

A Reassessment of Some Medieval and Modern Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade

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Introduction

IN an article entitled "The Use by Muslim Historians of Non-Muslim Sources," Bernard Lewis remarked: "For two centuries the Muslims of the Middle East were in intimate if hostile contact with groups of the Franks established among them—yet, at no time do they seem to have developed the least interest in them."¹ In support of his remarks, Lewis referred to similar conclusions by Francesco Gabrieli about Muslims' understanding of the nature of the First Crusade in which he (Gabrieli) says: "Muslims never reached the point, one would say, of regarding the Christian attack in the West as anything fundamentally different from the other wars against the infidels, whether they were the Franks or Byzantines: in Syria itself in the course of the tenth century and before, in al-Andalus throughout the Spanish reconquista, and in Sicily against the Normans. Even the well written passage of the Ibn al-Athīr, where he compares the First Crusade with the Christian offensives in Spain and Sicily, although it shows the breadth of the Mesopotamian historian's vision, proves to us that he did not perceive what distinguished the Crusades from the other wars between Christians and Islam in the Middle Ages, nor realize the special characteristics of the Latin settlement in the Levant."² Following the example of both Lewis and Gabrieli, J. J. Saunders elaborated further on the Muslims' ignorance of their neighbors (the Franks in the East), pointing out that "the Crusaders were, however, a nuisance rather than a serious menace to the Islamic World, and the Muslim chroniclers devote much less attention to them than might be expected. The Frankish states were strung out in a thin line along the Syrian coast, and never included any of the great Muslim cities, not even Damascus. . . . The task of driving

out the Western intruders would have to be undertaken, not from divided Syria or decadent Egypt, but from northern Iraq, where there were ample reserves of man power."³

Such generalizations by outstanding historians, which tend to undermine the degree of Muslim awareness of the nature of the Crusades and Counter-Crusade, have, unfortunately, been echoed by others.⁴ One may only ask, if Muslim awareness of the Crusades, and the Crusaders, was so minimal how could they have developed an ideological campaign—the Counter-Crusade—unprecedented in Islamic history, which reinforced the military activity that persisted for almost two centuries, and ultimately resulted in the final uprooting of Crusaders' settlements in Muslim lands.

Contrary to Saunders' allegations, some Muslim chroniclers gave a very prominent place to the Muslim-Latin Christian confrontation in their chronicles, while others, as 'Imād al-Dīn al-İşfāhānī did in *al-Barq al-Shāmī* and *al-Faṭḥ al-Qussī*, dedicated their chronicles almost exclusively to the conflict. Ibn Shaddād gave us a detailed first hand account of the Third Crusade in his biography of Saladin entitled *al-Nawādir al-Sultāniyya wa-l-Mahāsīn al-Yūsufiyya*; while al-Maqrīzī, in his *Itti'āz al-Ḥunafā' bi-Akhibār al-'Immah al-Faṭimiyyīn al-Khulafā'*, provides us with insight into the role of Egypt in the Counter-Crusade, which was as vital as the role of Northern Iraq to the success of the Counter-Crusade, especially in the second half of the twelfth century and throughout the thirteenth century.

In addition the chronicles, biographies, and dynastic, regional and city histories, which focussed on the Counter-Crusade, other sources, such as religious literature, sermons, personal and official correspondence and poetry, which have been often overlooked by contemporary historians of the Crusades, provide us with a clear picture of the Islamic interpretation and response to the Crusades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

In this paper we will attempt to redefine the Muslim perception of the Crusades and their ideological response to them between 493/1099 and 588/1192, focussing on three phases:

1. Early Muslim perceptions of and intellectual response to the First Crusade. (*Jihād* is defined as a purely defensive war within the boundaries of the Muslim state.)
2. The ideological response between 539/1144 and 583/1187 A. D. This is the period of Muslim military success against the Crusaders. (*Jihād* is defined as defensive, though offensive and religious in nature.)

3. The Islamic response to the Third Crusade: 585–588/1189–1192 A. D. (*Jihād* is defined as defensive, yet confined to Muslim recovered land. These years were characterized by diplomacy and peace negotiations.)

