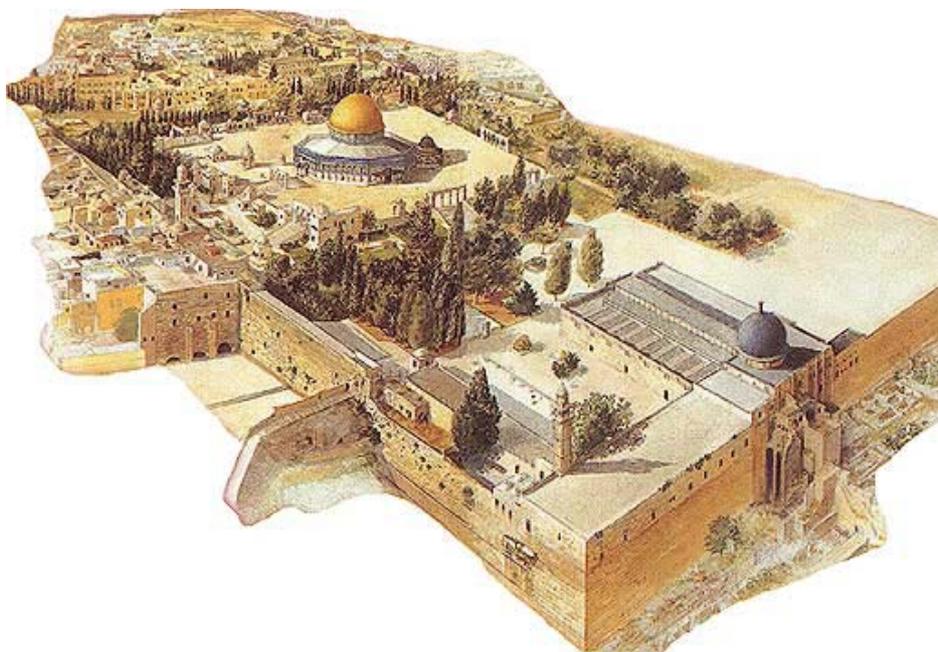


Figure 2. Al Aqsa Mosque is to the south on the lower right of this picture with the Dome of the Rock to north on the upper left²⁶

A number of Turkish women are behind the construction of many such madrasas in and around Masjid al-Aqsa. The madrasa Othmania was constituted in waqf in the year 1523 by a woman who belonged to one of the greatest families of the country; she was called Isfahan Shah Khatoun. Earlier, in 1354, another

²³P.P. Soucek: Islamic Art and Architecture; p. 594.

²⁴ Al-Muqaddasi: *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, a translation of his Ahsan... by B.A. Collins, Centre for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, Garnet Publishing Limited, Reading, 1994. p; 170

²⁵ Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns al-jalil bi Tarikh el-Qods wa'l Khalil*, translated into French as Histoire de Jerusalem et Hebron, by H. Sauvaire; Paris; Ernest Leroux; 1875; and 1926; pp. 140 fwd.

²⁶ Source - http://www.atlastours.net/holyland/al_aqsa_mosque.jpg

madrassa called Khatouniya was constituted in waqf by Oghl Khatoun, daughter of Chams ud-din Mohammed Bin Sayf ud-din of Baghdad. The madrassa was financed by a local business.²⁷

The great number of madrasas is a reflection of the great intellectual activity that thrived in Jerusalem during the Islamic era preceding the crusades. Mudjir ud-din names some of the illustrious figures who, by their thoughts and writing, made a mark in the city's history such as Omm al-Khayr Rabeah, daughter of Ismail of the Aqyl family, who lived in the 8th century (CE).²⁸ In the 11th century, under the Seljuks, on the eve of the crusades, the city witnessed a great variety of cultural activities. Great scholars from both east and west of the Muslim land made the city their destination and, many settled therein. Both the city's scholars and the visitors participated in a rich cultural life.²⁹ Ibn al-Arabi gives a vivid picture of the active life in the city which was a meeting place of scholars from Khurasan in the east to Al-Andalus in the west; he was impressed by the circles of study and the majlis of disputations.³⁰ Amongst such scholars was the Sha'afiite Nasr b. Ibrahim al-Maqdisi (1096), who taught at the Nassriyya school; Ata al-Maqdisi (Abu'l Fadl); , and al-Rumali.³¹ Abu'l Farradj Abd Al-Waheed (d. ca 1090s) also dwelt Jerusalem. He is responsible for the spread of the Hanbalite thought of Islam in and around the city. He also wrote on jurisprudence and wrote *Kitab al-Djawaher* on the interpretation of the Quran.³² Abu Fath Nasr (d. 1097) is the author of many works such as *Zahd al-Abed*, and he taught Hadith in Jerusalem in the same place that was to be Al-Ghazali's abode. Abu'l Maaly Al-Mucharraf is amongst the great scholars of Jerusalem, who wrote *Fadail al-Bayt Al-muqaddas wa Asakhra* (The merits of the Jerusalem and the Rock) in which he deals with all that relates to the city, its history, its sites and its sanctuaries.³³ He is the contemporary of Abu Kassem Mekki al-Romarly, who also gathered many facts on Jerusalem and wrote on its history.³⁴ There was the great al-Ghazali (b. 1058) who settled in the city. The Andalusian Faqih, Abu al-Bakr al-Turtushi, also came to Jerusalem in 1091 and stayed and taught in the Aqsa Mosque, whilst Abu Bakr Ibn al-Arabi, who left for the East, attended his lectures.³⁵

It has already become apparent how much of the scholarly life evolved in and around the mosques and especially with regards to al Aqsa. The Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is Islam's third holiest shrine and it had four libraries. It had several book collections in the Nahawiya and Ashrafyia madrassas and a library of even greater stature: the Farisiya Madrassa. Next to it is the Mosque of Omar which was founded during the reign of the second caliph Omar Ibn al-Khattab (Caliph 634-644). It developed rapidly into an important academy for religious and secular studies and included a large book collection which was spread among the mosque's four madrassas. Amongst the latter was the Nassiryia Madrassa, founded by Nasr al-Maqdisi, which is also known as the Ghazzaliya in a tribute to the philosopher al-Ghazali (d. 505AH/1111CE) who sequestered himself there until he completed the writing of the celebrated work *Ihya al-Ulum ud-din (The revival of religious sciences)*.³⁶

²⁷ Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); P. 145.

²⁸ Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); op cit; P. 61 fwd.

²⁹ A.A. Duri: Jerusalem; op cit; p. 119.

³⁰ Duri; p. 120.

³¹ Duri; p. 119.

³² Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); pp. 63 fwd.; A.A. Duri: Jerusalem; op cit; p. 120.

³³ Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); Pp. 64-5.

³⁴ Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); P. 65.

³⁵ A.A. Duri: Jerusalem; op cit; p. 120.

