

ASSIGNMENT TWO - Mortality and Violence

David Lewis - 1902832

Q. How important was the papacy in the development of the crusading movement? (Marker - HW)

It was Pope Urbans II speech at Clermont in 1095 which signalled the start of the first crusade and is generally seen as the originator of the crusading movement (Riley-Smith 1987 p.10). Following on from Urban's speech and the first crusade, successive Popes then authorised a series of crusades which were aimed at Muslims in the near East from the 11th century and against heretics from the 13th century which had a profound impact on Christians; "religiously, socially and politically" (Rist 2016). In this essay I will seek to examine how important was the role of the papacy in the development of the crusading movement by considering the crusading movement from Pope Urban II in 1095 to Pope Innocent III in 1216. I will look at examining religious belief and the authority and position of the papacy. I will then go on to consider differing views of what constitutes a crusade before showing the development of the crusading movement and the papacy from 1095 to 1215.

Christianity was the most universally accepted faith in Western Europe in the middle ages. Christian belief was central to all aspects of how people lived their lives across all classes of people (Lewis 2021 and Tyerman 2015 p.10). The workings of God could be seen all around in miraculous healings of pilgrims and heavenly portents. As Tyerman states "it was a society that understood the world to be God created and divinely ordered" (Tyerman 2015 p.10). The fear for your soul and the afterlife and role of the Church's teaching around sin and the concept of weighing of the souls were powerful influences (Lewis 2021, Ashbridge 2010). Medieval attitudes were shaped by concepts such as charity, obligation, love and tradition; but the most powerful conditioning influence was fear (Ashbridge 2010 p11). Fulk Nerra (987-1040) a warlord from the county of Anjou who had made three pilgrimages to Jerusalem stated in a letter that he had 'caused a great deal of bloodshed in various battles (and was) terrified by the fear of Hell'. (Ashbridge 2010 p.10).

Since the adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire under Constantine in AD 342 it was through the Christian Church that mediated people's understanding and demonstrated their Christian faith. The Church and activities of the Church were at the centre of life in medieval western europe. The Church had developed its own infrastructure, had its own courts and was involved in supporting the administration of

the individual states of Western Europe. It was through the Church that people were encouraged to confess their sins and offered a suitable penance which would cancel out the "taint of sin" (Ashbridge 2010) and saw pilgrimage becoming an extremely important part of Christian life (Lewis 2012).

In Roman Catholic Church doctrine the papacy claimed it had delegated authority from Jesus via the apostle St Peter whom Christ had chosen as head of the apostles (ccc.882). St Peter also known as Simon Peter in the bible was one of the leaders of the early church and tradition asserts that he was crucified after the Great Fire of Rome in AD 64 under the emperor Nero (Kinder 1974 p.109) The Popes claimed as the heirs of St Peter to be the vicar of Christ and have "supreme, and universal power over the whole Church". (ccc.882). The Pope therefore was seen to be Christ's chief representative on Earth and when the Pope preached the Crusades it had the authority of Christ and was regarded as being "positively holy" (Riley-Smith 1987 p. xxix)

Fulcher of Chartres in his retrospective account of Pope Urban's Clermont speech records Urban as saying: "if you truly wish to be friends of God then gladly do what you know is pleasing to him". "More over Christ commands it". "Let those who have long been robbers now be soldiers of Christ" (Fulcher of Chartes in Tyerman 2012 p.10).

In his speech at Clermont Pope Urban preached a holy war ,and justified an armed pilgrimage which transcended the limits of just war (Tyerman 2015 p. 35). It's call for war was unequivocal with an image of salvation, penance and the cross. He created a new ritual of taking the cross which meant that soldiers of Christ was more than a metaphor. It offered participants who took the cross and fought with devotion spiritual reward, the remission of all confessed sins and a range of temporal rewards and placed participants under the protection and jurisdiction of the Church (Tyerman 2015 p.30). This call was underpinned by his authority as Christ's representative and his speech sought to resonate with peoples Christian beliefs and fears. Urban's speech was also designed to resonate and exploit the culture, skills and resources of the knightly class concocted in terms of valour and martial reputation (Tyerman 2015 p. 40). Pope Urban was also able to exploit the universal reach and administration of the Church to spread his message from bishops to priests and to individual communities.