We will investigate the views of some early twelfth-century jurists, as well as those of the leaders of the *jihād*, especially Nūr al-Dīn Mahmud Zangī (d. 570/1174) and Saladin (d. 591/1193). Both grew up in the ideological milieu of Damascus, and were the recipients of several works on the *jihād* written by jurists of their time. We will also examine the views of three scholars who were associated especially with Saladin and contributed ideologically to the *jihād*, namely, al-Qādi al-Fāḍil, ‘Imād al-Dīn al-İṣfahānī and Bahā’ al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād. We will refer to the views of others wherever possible.

Early Muslim Perceptions of and Intellectual Response to the First Crusade

After concluding the treaty that marked the end of the Third Crusade on 22nd Sha‘ban, 588/September 2, 1192, Saladin, according to Ibn Shaddād, “ordered a Proclamation to be announced in all military camps as well as in the markets stating that unrestricted movement was permitted between their territory (the Latin held territory) and ours (Muslim held territory). . . . It was a memorable day, one on which the two sides expressed unimaginable joy and happiness.” Saladin, who was rather apprehensive about concluding the treaty, told Ibn Shaddād: “I am afraid of making peace, because I do not know what might happen to me (in the near future). The enemy, who still holds some Muslim territory, might gain strength from my death, try to attack the Muslim forces and recapture some of the liberated territories.”⁵ However, despite his fears, Saladin felt that the concluding of a peace treaty was imperative because his forces, some of which had been in the battlefield for almost two years, were exhausted, while others were hostile to the continuation of military activity. With the peace treaty, the first ninety-four years of confrontation between Muslim and Latin Christian forces in the East came to an end.

The conclusion of the Third Crusade with a lengthy treaty, characterized by negotiations and concessions on the part of both the Latins and the Muslims, was a great departure from the First Crusade, which was characterized by bloodshed and expansion on the part of the invaders, and indifference on the part of the Muslim rulers. It also reflected the Islamic

interpretation of war and peace in the twelfth century. War is referred to in Arabic as *jihād*, *Qitāl*, *Ḥarb*, and in a more limited sense, as *Ghazāt*, or *Ghazū* (incursions). Peace is generally known as *Ṣulḥ*, and in a more comprehensive sense as *Salām*. The roots of legislation regarding war and peace in Islam are in the Qurʾān, which, although it envisaged peace as the ultimate objective of Islam, did not deny the need for war under certain circumstances, provided that it was terminated with a peace agreement, and was carried out in accordance with Islamic law. Other sources, such as the Prophet's (Muḥammad) tradition (*Sunnah*), and the consensus of the Prophet's companions on new legislation, as well as the legal opinion of the classical jurists, formed the core of the Islamic theory of war.

Since the doctrine of *jihād* was formalized during a period of strength for the Muslim Caliphate, the jurists who formulated it prescribed an aggressive *jihād*, one which advocated constant fighting against polytheists until they embraced Islam. Accordingly, some of these jurists divided the world, although artificially, into two zones: *Dār al-Islam* (the Abode of Islam) and *Dār al-Ḥarb* (the Abode of War). They defined the former as any territory whose inhabitants observed Islamic law and where Muslim authority prevailed, and the latter as any territory outside Islamic jurisdiction where non-Islamic law was applied and also as any land hostile to Islam.⁶ Other jurists rejected this rigid division on the basis that the Qurʾān states: "There is no compulsion in religion," as well as because of the impracticality of conversion, especially after the Islamic state had reached the limits of its expansion.⁷ A contemporary scholar, al-Ghunaimī, describes this division, under the Abbasids, as corresponding to "the factual relations between the Islamic and non-Muslim states." "Classical writers," he says, "only intended to give a legal justification to that situation."⁸