³⁶ Kurd Ali, Muhammad. *Khitat al-Sham*. 6 Vols. Damascus: Al-Matbaa al Haditha, 1925-8. 6: p. 119.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali was born at Tus in 1058, lost his father at an early age and was reared by a Sufi friend. He studied law, theology and philosophy; he spent much of his life teaching and writing and he would stay in Jerusalem, Damascus and Baghdad. At thirty-three he was appointed to the chair of law at the Nizamiya College in Baghdad where he taught. Soon all Islam acclaimed his eloquence, erudition and dialectical skill.³⁷After four years of this glory he was laid low by a mysterious disease; appetite and digestion failed, paralysis of the tongue occasionally distorted his speech and his mind began to break down.³⁸

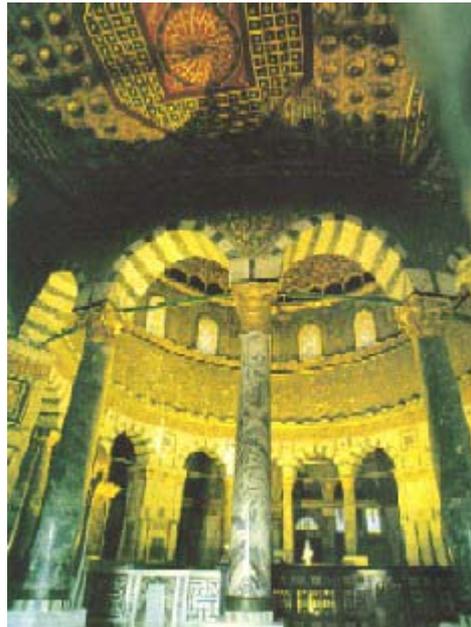


Figure 3. The Dome of the Rock, Inside³⁹

In 1094 he left Baghdad, ostensibly on a pilgrimage to Mecca; in reality he went into seclusion seeking silence, contemplation and peace.⁴⁰ He transported himself to Jerusalem burning with a desire to devote his life to faith and to visit the sacred sites.⁴¹ He established his house in the zawiya which was above the Door of the Redemption and which was formerly known as the Nassiriya, inside Masjid al-Aqsa, and there he wrote his famed *Ihya al-Ulum ud-din* (The Revival of the Science of Religion).⁴² He subjected sensation—on which materialism seemed to rest—to critical scrutiny; accused the senses of making the stars appear small when, to be so visible from afar, they must be vastly larger than the earth; concluded from a hundred such examples that sensation by itself could be no certain test of truth; reason, he deduced, was higher and corrected one sense with another but in the end it too rested on sensation. Perhaps there was in man a form of knowledge, a guide to truth surer than reason'.⁴³

³⁷ W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, Simon and Shuster, New York; 6th printing; 1950. p. 331.

³⁸ W. Durant: *The Age*; op cit; p. 331.

³⁹ www.islam.org/.../MOSQUES/Jerusalem/DRockin.htm

⁴⁰ Durant. 331.

⁴¹ Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); op cit; P. 66.

⁴² Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); P. 66.

⁴³ W. Durant: *The Age*; op cit; p. 331.

Al-Ghazali wrote his most influential *Tahafut al-Falasifa (The Destruction of Philosophy)* in which all the arts of reason were turned against reason; by a "transcendental dialectic" as subtle as the eighteenth century German philosopher Kant's, he argued that reason leads to universal doubt, intellectual bankruptcy, moral deterioration and social collapse.⁴⁴ Seven centuries before Hume, al-Ghazali reduced reason to the principle of causality and causality to mere sequence: all that we perceive is that B regularly follows A, not that A causes B. Philosophy, logic and science cannot prove the existence of God or the immortality of the soul; only direct intuition can assure us of these beliefs, without which no moral order and therefore no civilization, can survive.⁴⁵ He accepted again the Quran and the Hadith, and in his *Ihya Ulum ad-Din (Revival of the Science of Religion)* he expounded and defended his renovated beliefs in Sunni Islam with all the eloquence and fervour of his prime; never in Islam had the sceptics and the philosophers encountered so vigorous a foe.⁴⁶ When he died in 1111CE the tide of unbelief had been effectively turned; all Sunnis took comfort from him; even Christian theologians were glad to find, in his translated works, such a defence of religion and such an exposition of piety as no one had written since Augustine.⁴⁷ Al-Ghazali wrote,

*It has always been my practice, as a youth and as a man, to thirst for knowledge of the true nature of things.... So that I can be freed from the bond of imitation.*⁴⁸

For al-Ghazali personal knowledge should lead on to good deeds which please God and lead to salvation. He was also a very prominent scholar; his *Maqasid al-Falasifah (The Aims of the Philosophers)* was translated into Latin in the twelfth century and became very influential amongst scholastic Christian theologians.⁴⁹ He deeply influenced the medieval Jewish philosophers, Maimonides. Even Christian writers - particularly Aquinas, Dante, and Pascal - found inspiration in his translated works and used his ideas in the defence of their religion.⁵⁰

Before al-Ghazali, the city's famed scholars included **Al-Tamimi** (fl late 10th century). His full name was Abu 'Abdallah Mutammad ibn Ahmad ibn Sa'id al-Tamimi al-Muqaddasi (meaning, the native or inhabitant of the Holy City).⁵¹ He was a Palestinian physician who conducted pharmaceutical experiments and wrote various medical works chiefly on *materia medica*. His main work is a guide (*Murshid*) on *materia medica* entitled *Kitab al-murshid ila jawahir al-aghdiyya wa quwa-l-mufradat* (Guide towards [the understanding of] the substances of food-stuffs and [of] the simple drugs) which contains much valuable information on plants, minerals, etc....⁵²

⁴⁴ Durant. 332.

⁴⁵ Durant. 332.

⁴⁶ Durant. 332.

⁴⁷ Durant. 332.

⁴⁸ In *Al-Munquidh min al-dalal*, p.13; referred to by A.N. Diyab: Al-Ghazali: in *Religion, Learning and Science in the Abbasid Period*; Ed by M.J.L.Young; J.D.Latham; and R.B. Serjeant; Cambridge University Press; 1990; pp.424-44.

⁴⁹ M.Alonso quoted by A. Diyab: Al-Ghazali; op cit.

⁵⁰ F.B. Artz: *The mind, The Mind of the Middle Ages*; Third edition revised; The University of Chicago Press, 1980. pp. 146-7.

⁵¹ G. Sarton: *Introduction to the history of sciences*, The Carnegie Institution; Baltimore, 1927 fwd. vol 1; p. 679.

⁵² F. Wustenfeld: *Geschichte der Arabischen Aerzte*; Gottingen; 1840; p. 57.

E.H.F. Meyer: *Geschichte der Botanik*; Vol 3; pp. 174-6; 1856.

N.L. Leclerc: *Histoire de la medecine Arabe*; 2 vols; Paris; 1876. Vol 1; pp. 388-91.

The 19th century French medical historian, Leclerc, in the first volume of his work on Muslim medicine, (on pages 549-52) deals with a most interesting manuscript that is located in Madrid—Escorial 887, old 882—containing what seem to be the notes taken by a student at the consultations of a physician.⁵³ His physician is one Muhamad al-Tamimi about whom no definite information is given. Leclerc would place him in Toledo, c.1069, but Sarton notes that his conjecture is not convincing. There is a possibility that these two Tamimi are the same person. In any case this work seems to be very valuable and deserves a thorough investigation. About 50 consultations are reported in it.⁵⁴ Leclerc himself offers a good insight into this particular manuscript at the Escorial which he says is a mutilated, badly preserved manuscript.⁵⁵ It is divided into sessions, or consultations, and these sessions are in the number of fifty. A sick person presents himself/herself, the doctor asks them questions, and has them examined by his student with further questions and answers. The doctor then prescribes medicines. The doctor generally asks his student on his knowledge about the illness of the patient. If the student does not know much, the doctor then lectures him more about it once the patient has left.⁵⁶ If the student notices something that is odd in relation to the diagnosis, the prognosis or something that has struck him, he asks the master who then provides him with answers.

Here is an instance of a session narrated by the student:

*‘a patient arrived telling he was suffering from severe headache. My master asks him: ‘Is it at the front or at the back, and how do you feel the beating against the side of the head?’
The patient answered: ‘It is as if someone was hitting me with a hammer at the front of the head.’
The master provided the following prescription: You take some camomile, some rose leaves, and the head of poppies; you will mix the lot in a pan, and add water in sufficient quantity to cover the lot. You will boil the pan, and you bend your head towards the emanated steam. Do this for three days, day and night, and you will recover. With respect to your diet: eat something soft and that is relaxing.’ The patient soon recovered.⁵⁷*

Another session is also recounted by the student:

‘A man came in saying he had a large mole on his upper lid. My master orders me to measure the tumour with my hand, and whether it was static or moving. Which I did. The tumour moved like a sort of stone under the skin. The master asked me to see whether under the lid were lesions. Which I did and found nothing. The master then said: Friction the tumour with olive oil, and apply some compress with hot bread on it. The patient did it for three days and recovered.⁵⁸

In one session, the student relates how the master cured a disease by just prescribing a food diet. To the baffled student, the master answers that the prescribed food is enough to cure the disease.⁵⁹

Al-Muqaddasi (b.946-d.end of 10th century), originally from al-Quds (Jerusalem), hence his name, is by far one of the most instructive of all early Islamic writers on the social geography of Islam. On his travels,

⁵³ N.L. Leclerc: *Histoire de la médecine Arabe*; vol 1; pp. 549-52.