In preaching holy war, Urban was building on theological and church doctrine around war and faith which had been developed since St Augustine of Hippo's book City of God which laid the foundations for what could be regarded as a just war. Holy war was represented as a "religious duty rather than a legal category" which mitigated what was an essential sinful activity (Tyerman 2015 p. 35). So Urban's speech could be seen as a

rational extension and development rather than totally radical. In considering what exactly marks a crusade Erdmann argued that the Church had previously endorsed the use of war against heretics who were seen as an internal threat before it had accepted war against the external threat posed by Muslims in the East (Rist 2016 p. 313). For Erdmann a crusade was any holy war authorised by the papacy. However many recent historians have argued for the need for other criteria especially taking of a vow and grant of plenary indulgences. (Rist 2016 p.313).

The success of the first crusade acted as the template for future crusades. Successive Pope's in their encyclicals, bulls and letters calling future crusades consistently referenced their position as Christ's spokesperson on earth and the duty of Christians to follow God's teaching. In Pope Eugenius III summons for the second crusade he states: "we exhort therefore all of you in God". "Do grant and confirm by the authority conceded to us by God". "Those who war for the lord Undertake so holy a work So holy a journey" and ended his summons "By the authority of almighty God and by that of st. Peter the chief of the Apostles conceded to us by God". (Eugene 1154). Future calls for crusade similarly sought to resonate with the knightly class and peoples religious belief and fears.

However crusading only became a clearly defined institution gradually over time (Riley-Smith 1987 p. xxix). By the time of the third crusade it had institutionalized into the fabric of the church and Western society. Every king of France from 1137 to 1364, of England from 1154 to 1327, and of Germany from 1137 to 1250 took the Cross (Tyerman 2015 p. 142). Crusading became an established feature of the Knightly class in the habits and the institutions of chivalry which was an aristocratic code of conduct that provided the badge of identity for the ruling class in Western Europe and became part of a knightly career. (Tyerman 2015 p. 41). Examples included the future Conrad III in 1120's, Count Thierry of Flanders in 1137, 1147, 1157 and 1164 (Tyerman 2015 p. 41). Going on crusade would provide political benefits such as Conrad III of Germany who used the taking of the cross to impose a general peace and contain his political opponents. Alternatively Edward III (1327 - 77) of England felt nervous for not taking the cross as the first King of England for over two hundred years not to. (Tyerman 2015).

Riley- Smith states that before 1187 it is difficult to distinguish crusades from armed pilgrimages or expressions of holy violence in almost any theatre of war. (Riley- Smith 1987 p. 89). In 1106 Bruno of Segni who was a papal legate proclaimed a new crusade with the support of Pope Paschal. In 1114 a crusade was called against the Muslims in the Balaric Islands and in 1118 Pope Gelasius 11 proclaimed a crusade against Saragosa in Spain to be led by King Alfonso 1 of Aragon. Each of these were marked by

papal letters and privileges. 1120 to 1150 marked a period where the Papacy attempted to regain control of the crusading movement. (Riley-Smith 1987 p91). Pope Calixtus II in 1123 planned crusades to the East following a request from King Baldwin II and also decided to promote a crusade to Spain. These were evidenced by the issue of papal encyclicals and decree of a general council of the Church. This also marked a different approach in planning two campaigns at same time and the issue of general letters. (Riley-Smith 1987 p.91). In 1135 was the first proclamation of the first political crusade by Innocent II who issued a decree that those who fought for the Church against the enemies of the Pope would receive the same indulgences as granted by Pope Urban at Clermont. Around 1140 Gratian's *Decretum* was published which was a compilation of Church law. This laid out that war could be just, not necessarily sinful "and could be authorised by God and on God's behalf, by the Pope" (Riley-Smith 1987 p. 93). It also looked at suppression of heretics. *Decretum* would go on to have a powerful influence on preaching and propaganda of the crusading movement.

Following the fall of Edessa Pope Eugenius II issued a crusade encyclical in 1145 calling for a crusade to the East and reissued this in 1146 following a poor response and issued a further encyclical in 1147. This was to become known as the second crusade. St Bernard of Clairvaux who was known as the greatest preacher of his age was put in charge of preaching the crusade. In his first sermon he read out the encyclical to the crowd and ended "this is a plan not made by man, but coming from heaven and proceeding from the heart of divine love". (St Bernard of Clairvaux in Riley-Smith 1987 p.95). Following on from the failure of the second crusade successive Popes issued encyclicals calling for support for the East in 1157, 1165, 1166, 1169, possibly in 1173, 1181 and 1184 with little response (Riley-Smith 1987 p104).