The notions *Dār al-Islam* and *Dār al-Ḥarb* have led to some misunderstanding of the doctrine of *jihād*, which has been often defined as Islam's instrument to transform the *Dār al-Ḥarb* into *Dār al-Islam*.⁹ Opponents of this perception of the *jihād* argue that the two terms (*Dār al-Islam* and *Dār al-Ḥarb*) are not mentioned in the Qurʾān or the Tradition, that they are an innovation of the Abbasid legists. "As their idea on the division of the world is dependant on the notion of constant or aggressive *jihād*, and since this notion is not warranted, inevitably the alleged division should collapse too," says al-Ghunaimī.¹⁰

Some legists, like al-Shafīʿī (d. 205/820), introduced a third division, namely, *Dār al-Ṣulḥ* or *Dār al-ʿAhd*, the Abode of Covenant or Covenanted Communities. This additional division, according to al-Ghunaimī, did not

bridge the gap, "because it does not cover all the non-Muslim states which are not in actual war with the Islamic state."¹¹

The Abbasid legists may not have envisioned a situation in the Muslim East like that which resulted from the Crusades or the Mongol invasion; hence, they did not provide enough instructions for a defensive war. This was left to the jurists and scholars in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who interpreted the doctrine of *jihād* within the framework of their own political and military circumstances. Thus, their interpretation of the *jihād* departed to some extent from the classical doctrine, which was adapted to the nature of their adversaries as well as the type of war they were fighting.

Contrary to some contemporary misconceptions regarding the Muslims' ignorance of the true identity or background of their enemies, one finds in the earliest available treatise on the *jihād*, preached and dictated by the Damascene jurist and linguist, 'Alī Ibn Ṭāhir al-Sulamī (d. 501/1106), at a time when the early Crusaders were advancing into Syria, information indicating that the Muslim intellectuals, at least, were aware of the nature and motives of their enemies. Al-Sulamī defined them as religious [Christian] groups, "who wanted to quench their thirst for revenge from the Muslims. Hence, a certain group of them invaded Sicily, at a time when disunity and internal conflicts prevailed; likewise, they usurped different areas from al-Andalus."¹² Soon after, al-Sulamī continues, obtaining information about disunity among the Muslims in the East, they marched against them, hoping, among other things, to conquer Jerusalem, "the ultimate of their desires."¹³

Al-Sulamī, who expressed his views while the Norman forces, led by Bohemond, were besieging Antioch, seems to have known that the Normans and the Franks, who were involved in the Crusades against al-Andalus and Sicily, were also involved in the Crusade against the Muslim East, although he does not specifically refer to the two groups. The knowledge of al-Sulamī and his contemporaries about the nature of the enemies is not surprising, for, according to al-'Azīmī (d. 557/1160), the Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus, had informed the Muslim rulers about the approaching invasion in 589/1095. However, according to al-'Azīmī, the Muslim rulers failed to take any precautionary measures.¹⁴ Furthermore, the Muslims in the East were not unaware of what was happening to the Muslims in the West, for, besides the information reaching the ministries of correspondence and intelligence (Dīwānal-Inshā') in Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo from those areas, there was a continuous flow of scholars from al-Andalus and Sicily to the East. Some of these scholars, who often sojourned in Eastern Muslim

capitals on their way to or from performing the pilgrimage at Mecca, used to stop at Jerusalem, to complete their pilgrimage and teach in its mosque, al-Aqsa.¹⁵ When the Crusaders attacked Jerusalem in August 489/1096, some of these scholars may have been killed defending it. Western Muslim scholars, and refugees to the East, would have certainly had some knowledge about an enemy, against whom they had fought in their own lands, and would have informed their brethren in the East about that enemy.

While al-Sulamī alluded to the Franks and Normans as the culprits in the First Crusade, the chronicler Ibn al-Athīr (d. 631/1233) implicated both groups explicitly. Thus, while discussing the seizure of Antioch by the Crusaders, Ibn al-Athīr portrays the Crusade as a systematic Latin-Christian invasion of Muslim lands, which started in al-Andalus, Sicily, and North Africa and then moved to the East. He says:

The power of the Franks first became apparent when in the year 478/1085–86 they invaded the territories of Islām and took Toledo and parts of Andalusia, as was mentioned earlier. Then in 484/1091 they attacked and conquered the island of Sicily and turned their attention to the African coast. Certain of their conquests there were won back again but they had other successes, as you will see.