⁵⁴ G. Sarton: Introduction; vol 1; op cit; p. 679.

⁵⁵ L. Leclerc: Histoire; op cit; p. 549.

⁵⁶ L. Leclerc: Histoire; op cit; p. 550.

⁵⁷ L. Leclerc: Histoire; op cit; p. 551.

⁵⁸ L. Leclerc: Histoire; op cit; p. 552.

he set off from Jerusalem and visited nearly every part of the Muslim world. His best known treatise is *Ahsan at-Taqasim fi Ma'arif al-Aqalim*⁶⁰ (The best divisions in the knowledge of the Climes), which was completed around 985. A good outline of it is given by Kramers,⁶¹ extracts of which can be found in Dunlop's *Arab Civilisation*.⁶²

In this work, al-Muqaddasi was the first geographer to determine and standardize the meanings and connotations of Arabic geographical terms and the first to provide a list of towns and other features for quick referencing. He drew the first ever colour map indicating regional boundaries and trade routes in red, sandy areas in yellow, rivers in blue and mountains in ochre. After a general overview of geography and the land of Islam, the geographical arrangement of its various parts and approximate estimate of distances from one frontier to the other, al-Muqaddasi deals with countries separately. In dealing with each region, he divides his work in two parts: the first enumerates localities and gives good topographical descriptions, especially of the major towns, and the second lists various subjects: population, its composition, its social groups, commerce, minerals, archaeological monuments, money, political climate etc.⁶³ The work also includes accounts of weights and measures, moneys, languages, political climate, fiscal charges of people and commerce.⁶⁴ Al-Muqaddasi also gives the itineraries between the main places and distances are given in days' journeys but also in *farsakhs*.

The Islamic urban setting, its growth, diversity, complexities, economy and politics are the details that attract most of the attention of al-Muqaddasi, and can be found in each chapter, for every region and place he visits as Miquel shows.⁶⁵ Al-Muqaddasi differentiates between town and city by the presence of the great mosque and its minbar, symbols of Islamic authority. In connection with this, he states what follows:

*Now, if someone should say: Why have you considered Halab the capital of the district, while there is a town bearing the same name? I reply to him: I have already stated that the capitals are compared with generals and towns with troops. Hence it should not be right that we assign to Halab, with all its eminence, and its being the seat of government and the location of the government offices, or to Antakiya with all its excellence, or to Balis, with its teeming population, the position of towns subordinate to a small and ruined city.*⁶⁶

Al-Muqaddasi delves most particularly on the defensive structures of every city. Walls, their height, thickness, distances between each, fortifications, access in and out, their location according to the general topography but it is the artificial obstacles which in particular draw his attention. So do daily concerns such as trade and exchanges, markets and the urban economy as a whole. Al-Muqaddasi studied markets, their expansion and decline, providing a bill of health for each, the daily and monthly revenues derived from

⁵⁹ L. Leclerc: *Histoire*; op cit; p. 552.

⁶⁰ Al-Muqaddasi: *Ahsan at-taqasim fi Ma'arif al-Aqalim*; is in M.J. de Goeje ed., *Bibliotheca geographorum arabicum*, 2nd edition., III (Leiden, 1906); a partial French translation is by Andre Miquel, Institut Francais de Damas, Damascus, 1963. There are also English and Urdu versions of the work.

⁶¹ J.H. Kramers: *Analecta Orientalia*, i, 182-3; in D.M. Dunlop: *Arab civilisation to AD 1500*; Longman, 1971, pp 166-7.

⁶² D.M. Dunlop: *Arab civilisation*; pp. 166-7.

⁶³ D.M. Dunlop; p. 166-7.

⁶⁴ D.M. Dunlop; p. 166.

⁶⁵ A. Miquel: *La Geographie Humaine du Monde Musulman*, Vol 4, Ecole des hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1988.

⁶⁶ Al-Muqaddasi: *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, a translation of his Ahsan... by B.A. Collins, Centre for

them, and how such revenues were distributed.⁶⁷ He would carefully study how a location was run and the way its citizens would act, dwelling mainly on such factors as order, cleanliness, morality and state of learning, all of which he considers for each and every place visited.⁶⁸

On water management and hydraulic technology, much can be learnt from him as he describes Egypt, the Nile and the Nilometer.⁶⁹ Currency, its uses, and its users as well as its fluctuations constitute a major aspect of interest; Dinar, Dirhem, their multiples and sub-multiples in addition to each region's local currencies were studied in good detail.⁷⁰ Also of interest is information on diets, clothing, dialects, the varied differences of the many ethnic groups of the vast Muslim land, a diversity in union, which Miquel notes in his conclusive words, was to be completely shattered by the Mongol irruption.⁷¹

This approach is in contrast with his predecessors, whose focus was much narrower, whilst Al-Muqaddasi wanted to encompass aspects of interest to merchants, travellers, and people of culture.⁷² Thus, it becomes no longer the sort of traditional 'geography', but a work that seeks to understand and explain the foundations of Islamic society, and not just that, the very functioning of such society. On the whole, Kramers concludes that '*There is thus no subject of interest to modern geography which is not treated by al-Muqaddasi.*' And so, he is, according to A. Miquel (the author of a more recent translation of Al-Muqaddasi), the creator of '*total geographical science.*'⁷³

Muwaffaq Eddin Yaqub Ben Saqlan was a Christian doctor of Jerusalem (fl. Middle of 12th century; d. 1229). He was an Oriental Christian who served as a manager of the hospital of Jerusalem under Muaddam the Ayyubid ruler. Muaddam took Yaqub into his service and showered him with gifts and honours.⁷⁴ Although his own health failed and he could not move due to problems with his legs, he still served the same Muaddam even if he had to be carried to see to the ruler.⁷⁵ Both died in a short space of each other. Ben Saqlan was not just an able doctor, he is also said to have been appreciated for his surgical skills; Ibn Abbi Ussaybaia (the 13th century medical historian) is particularly full of praise for him.⁷⁶ According to Ibn Abbi Ussaybia, Ben Saqlan observed very minutely all the symptoms, studied them while never allowing any detail to escape his attention and then applied the most accurate cures. He was an accomplished man, intelligent and judicious in his practice. He died leaving a son who followed in his footsteps.⁷⁷

Rashid Eddin Ibn Essury (fl. Late 12th century- early 13th century), as shown by his last name, is of Syrian origins and he learnt his trade in Damascus. However he too practiced medicine for some time in

Muslim Contribution to Civilization, Garnet Publishing Limited, Reading, 1994. p. 143.

⁶⁷ A. Miquel: *La Geographie*, op cit, pp 237-9.

⁶⁸ A. Miquel: *La Geographie Humaine du Monde Musulman*, Vol 4, Ecole des hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1988.

⁶⁹ Al-Muqaddasi: *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, (B.A. Collins); op cit; p.189.

⁷⁰ Al-Muqaddasi (Collins tr) op cit; pp. 215 fwd.

⁷¹ A. Miquel: *La Geographie*, op cit, p. 347.

⁷² S.M. Ahmad: Al-Maqdisi, in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, C.C. Gillispie editor in Chief, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Vol 9; at p. 88.

⁷³ Al-Muqaddasi: *Ahsan at-taqasim fi Ma'rifat al-Aqalim*; traduction partielle, anotee par Andre Miquel, Institut Francais de Damas, Damascus, 1963, p. xxiv, in D. M. Dunlop: *Arab Civilisation*, op cit, at p. 166.