The crusading movement reached its height between 1187 and 1229. Gregory VIII issued a letter to appeal for a new crusade following the fall of Jerusalem after the battle of Hattin which was to become the third crusade in 1197. His letter appealed to the transitory nature of this world and "accept with an act of thanksgiving the opportunity for repentance and doing good" (Riley-Smith 1987 p109). The third crusade had one of the largest responses and demonstrated that a real crisis in the East could generate a substantial response. It was only partially successful in that Jerusalem was not liberated but had managed to regain the whole of the Palestinian coast.

In 1198 Pope Innocent III took a much more active interest in the management of crusades rather than leave the planning and conduct to the laity. Riley-Smith states that he "positively set out to manage crusades himself" and contributed more to the crusading movement than anyone since Urban. (Riley-Smith 1987 p119). He

subordinated a fundamental canon law principle by decreeing that a man could take the cross without her consent. He also preached more crusades than any other Pope. He made the vow to go on crusade as a moral imperative (Riley- Smith 1987)

“To those men who refuse to take part, if indeed there be perchance any man so ungrateful to the Lord our God, we firmly state on behalf of the apostle Peter that they... will have to answer to us in this matter in the presence of the Dreadful Judge on the Last Day of severe judgement (Lateran Council IV in Alberigo 1962 in Riley-Smith 1987 p. 120). In 1198 he issued his first encyclical for what would become the fourth crusade which led to the fall and sacking of Constantinople. He issued letters in 1199 and 1204 against pagans in the Baltic which extended the crusading movement to fight against pagans. In 1199 he also preached a crusade against Markward in Anweiler in Italy. In 1208 letters were issued calling for a crusade in southern France known as the Albigensian Crusade. This further extended the crusading movement to heretics within Western Europe. In 1213 he proclaimed the fifth crusade and also extended privileges to those contributing but who did not go on crusade. Pope Innocent III died in 1216

In conclusion, Pope Urban speech at Clermont is seen by many historians as the starting point of the crusading movement. His speech tapped into the religious belief and insecurities of people of the time and especially aimed at involving the knightly class. . Although novel in some respects it could be considered as a rational extension to previous doctrines and policy. The first crusade acted as a template for future crusades. The role of indulgences played a key role in the crusading movement. Although the extent of the role of the papacy varied between different popes, the role of the papacy can be seen to be the central component to the development of the crusading movement and is seen in their encyclicals , bulls and letters.

Bibliography

Primary sources.

Aquinas,. *The Summa Theologica Part 11, Question 40*. The Latin Library. Available at www.thelatinlibrary.com. Accessed 15 February 2021

Secondary sources.

Ashbridge, T., 2010. *The crusades. The war for the Holy land*. Simon and Schuster. London.

Augustine, and Hitchcock, F. R. M. 1922. *St. Augustine's treatise on the City of God*. London, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Jones, D., 2017. “ *The Templers. The rise and fall of God's Holy warriors*”. Head of Zeus. London.

Kinder, H and Hilgemann, W,. 1974. *The Penguin atlas of world history. Volume one. From the beginning to the eve of the French revolution*. Penguin. Harmondsworth England.

Lewis, D,. 2021. *Assignment One. Mortality and Violence*. UWTSO. Lampeter

MacGregor, J. B. 2004. Negotiating Knightly Piety: The Cult of the Warrior-Saints in the West, ca. 1070–ca. 1200, *Church History*. Cambridge University Press, 73(2), pp. 317–345. doi: 10.1017/S0009640700109291.

Riley- Smith, J., 1980. Crusading as an Act of Love. *History*, vol. 65, no. 214, pp. 177–192. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24419031. Accessed 13 February 2021.

Riley-Smith,J,. 1987. *The crusades. A short history*. Yale University Press. New Haven and London.

Theron, J., & Oliver, E,. 2018. Changing perspectives on the Crusades. *HTS Theological Studies*, 74(1), 1-12. Available at:<https://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4691>. Accessed 20 February 2021.

Tyerman,C,J 2006. *Gods war. A new history of the crusades*. Penguin Books. London

Tyerman,C,J. 2015. *How to plan a crusade*. Penguin Random House. London

Tyerman, C,J. 2012. *Chronicles of the first crusade*. Penguin Books. London

Tyerman,C,J. 1995. Were There Any Crusades in the Twelfth Century? *The English Historical Review*, vol. 110, no. 437, 1995, pp. 553–577. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/578335. Accessed 11 Feb. 2021.