In 490/1097 the Franks attacked Syria. This is how it all began: Baldwin, their King, a kinsman of Roger the Frank who had conquered Sicily, assembled a great army and sent word to Roger saying: 'I have assembled a great army and now I am on my way to you, to use your bases for my conquest of the African coast. Thus you and I shall become neighbors.'

Roger called together his companions and consulted them about these proposals. 'This will be a fine thing both for them and for us!' they declared, 'for by this means these lands will be converted to the Faith!' At this Roger raised one leg and farted loudly, and swore that it was of more use than their advice. 'Why?' 'Because if this army comes here it will need quantities of provisions and fleets of ships to transport it to Africa, as well as reinforcements from my own troops. Then, if the Franks succeed in conquering this territory they will take it over and will need provisioning from Sicily. This will cost me my annual profit from the harvest. If they fail they will return here and be an embarrassment to me here in my own domain. As well as this Tamīm will say that I have broken faith with him and

violated our treaty, and friendly relations and communications between us will be disrupted. As far as we are concerned, Africa is always there. When we are strong enough we will take it.'

He summoned Baldwin's messenger and said to him: 'If you have decided to make war on the Muslims your best course will be to free Jerusalem from their rule and thereby win great honour. I am bound by certain promises and treaties of allegiance with the rulers of Africa.' So the Franks made ready and set out to attack Syria.¹⁶

Such remarks by Ibn al-Athīr reveal more knowledge and insight than Gabrieli has hinted at. The chronicler may have missed the role of the papacy in the First Crusade, even though the relationship between the papacy and some of the later Crusades was known to the Muslims of his time, but he was certainly not unaware of the nature of the enemies and their settlements, for he grew up in the *jihād* milieu which focussed specifically on uprooting those settlements and succeeded in doing so during Ibn al-Athīr's lifetime.

Although Ibn al-Athīr caricatures Roger of Sicily, he portrays him as a shrewd and diplomatic ruler who did covet Muslim land. Such an image of the Norman rulers of Sicily seems to have been perpetuated throughout the twelfth century among the Muslims of the East, who considered them among their most dangerous enemies. This is perhaps best exemplified in a popular story, which circulated in Syria, following the fall of Edessa, Jumādā II, 539/Dec. 23, 1144, to 'Imād al-Dīn Zangī. According to the story, the ruler of Sicily (Roger II, d. 1154) had sent a naval expedition (around the time of the capture of Edessa) against the North African coast, which carried successful incursions into the coastal territories, looting and capturing a large number of civilians and military personnel. When the news of the success of the raid reached this ruler, he was elated as he announced it in a meeting which included a Muslim advisor of his. The Muslim advisor, according to the story, was in a trance-like state when the ruler made the announcement. So, the ruler called him saying: O Jurist! Our forces have defeated the Muslim forces! Where was Muḥammad (reference to the Prophet Muḥammad) at the time of the Muslims' defeat? Why could not he support them! (the Muslims). The jurist looked at the ruler saying: At that particular time, Muḥammad was supervising the recovery of Edessa! The audience laughed, but the ruler warned them that this jurist could not be joking. It was soon after that that the jurist's prophecy was proven true, and the news about the Muslims' recovery of

Edessa reached the Norman court in Sicily.¹⁷ Thus, according to Muslim chroniclers, the grief over the loss of Edessa surpassed the euphoria over the victories in North Africa.