⁷⁴ L. Leclerc: *Histoire*; op cit; vol 2; p. 170.

⁷⁵ Leclerc: vol 2; p. 170.

⁷⁶ Ibn Abbi Ussaybaia: *Waafayat al-Iyyan*; in L. Leclerc. P. 170.

⁷⁷ In Leclerc: vol 2; p. 171.

Jerusalem and was attached to the city's hospital. He was taught the art of botany by his friend Abu Al-Abbas Al-Hayany, a scholar and a man of great generosity, who knew about simples.⁷⁸ Rashid Eddin, just as Ibn Saqlan, served King al-Muaddam (Muazzam) including during his war campaigns against the crusaders. At the death of Muaddam he served Nasir who legated to him the headship of doctors. Rashid Eddin was a well-recognised botanist⁷⁹ and his passion and knowledge of the subject places him amongst the greatest botanists such as Ibn al-Baytar and Ibn Rumya.⁸⁰ His works are not extant but other scholars refer to them. Rashid Eddin was famous not just for his theoretical knowledge of the subject but also for his innovations in the field. He travelled extensively especially in the mountains of Lebanon and he was always accompanied by a painter; the latter painted each plant in the proper colours, in minute details relating to the leaves, roots, body and at the various stages of growth; then the plants were drawn at their stage of dryness which is when they are best to be used as medicinal plants.⁸¹ According to the Ottoman historian-biographer, Hadji Khalifa, Rashid Eddin added many plants to the known repertory.⁸² He is also known for his commentary on botany exchanged with another famed botanist of Islam, Tadj Eddin al-Bulghari (a friend's of the famed botanist Ibn al-Baytar)⁸³

The Devastation of War through the Instance of Jerusalem

The thriving scholarship, which Jerusalem witnessed up to the late 11th century has been described above. The crusaders reached and took the city in 1099, and all amongst the Muslim scholars, just like the city's population, were slain. The madrasas and libraries were either destroyed or, just like the Aqsa mosque, (as will be shown further on) were desecrated or reconverted for Christian use or as stables. The fate of Islamic learning and scholarship in Jerusalem is precisely the fate of every Islamic city that went through the woes of invasion. Thus, as shown under the appropriate entries on these cities, whether in Cordova (1236), Seville (1248), Baghdad (1258), Aleppo (1260), Damascus (1260), Merw, Bukharra, Nishapur, etc... in the period 1219-1221, everywhere, the scholars fled or were put to the sword, crucified or tortured to death; libraries and madrasas burned, trades taken away or completely devastated, the Muslim population was slaughtered en masse and Islamic culture suppressed as in Spain following the Christian taking of Seville, Cordova, Valencia, Toledo, etc. All these tragic upheavals were bound to destroy Islamic learning. How can, indeed, Cordova produce any Islamic learning when it had fallen into Christian hands bent on de-Islamising the city? How can Bukhara produce another Ibn Sina when it has been burned to the ground? How can Merv thrive when its schools and libraries had been burnt to the ground, and everyone in it slaughtered, with some sources there speaking of the mass slaughter of 1.3 million lives.⁸⁴ How can Nishapur suffer the same fate and then produce an Omar Khayyam, again? And it is the same all over. These evident facts, repeated all over, explain the decline of Islamic learning, which any ordinary person can find by browsing through history. Yet they are not recognised factors by most of those who write on Muslim civilisation and blame its decline on Islam, an issue seen under other entries, thus, needless to be repeated here.

⁷⁸ Leclerc: vol 2; p. 171.

⁷⁹ Leclerc: vol 2; p. 172.

⁸⁰ Leclerc: vol 2; p. 172.

⁸¹ Leclerc: vol 2; p. 172.

⁸² Leclerc: vol 2; p. 172.

⁸³ Leclerc: vol 2; p. 173.

⁸⁴ E.G. Browne: in W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, op cit; p.339

Here instead, we will focus on what has not been dealt with in the other entries: the war, its killings, its devastation, its mighty demands, its fierceness shared by both Muslims and their enemies. Its endlessness, absorbing the energies and the lives of generations after generations, bleeding the land of Islam in its fight for survival in face of an enemy dedicated to wiping the whole entity out. It will be shown that the fact that Muslims survived is a tribute to their absolute resilience and the power of their faith, that they survived, indeed, the fiercest onslaught ever witnessed in history, is a miracle even if their civilisation suffered. Other races worldwide, in their tens of millions, had been wiped out of existence by much lesser onslaught than what Islam faced.⁸⁵ It will be shown how in those centuries (11th-13th centuries), when supposedly Islam or the Seljuk destroyed Islamic civilisation, how it was the war of devastation inflicted on Islam which prevented learning or civilisation prevailing, let alone thriving.

The crusades (1096-1291) are a result of the Christian awareness of divisions amongst the Muslims between the Shias and Sunnis who were then at war. The Christians had also been emboldened by their successes in Spain with the taking of Barbastro in 1063 and Toledo in 1085 (see entry on Toledo). They had also re-taken Sicily from the Muslims in 1089 (see entry on Sicily). The Catholic Church knew this was the most opportune time to strike at the centre of Islam and amongst the disunited, infighting Muslims. The Muslims in the East had also just lost their two greatest figures; Malik Shah, the Seljuk ruler and his minister Nizam al-Mulk were both assassinated and the Fatimids, whose leaders were generally Armenian in origin, were ready to make an alliance with the crusaders. It was only left for the Christian leadership to find an excuse to justify the attack on Islam and to rouse the people of Christendom. Hence Pope Urban II concocted a story of Muslim massacres of Christians in the Holy Sites of Jerusalem. His speech included:

‘An accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God, a generation forsooth which has not directed its heart and has not entrusted its spirit to God, has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire; it has led away a part of the captives into its own country, and a part it has destroyed by cruel tortures; it has either entirely destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of its own religion. They destroy the altars, after having defiled them with their uncleanness. They circumcise the Christians, and the blood of the circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font. When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels, and dragging forth the extremity of the intestines, bind it to a stake; then with flogging they lead the victim around until the viscera having gushed forth the victim falls prostrate upon the ground. Others they bind to a post and pierce with arrows. Others they compel to extend their necks and then, attacking them with naked swords, attempt to cut through the neck with a single blow. What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? To speak of it is worse than to be silent... Accordingly undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven.’⁸⁶

⁸⁵ see, for instance:

-W. Howitt: *Colonisation and Christianity*. Longman; London.

-R. Garaudy: *Comment l'Homme devient Humain*. Editions J.A, 1978.

-D E. Stannard: "Genocide in The Americas" in *The Nation*, October 19, 1992; pp. 430-4.

⁸⁶ In D. C. Munro, "Urban and the Crusaders", Translations and Reprints from the *Original Sources of European History*, Vol 1:2, 1895, pp. 5-8

In truth, there were no Turkish atrocities and defilements of the Holy sites; far from being in danger of extermination, the Christians enjoyed a uniquely favourable status under Muslim rule. In 1047 the Muslim traveller Nasir-i-Khosru, having seen Christians freely practicing their faith, described the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as 'a most spacious building, capable of holding 8000 persons, and built with the utmost skill. Inside, the church is everywhere adorned with Byzantine brocade, worked in gold.'⁸⁷ This was but one of many Christian churches in Jerusalem. Christian pilgrims had free access to the holy places.⁸⁸

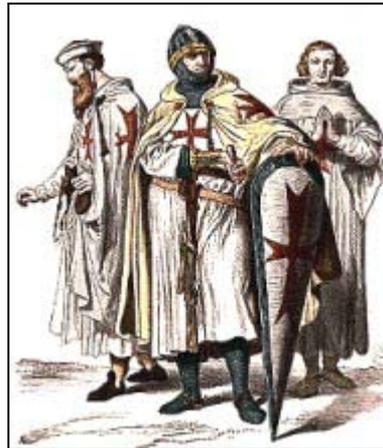


Figure 4. The Knight Templars⁸⁹

Christians (like Jews) also occupied all spheres of command within the Islamic realm, since the earliest times. Caliph Al-Mutasim (833-842), for instance, had two Christian ministers, one of whom was responsible for finance.⁹⁰ Everywhere Christians were free to practice their faith and keep property and wealth with little intervention from the Muslims. In fact the destruction of The Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem, which the Pope used as an illustration of Muslim desecration of Christian sites, was the work of the Fatimid king Al Hakem (b. 985) gone mad; and the paradox, as Finucane notes, was that the king's chief secretary, who drew up the document of destruction of the Church was a Christian just like his vizier who signed it.⁹¹ Even more importantly, this Fatimid ruler had put to death many of the respectable Muslim Sunnis.⁹² The other principal cause cited by the Pope to justify the crusades was the supposed Muslim massacres of pilgrims and the prevention of them visiting the Holy sites; this claim is equally groundless.

*'At this time,' years prior to the crusades, says a Christian contemporary, 'there began to flow towards the Holy Sepulchre so great a multitude as, ere this, no man could have hoped for. First of all went the meaner folk, then men of middle rank, and lastly, very many kings and counts, marquises and bishops; aye, and a thing that had never happened before, many women bent their steps in the same direction.'*⁹³

⁸⁷ G. LeStrange: Palestine; op cit p. 202.

⁸⁸ W. Durant; The Age; op cit; p. 585.

⁸⁹ http://www.rosslyntemplars.org.uk/Knights_Templar1.gif

⁹⁰ T.W. Arnold: The preaching of Islam. A History of the Propagation of the Muslim faith, Archibald Constable, Westminster, 1896. in Y. Courbage, P. Fargues: *Chretiens et Juifs dans l'islam Arabe et Turc*, Payot, Paris, 1997;p. 53.

⁹¹ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd; London, 1983. p. 155.

⁹² C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*; The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund; London; 1897. p. 231.

⁹³ Ralph Glaber in T.A. Archer: *The Crusades*; T. Fisher Unwin; London; 1894; p. 15.

Even when some Bedouin thieves, who preyed on caravans, whether Muslim or non Muslim, attacked the Christians in order to rob them, the Saracen lord of Ramleh came to the rescue, and under his guidance the pilgrims visited Jerusalem in safety.⁹⁴

The true reasons for the call of the crusades, other than the awareness of Muslim chaos and divisions already cited, was the fact that the Church became aware that inflicting the final blow on the foe was within reach. The reason was, Bennet holds, the Church's overriding ambition to destroy the Muslim creed and annihilate Islam.⁹⁵ The need to exterminate the Muslim enemy was also reinforced by the need to re-assert Christian unity; first between the Greek and Latin Churches and also within Western Christendom.⁹⁶ Pope Urban also sought unity amongst Western Christians in his own realm, as divisions were being exacerbated by the conflict between Pope (Gregory VII) and Emperor (Henry IV).. Urban stressed the ideological aims of the crusade: peace among Christians and death to the enemies of the faith.⁹⁷ And amidst the new unity, peace was found with local feudal internal wars being now repressed; the men's pugnacity was now diverted to the Crusades.⁹⁸

*'Let hatred, therefore, depart from among you; let your quarrels end,' said Urban in his speech, 'Enter upon the road to the Holy Sepulchre; wrest that land from a wicked race, and subject it to yourselves. Jerusalem is a land fruitful above all others, a paradise of delights. That royal city, situated at the centre of the earth, implores you to come to her aid. Undertake this journey eagerly for the remission of your sins, and be assured of the reward of imperishable glory to the Kingdom of Heaven.'*⁹⁹

*'..... To all those who will depart and die on route, whether by land or sea, or lose their life in fighting the pagans, the forgiveness of their sins will be granted. And this I grant to those who participate to this voyage in accordance with the authority that I hold from God.'*¹⁰⁰

Equally high on the Western Christian agenda was the need to wrest from the Muslims their wealth. The men of Provence and Italy, Conder explains, were not insensible to art and beauty but many of the Latins came from gloomier lands, from dark castles and small fortresses frowning over squalid wooden villages.¹⁰¹ They were astonished at the wealth and luxury of Asia and their hearts rejoiced thinking of the spoils that lay before them in the east, where Baghdad and Damascus were said to rival Byzantium.¹⁰² The powerful trading cities of Pisa, Genoa, Venice and Amalfi also had great desire to extend their rising commercial power and capture such Islamic wealth for themselves.¹⁰³ The leaders of the

⁹⁴ T.A. Archer: *The Crusades*; p. 17.

⁹⁵ C. Bennett: *Victorian Images of Islam*; Grey Seal; London; 1992. p. 6.

⁹⁶ J.J.Saunders: *Aspects of the Crusades*; University of Canterbury publishing; Canterbury; 1962. p.20.

⁹⁷ J.H. Lamonte: crusade and Jihad: in N.A. Faris ed: *The Arab heritage*, Princeton University Press, 1944. pp 159-198. p.161.

⁹⁸ W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, op cit; p.829.

⁹⁹ Ogg quoted in W.Durant: *the Age of faith*; op cit; p. 587.

¹⁰⁰ A. Bouamama: l'Idée de croisade dans le monde Arabe hier et aujourd'hui, in *De Toulouse a Tripoli*, AMAM, Colloque held between 6 and 8 December, 1995, University of Toulouse; 1997 .pp 211-219.p.212.

¹⁰¹ C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*; op cit; p. 30.

¹⁰² C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*. p. 30.

¹⁰³ W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, op cit; p.586.

*crusades themselves had great dreams of making fortunes in the East. Godfrey of Bouillon, one of the principal leaders, was accompanied by a brother, Baldwin, and another leader, Bohemond, was joined by a nephew, Tancred. They hoped to make their fortunes overseas.*¹⁰⁴

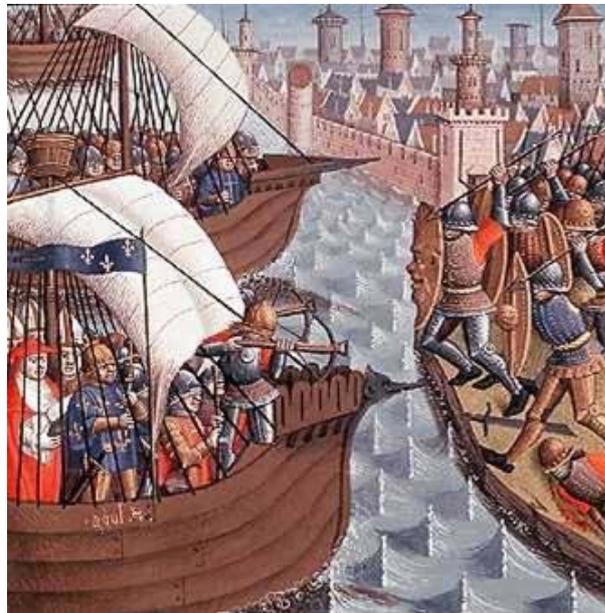


Figure 5. Crusaders¹⁰⁵

Just as Bohemond went to find a principality in the East, Raymond of St.Gilles, the third most important leader, also had an eye on the fair lands of Syria.¹⁰⁶ The masses who were to depart for the crusades were moved by the Pope's speech relating of the massacres of their fellow Christians, the so-called desecration of the Holy Land and atrocities committed by 'the infidels' but it was unlikely, as Finucane observes, 'that righteous indignation alone could have sustained the majority over the long trek east.'¹⁰⁷ Everyone sought a piece of the gains of this earth; Pope Urban had promised 'eternal wealth' but had also argued the 'wealth of the Orient', contrasted with the 'poverty of the Western world'.¹⁰⁸ So anxious were the poor for a chance to strike it rich that once the killing began, 'they were scrabbling for the spoils while the knights were still killing the Turks.'¹⁰⁹

And if all this was not enough to stir the masses of Western Christendom to depart east to slay the Infidel, there were other reasons, as Durant outlines:

'Extraordinary inducements brought multitudes to the standard. A plenary indulgence remitting all punishments due to sin was offered to those who should fall in the war. Serfs were allowed to leave the soil to which they had been bound; citizens were exempted from taxes; debtors enjoyed a moratorium on interest; prisoners were freed, and sentences of death were commuted, by a bold

¹⁰⁴ D.Hay: *The Medieval Centuries*; Methuen and Co; London; 1964. p. 91.