The Muslims' knowledge of the Normans of Sicily, as well as of their military activities in North Africa, and their increasing intervention in Muslim affairs during the first half of the twelfth century, is clearly expressed in some correspondence between the Fatimid Caliph al-Hāfiẓ (d. 544/1149), and Roger II of Sicily. In a letter revealing Fatimid policy towards the Normans addressed to Roger of Sicily in 537/1142, the Caliph congratulates him, though with some reservations, about his (Roger's) conquest of Jerba Island, referring to the defeat of the Muslim authorities there as God's punishment for their deviance from the right path. The Caliph also refers to the releasing of some Sicilian captives, in accordance with a request from Roger II, and alludes, rather vaguely, to an attempt by Roger II to intervene in an Egyptian internal political crisis, involving the Armenian Christian wazir Bahrām. Bahrām, according to the letter, had strengthened his political base by importing large numbers of Armenians and enrolling them in the army, at the expense of other Muslim Egyptian forces. Such a situation caused turmoil in Egypt, resulting in the overthrow of the wazir from his powerful position. However, in a gesture of good will towards Roger, al-Hafiz points out that Bahrām was given safe conduct to live in Egypt, and hence was honored by the authorities there.¹⁸

While al-Sulamī and Ibn al-Athīr linked the invasion of the Muslim East with that of the Muslim West, the chronicler al-'Azīmī added another dimension to the Muslims' interpretation of the First Crusade, by linking it to the pilgrimage. He stated that, in the year 486/1093 "the authorities in the coastal cities (of Palestine) prevented some Frankish (Ifranj) and Byzantine (*Rūm*) pilgrims from passing through their territories on their way to Jerusalem. Accordingly, pilgrims who returned safely to their countries spread the news about the obstruction of their pilgrimage. This led the Franks and the Byzantines to prepare for the invasion [of Muslim land]. News of their preparation reached the coasts as well as all the Muslim countries."¹⁹

Al-'Azīmī implicated the Byzantines as partners of the Franks in the First Crusade. His remarks further dispel some contemporary notions that the Muslims identified the Crusaders only as Byzantines. He added further, in his narration of the events of 490/1096 that the fleets of the Franks appeared in the port of Constantinople with 300,000 men. Their leaders were six, and they had agreed with the emperor of Byzantium to surrender

to him the first stronghold that they would conquer, but they breached the agreement.²⁰ Al-‘Azīmī’s information about the role of Byzantium is elaborated by another contemporary of his, the chronicler and administrator, Ibn al-Qalānīsī (d. 555/1160), who indicates that news about the appearance of the forces of the Franks via the route of the Sea of Constantinople (*Baḥr al-Qusṭantīniyya*) in innumerable numbers, started to reach Muslim territories. “When this news continued to arrive, people were worried and disturbed especially when it was confirmed.”²¹ He also reports about an agreement between the Byzantines and the Franks, stating that the Franks would surrender the first stronghold they would conquer to the Byzantines and adding that, when the Franks conquered Nicaea, they refused to surrender it to the Byzantines in accordance with a previous agreement.²²

A later chronicler, Ibn al-‘Adīm, referred to the First Crusade in more specific terms, pointing out that the Franks were led by nine leading counts (*Qawāmiṣ*): Kundfūrī (Godfrey) and his brother the Count (referring to Count Baldwin), Bemund (Bohemond), and his nephew Ṭancrīd (Tancred), Ṣanjīl (St. Gilles, Raymond) and others.²³ These were the foremost leaders of the First Crusade.

Although Muslim chroniclers used the generic term *Ifranĵ* when identifying the early Crusaders, later on, in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they began identifying them by their ethnic backgrounds. Thus, they reported about the Germans (*Almān*) of the Second Crusade, the English (*Inkitār*) of the Third Crusade, and the French (*Faransīs*) in the later Crusades, as well as about the Pisans (*Bayāshina*), Venetians (*Banādīqa*) and Genoese (*Genawīyyīn*). The term *Rūm* which is often applied in Muslim chronicles to the Byzantines, is sometimes used to identify the Latins of Rome, which is referred to as greater *Rūmiyā* (Rome) (*Rūmiyā al-Kubrā*), in contrast to Byzantium. The use of the term *Rūm* by some Muslim chroniclers may have led some contemporary historians to believe that these chroniclers mistook the Crusaders for Byzantines.