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.freewebs.com/museumstjuliens/crusades.jpg>

¹⁰⁶ J.H. Lamonte: *crusade and Jihad*: pp 159-198; p.162.

¹⁰⁷ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd; London, 1983. p.35.

¹⁰⁸ R. Pernoud: *les Hommes de la Croisade*, op cit. in Yves Courbage, Paul Fargues: *Chretiens et Juifs dans l'Islam Arabe et Turc*, Payot, Paris, 1997. p.85.

¹⁰⁹ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*. p.79.

*extension of papal authority, to life service in Palestine. Thousands of vagrants joined in the sacred tramp. Men tired of hopeless poverty, adventurers ready for brave enterprise, younger sons hoping to carve out fiefs for themselves in the East, merchants seeking new markets for their goods, knights whose enlisting serfs had left them labourless, timid spirits shunning taunts of cowardice, joined with sincerely religious souls to rescue the land of Christ's birth and death. Propaganda of the kind customary in war stressed the disabilities of Christians in Palestine, the atrocities of Moslems, the blasphemies of the Mohammedan creed; Moslems were described as worshipping a statue of Mohammed. Fabulous tales were told of Oriental wealth and of dark beauties waiting to be taken by brave men. Such a variety of motives could hardly assemble a homogeneous mass capable of military organization. In many cases women and children insisted upon accompanying their husbands or parents, perhaps with reason, for prostitutes soon enlisted to serve the warriors.*¹¹⁰

Neither were criminals nor violent men to be denied a share in the holy work-room for repentance and for good services'.¹¹¹ Sinners and robbers sought a better life, and swore to set free from the Turks the land hallowed by the feet of Christ.¹¹² Hence, all in all, clergy, nobles, the chaste, the incestuous, the adulterers, robbers - all who professed the Christian faith' - grasped the opportunity for penance, and went onto the crusade.¹¹³ They emerged in bands on all sides', equipped themselves with food and arms that they needed to get to Jerusalem and all were burning with fire and divine love' according to Albert of Aix.¹¹⁴ Even the animal world joined the crusades and as leaders (like the inspired goose and the perspicacious goat).¹¹⁵

This was the force, in their hundreds of thousands, which set off from Europe in the years 1095-96 and descended on the Muslim world.

Having been told of Islamic barbaric cruelties' against their Christian brethren, armed Christian crowds in their hundreds of thousands and possibly millions sought retribution. Their trail is covered in the mass slaughter of Muslim populations; mass rape; cannibalism in each and every Muslim city, town and village they came across (Antioch, Maarat An' Numan, Tyre.. etc.)

At Ma'arat an'Numan, in late 1098, the crusaders scaled the undefended walls and entered the city. The terrified population hid in their homes but to no avail. For three days the slaughter never stopped. The Christian chronicler, Robert the Monk, following the taking of Ma'arrat describes the scene:

'Our men' said the pious and charitable chronicler (Le Bon's words) 'walked through the roads, places, on the roofs, and feasted on the slaughter just like a lioness who had her cubs taken from her. They cut into pieces, and put to death children, the young, and the old crumbling under the weight of the years. They did that in groups... Our men grabbed everybody who fell in their hands. They cut bellies open, and took out gold coins. Oh detestable cupidity of gold! Streams of blood ran on the roads of the city; and everywhere lay corpses. Oh blinded nations and destined to death;

¹¹⁰ W. Durant: The Age of faith; op cit; pp 588-9.

¹¹¹ C.R. Conder: The Latin Kingdom; op cit; p. 25.

¹¹² C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*; op cit; p. 24.

¹¹³ N. Daniel: *The Arabs and medieval Europe*; Longman Librarie du Liban; 1975. p.122.

¹¹⁴ J.W. Draper: A History; vol ii; op cit; pp 22-3; N. Daniel: The Arabs; op cit; p.123.

¹¹⁵ R. Finucane: Soldiers of the Faith; op cit. p.117.

*none of that multitude accepted the Christian faith. At last Bohemond brought out all those he had first invited to lock themselves in the tower of the place. He ordered that all old women be put to death, and also old men, whose age had rendered useless; then all the rest he ordered to be taken to Antioch to be sold as slaves. This massacre of the Turks took place on 12 December (1098); on Sunday; but on this day not all work could be accomplished; so the following day our men killed all the rest.*¹¹⁶

Radulph of Caen mentioned how

*"In Maarra our troops boiled pagan adults in cooking pots; they impaled children on spits and devoured them grilled."*¹¹⁷

In fact it was a common practice, as the chronicler William of Tyre reports, for the crusaders to roast and eat the flesh of the Turks they slew.¹¹⁸ At Ma'arrat, to avoid such a fate, many Muslims were said by a Christian writer to have jumped down wells to their deaths.¹¹⁹

After a few more similar massacres down the road, the crusaders reached Jerusalem in 1099. The city must have contained a sizeable population at the time of the Crusader siege, since, as well as its own inhabitants, it probably also housed refugees from other towns and villages who had sought asylum behind its walls.¹²⁰ None escaped with their lives. The massacre has been described above to warrant more gruesome details here, but that can be found in any contemporary chronicle, or in old Western history books (The modern ones have typically cleansed Western history of such dark images and have in the same process cleansed Islamic history of anything positive).

The scholars of Jerusalem suffered the same fate as the population. Al-Rumayli, the most celebrated Palestinian hadith expert of his age and author of tracts on the merits of Jerusalem and Hebron, was stoned to death.¹²¹ When the Crusaders took the city, he was made prisoner and was ransomed at 1000 dinars. As nobody paid his ransom, he was stoned to death at the gate of Antioch.¹²² Abd Al-Djabbar B. Ahmad of Isfahan was also killed.¹²³

Such was the killing that the chronicler William of Tyre tells us,

*'The place was inundated of the blood of the faithful. We could not watch without horror that multitude of deaths, their limbs scattered laying on the ground on all sides, and the flood of blood inundating the surface of the ground.'*¹²⁴

¹¹⁶ Robert the Monk, in G. Le Bon: *La Civilisation des Arabes*; Syracuse; 1884; p. 248.

¹¹⁷ In Janet Abu Lughod: *Before European Hegemony*; Oxford University Press; 1989; p. 107.

¹¹⁸ C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*; op cit. p. 45.

¹¹⁹ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; op cit; p.106;

¹²⁰ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades, Islamic Perspectives*, op cit;p.66.

¹²¹ B. Z. Kedar: *The Subjected Muslims of the Frankish Levant*, op cit.143.

¹²² Mudjir Eddin: *Al-Euns* (Histoire de Jerusalem); P. 65.

¹²³ Mudjir: *Ens*; op cit; p. 299.

¹²⁴ A. Bouamama: 'l'Idée de croisade dans le monde Arabe hier et aujourd'hui, in *De Toulouse a Tripoli*, AMAM, Colloque held between 6 and 8 December, 1995, University of Toulouse; 1997 .pp 211-219. p.213.

In the words of Raymond of Aguilers,

*It was a just and splendid judgment of God that this place should be filled with the blood of the unbelievers... the city was filled with corpses and blood.*¹²⁵

Some spared captives were forced to clear the streets and the court of the Haram of tens of thousands of corpses which were collected in heaps and burnt or thrown over the walls.¹²⁶ When the Christian chronicler Fulcher visited Jerusalem in December 1099, five months after it was taken, he was disgusted by the stench of death inside and outside the city walls.¹²⁷

*Oh what a stench there was around the walls of the city, both within and without, from the rotting bodies of the Saracens slain by our comrades at the time of the capture of Jerusalem, lying where they were hunted down.*¹²⁸

All Muslim houses and trades, now vacant, were taken over by the crusaders. For seven days as the riot and carnage of the Muslim population went on, a contemporary wrote,

*Men forgot their vows, forgot the Sepulchre and Calvary, hastening to gather spoil, revelling and exulting, and claiming for their own the empty houses which they seized.*¹²⁹

Even priests were not slow to ask their share. Arnold, as Latin patriarch, claimed the treasures of the Mosque, which Tancred and Godfrey, the crusade leaders, had shared between them.¹³⁰ In fact, it is whole Muslim towns and villages which became property of the Church. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was the richest and most important of all; Geodfrey, the first crusade leader gave twenty one villages to the church and the number increased to seventy through the donations of other kings and barons.¹³¹ These lay mainly in the mountains around Jerusalem within the Royal Domain; but in 1165 five villages in Galilee were purchased, and land in the north east of Caesarea.¹³²

It is needless here to go on about the military campaigns that followed the taking of Jerusalem, the intensity and bitterness of each military encounter, etc... as some of these can be found under other entries (Mosul, Hama, Aleppo) and from these the cost of the crusades upon Islam can be understood. The Muslims re-conquered Jerusalem in October 1187. Three months after Salah-ud-din's victory at Hattin on July 1187, on 2 October 1187, Jerusalem surrendered to the Muslims after a short siege. Salah-ud-din's terms were accepted, says a learned Christian, "with gratitude and lamentation"; perhaps some learned Christians compared these events of 1187 with those of 1099.¹³³ No massacre or violence was perpetrated, the entry of Salah-ud-din was more like that of Omar rather than that of Geodfrey'.¹³⁴ (Geodfrey, it must be noted, was the

¹²⁵ Raymond of Aguilers: *Historia francorum qui ceperunt Jerusalem*; tr. J.H. and L.L. Hill (Phila., 1968); p. 127-8.

¹²⁶ M.A.Hiyari: Crusader Jerusalem; in Jerusalem in History; op cit; pp. 130-76; at p. 140.

¹²⁷ in R. Finucane: Soldiers of the Faith; op cit; p.104.

¹²⁸ Fulcher; Expedition; p. 132; in M.A. Hiyari: Crusader Jerusalem; at p. 140.

¹²⁹ C.R. Conder: The Latin Kingdom; op cit; p. 67.

¹³⁰ C.R. Conder: The Latin Kingdom; op cit; p. 67.

¹³¹ C.R. Conder: The Latin Kingdom; op cit; p. 194.

¹³² Regesta, No 420-425; see Quarterly Statement, Palestine Exploration Fund; January, 1890. There are fifty documents in the Cartulary of the Holy Sepulchre, referring to property in Palestine and in Europe.

¹³³ W. Durant: The Age of faith, op cit; p.598.

¹³⁴ C.R. Conder: The Latin Kingdom; op cit; p. 156.7.

crusade leader in 1099, when in July of that year, as seen above, the crusaders wiped out the whole Muslim population in a massacre that was hardly unique in crusader history.) Following the Muslim victory in 1187, Salah-ud-din's brother al-Adil asked for the gift of a thousand slaves from the still un-ransomed Christian poor; it was granted and he freed them.¹³⁵ Ibn al-Athir narrates this follow up to the taking of the city:

‘The Sultan (Salah-ud-din) agreed to give the Franks assurances of safety on the understanding that each man, rich or poor alike, should pay ten dinar, children of both sexes two dinars and women five dinars. All those who paid the sum within forty days should go free... Balian Ibn Barzan offered 30,000 dinars as ransom for the poor, which was accepted, and the city surrendered on Friday 27 Rajab/2 October 1187, a memorable day on which Muslim flags were hoisted over the walls of Jerusalem...

Among those multitude who left was the Grand Patriarch of Jerusalem who left with the treasures from the Dome of the Rock, the Masjid al-Aqsa, the Church of Resurrection and others, God alone knows the amount of treasure. He also took an equal quantity of money. Salah Eddin made no difficulties, and when he was advised to sequester the whole lot for Islam, he replied that he would not go back on his word. He took only the ten Dinar from the Patriarch, and let him go heavily escorted to Tyre.

At the top of the cupola of the Dome of the Rock there was a great gilded cross. When the Muslims entered the city on the Friday, some of them climbed to the top of the cupola to take down the cross. When they reached the top a great cry went up from the city and from outside the walls, the Muslims crying Allah Akbar in their joy, the Franks groaning in consternation and grief. So loud and piercing was the cry that the earth shook.

Once the city was taken and the infidels had left, Salah Eddin ordered that the shrines should be restored to their original. The Sultan ordered that the Dome should be cleansed of all pollution and this was done. On the Friday 4 Shaaban/9 October, the Muslims celebrated the communal Friday prayers there... The Frankish population of Jerusalem who had not departed began to sell at very low prices all their possessions, treasures and whatever they could not carry with them. The merchants from the army and the non-Frankish Christians in Jerusalem bought their goods from them. The latter had asked Salah Eddin's permission to remain in their homes if they paid the tax, and he had granted them this, so they stayed and bought up Frankish property. What the Franks could not sell, beds and boxes and casks, they left behind; even superb columns of marble and slabs of marble and mosaics in large quantities. Then they departed.¹³⁶

Ibn al-Athir says:

‘When Salah Eddin re-took possession of the city, and after driving out the infidels, he commanded that the buildings should be put back to their ancient usage. Now the Templars had built to the west of the Aqsa a building for their habitation, and constructed there all that they needed of granaries, and also latrines, with other such places, and they had even enclosed a part of the Aqsa in their new building Salah Eddin commanded that all this should be set back to its former state, and he ordered that the Masjid (or Haram area) should be cleansed, and also the Rock from all the filth and the impurities that were there. All this was executed as commanded.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ W. Durant: The Age of faith, op cit; p.598.

¹³⁶ Ibn al-Athir : Kamil; op cit; Vol xi; pp. 363-6.

¹³⁷ Ibn al-Athir; op cit; vol ix; p. 364.

(When the crusaders took Jerusalem in July 1099, the Aqsa Mosque was given to the Knights of the Temple, who made considerable alterations to it and to the adjoining portions of the Haram area.)

After Salah-ud-din re-took Jerusalem in 1187, to Richard's vow that he would not abandon Jerusalem, Salah-ud-din wrote to Richard (Lionheart):

*Al-Quds is to us just as much as to you, and is more precious in our eyes than in yours, for it is the site of our Prophet's nocturnal departure and the place where people will assemble on Judgment Day. Therefore do not imagine that we can waver in this regard.*¹³⁸

As for the Jews, what they lost under crusader occupation, they regained under the Muslims. After retaking Jerusalem in 1187, Salah-ud-din raised the ban imposed on them by the Crusaders and encouraged them to settle the Holy city once more.¹³⁹

Once Salah-ud-din died in 1193, his brother and his sons divided the realm, and instead of fighting the Crusaders, they sought to compromise so they could keep their territory. Two of the Ayyubid rulers were actually ready to hand back Jerusalem to the Franks.¹⁴⁰ During the sixth crusade as the crusaders besieged Damietta, Malik al-Kamil offered to give up Jerusalem to the Crusaders, to free all the Christian captives and to pay a large sum towards the rebuilding of the walls, only for the offer to be rejected by the Pope legate, Cardinal Pelagius.¹⁴¹ Al-Kamil was not the only Ayyubid who sold out Jerusalem and other territories for the sake of his own realm. On hearing that the Franks had designs on Jerusalem, another Ayyubid, al-Mu'azzam, i.e The Grand, who initially had patronised building projects in the city, found himself dismantling its fortifications. According to Sibt al-Jawzi, al-Mu'azzam justified this very unpopular act by saying: `If they (the Franks) were to take it (Jerusalem), they would kill those in it and rule over Damascus and the countries of Islam. Necessity demands its destruction.'¹⁴²

In 1228 Frederick II of Sicily arrived in Palestine on a Crusade, the sixth. Worried about his own realm, and without a blow, the Ayyubid sultan al-Kamil concluded a treaty with Frederick, which in the words of Muslim chroniclers was a supplication on the part of the Muslim ruler.¹⁴³ In the treaty, al-Kamil surrendered the whole of Jerusalem except the Mosque of Omar, the keys of which were to stay with the Muslims, but Christians under certain circumstances could enter it for prayer; the treaty further restored Bethlehem, Jaffa and Nazareth to the Crusaders.¹⁴⁴ So pleased was Frederick he decorated the Sultan's chief ambassador with the order of knighthood.¹⁴⁵ This capitulation over Jerusalem caused widespread indignation and outrage amongst Muslims. In 1229, the chronicler Sibt b, al-Jawzi wrote, `In it (this year)

¹³⁸ Ibn Shadad: *Al-Nawadir al-Sultaniya wa'l Mahassin al-Yussufiya*; in *Receuil des Historiens des Croisades; Historiens orientaux*; Paris; 1884; III; p. 265.

¹³⁹ Kenneth Setton: *History*. in Y. Courbage, P.Fargues: *Chretiens et Juifs dans l'Islam Arabe et Turc*, Payot, Paris, 1997; p.99.

¹⁴⁰ C. Hillenbrand: *The Crusades*, op cit;p.249.

¹⁴¹ C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*; op cit; p. 310.

¹⁴² Sibt al-Jawzi: *Al-muntazam fi tarikh al-muluk wa'l umam*; X; Hyderabad; 1940; VIII/2; p. 601.

¹⁴³ G.W. Cox: *The Crusades*; op cit; p. 189.

¹⁴⁴ G.W. Cox: *The Crusades*; op cit; p. 189.

¹⁴⁵ A.S. Atiya: *Crusade, Commerce and Culture*; Oxford University Press; London; 1962; p. 89.

al-Kamil gave Jerusalem to the emperor... the news of the handing over of Jerusalem to the Franks arrived and great anger broke loose in all the lands of Islam.¹⁴⁶

On 11 July 1244, the Khwarizmian Turks, who were not ready to compromise on the city, after crossing the Galilee burst into Jerusalem and, literally, in the space of days slaughtered their way through crusader ranks, decimating the whole of the two crusader armies of Hospitallers and Templars leaving barely fifty survivors.¹⁴⁷ Thus the Jerusalem that had been ceded by the Ayyubid to the crusaders was recaptured and so ended Christian hegemony in the area until modern times.¹⁴⁸

The Ayyubids and the crusaders formed an alliance to retake the city from the Khwarizmiens. Against the Ayyubid-crusader alliance stood the combined Egyptian-Turkish army led by Baybars. The decisive battle of La Forbie (near Ghaza)¹⁴⁹ lasted two days having started on the morning of October 17, 1244. In the end, such was the fierceness of battle that thirty thousand crusaders and their Muslim allies were killed; only the patriarch and the Prince of Tyre escaped with thirty three Templars, twenty six Hospitallers and three Teutonic Knights.¹⁵⁰ More Christians died in this battle than at Hattin; hundreds were carried prisoners to Egypt.¹⁵¹ Following this success, Baybars went on the offensive and in just a year, aided by his forces, he retook most of the territory that the Ayyubids had ceded to the Crusaders.¹⁵²

A decade later, the crusaders formed an alliance with the Mongols whose army was commanded primarily by Christians and included large numbers of Christians (particularly Armenians). They promised to wipe out Islam (the crusade-Mongol alliance can be further examined under the entry on Baghdad). Mongke, the Mongol general, promised the King of Armenia to conquer the Holy Land and give it straight back to the Christians.¹⁵³ The engagement taken by Hulagu to return the Holy City and the old Kingdom of Jerusalem to the Latin was, in fact, the basis for the accord.¹⁵⁴ Led by Hulagu, the Mongols were about to succeed in their enterprise, massacring nearly a million people in Baghdad and millions more elsewhere, especially in Syria. They were advancing on Egypt and from there Jerusalem. They were defeated by the Mamluks at Ain Jalut in September 1260 who consequently had saved Muslims from extinction (see entry on Cairo).

Jerusalem was saved and remained in Muslim hands until 1917 when new crusaders arrived. However the carnage perpetrated by the crusaders when they took the city - their destruction of schools, libraries and madrassas; the scattering of scholars; their occupation of the city for a century; two centuries of fierce warfare which took the lives of countless millions of Muslims and crusaders - had its enduring detrimental impact. Scholars who escaped to other parts were caught up with and massacred either by the crusaders or the Mongols or their allies. In the end, the scholars and scholarship that once thrived in the city before the crusades were gone for good. Jerusalem, just as the rest of the land of Islam, despite some recurrent

¹⁴⁶ Sibt al-Jawzi: *Al-muntazan* VIII/ 2; op cit; p. 653.

¹⁴⁷ G.W. Cox: *The Crusades*; op cit; p. 195.

¹⁴⁸ R. Finucane: *Soldiers of the Faith*; op cit. p.28.

¹⁴⁹ W. Durant: *The Age of faith*, op cit; p.607.

¹⁵⁰ C.R. Conder: *The Latin Kingdom*; op cit. p. 318.

¹⁵¹ R. Payne: *The Crusades*; op cit; p. 331.

¹⁵² A.S. Atiya: *Crusades*; op cit; p. 90.

¹⁵³ Hayton; in W. Heyd: *Histoire du Commerce du Levant au Moyen Age*; A.M.Hakkert Editor; Amsterdam; 1967. Vol II; op cit; p. 68.

¹⁵⁴ Jean Richard: *La Papauté et les Missions d'Orient au Moyen Age*; Ecole Francaise de Rome; Palais Farnese; 1977. p. 101.

appearance of some individuals here and there, would never recover the glory and power which preceded the combined crusade-Mongol onslaught. Only Cairo, which had been spared both would remain the beacon of Islamic civilisation for centuries after.

This is only the most minute illustration of what the land of Islam faced. Yet the eventual reality is staggering, as anyone reading through the history of Islam will know, the marvellous powers Muslims and their faith had in surviving the terrible onslaughts on them is astounding. Millions upon millions of enemies dedicated to wiping out Islam, descending upon the Holy land, and yet, after hundreds and thousands of fierce battles, despite betrayal, despite treachery, despite mass slaughter and all plots, the Muslims prevailed but at huge costs. The Muslims did lose their civilisation to the devastating blows of unforgiving enemies in wars that ran on and on but they survived. No other people suffered similar onslaught, an onslaught which the Muslims today in their shameful ignorance of history can never figure out, but an onslaught out of which emerged the greatest miracle of all: Muslim survival and Islam as strong as ever. And here is no better, and more fitting a conclusion than these words by the Italian historian, Gabrieli, who tells us,

'I am going to make a confession, a confession of somebody who had studied since his youth Muslim society, its faith and culture, without ever reaching any sympathy for it, sympathy which alone allows a good understanding of history. Well, this sympathy, I must say, I did feel, though, when listening to the voices of these Arabs, these Muslims, who, at a time of great peril during the crusades, still clung fiercely by their faith, their civilisation, and fought back, and died defending it, like this old sheikh from the Maghrib: Al-Findalawi, who, Ibn Al-Athir says, walked amongst the volunteers for the defence of Damascus (in 1148), and who was told to withdraw from the fight because of his old age, but who answered:

'I have given my life to God; He had accepted it; this engagement is still valid.' And, resolutely, and solemnly, he moved forwards towards death.¹⁵⁵

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¹⁵⁵ F. Gabrieli: Introduction aux historiens arabes des croisades; in *Cahiers de Civilisation Medievale*; vol 13; 1970; pp. 221-8; at p. 228.

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