So far, we have mentioned that Medieval Muslims were aware of the alliance between the Normans, Franks and Byzantines in the First Crusade. However, this awareness was not confined to these groups alone. Some intellectuals envisioned the Crusade as an all-Christian war against Islam, one which included, in addition to the above-mentioned groups, certain native Christian groups, among them the Armenians played the most prominent role. Ibn al-‘Adīm writes in 491/1097 that the Armenians, encouraged by the success of the Franks, arrived in large numbers in Tal Qabbāsīn (in the vicinity of Aleppo), and began massacring the Muslim

natives. As a result, the Muslims and some Turks pursued them and killed many of them.²⁴ He also refers to the role of the Armenians in the fall of Antioch to the forces of Bohemond in 492/1098. This role, which is also reported by Ibn al-Qalānīsī, is confirmed by William of Tyre who stated that: "The Syrians (Native Christians), Armenians and the true believers of other nations rejoiced exceedingly over what had happened (the conquest of Antioch). . . they joined forces with the army. Being acquainted with the city, they were able to act as guides for the others through the intricate ways of the city."²⁵ Ibn al-ʿAdīm further implicates the Armenians and Native Christian villagers in the conquest of al-Maʿarra in Syria (492/1098), which resulted in the massacre of the Muslim population.²⁶

In addition to references by Muslim chroniclers to the involvement of the Armenians and some Native Christians in the First Crusade, William of Tyre refers to a specific group of Syrian Christians, identified in the thirteenth century by Jacques De Vitry as the Maronites, who supported the early Crusaders, paying them tribute and supplying them with guides on their way to Jerusalem.²⁷

Although some of the Native Christian groups were seen by Muslim chroniclers as collaborators, they were not viewed with the same hostility as the Franks, or the Armenians, who were singled out as the most dangerous of them. In fact, some chroniclers did refer to their grievances under some local rulers, especially Yaghi-Siyān of Antioch, which may have pushed some of them to side with the Franks.²⁸ Some Native Christians, like Byzantium, their protector, shifted alliances during the course of the twelfth century.

In addition to the Christian groups involved in the First Crusade, Ibn al-Athīr attributes a role, in the initiation of the First Crusade, to the chief administrator of the Fatimid State, the wazir, al-Malik al-Afdal (d. 515/1121), who happened to be an Armenian convert to Islam. Ibn al-Athīr explains the Franco-Egyptian rapprochement on the basis that: "the Fatimids of Egypt were afraid of the Saljuk expansion into Syria and Palestine. They therefore sent to invite the Franks to invade Syria and so protect Egypt from the Muslim (Sunnis). But God knows best!"²⁹

Although Ibn al-Athīr expressed some reservations about the collaboration between the Fatimid authorities and the Crusaders, William of Tyre confirmed it. He states that the Caliph of Egypt, al-Mustaʿlī (d. 495/1101), sent envoys to the leaders of the Franks, who were besieging Antioch, offering to provide them with military support and resources, and expressing an interest in concluding a treaty of friendship with the Franks. These

envoys "were received with fitting hospitality and honor by the chiefs of our army and were admitted to frequent conferences with them, that they might have opportunity to deliver their message."³⁰

It also seems that the Franks had sent envoys to Egypt, at the request of the Egyptian delegates who met the early Crusaders during the siege of Antioch, but the Frankish delegation was detained for almost a year there, before they were released and escorted to Antioch by the Egyptian authorities with some messages for the leaders of the First Crusade, which expressed a different attitude than that shown during the siege of Antioch. "At this time (during the siege of Antioch)," says William of Tyre, "they had tried most earnestly to gain the good will and assistance of our leaders against the overwhelming arrogance of the Turks and Persians. Now, however, their attitude was entirely changed. They seemed to imply that they were conferring a great favor on the Christians by allowing unarmed pilgrims to go to Jerusalem in groups of two or three and return in safety after completing their prayers."³¹ Apparently, the Frankish leaders rejected the message, regarding it as an insult. Instead, they answered saying that "the army would not consent to go thither in small detachments, according to the conditions proposed. On the contrary, it would march on Jerusalem as one united host and threaten the kingdom of their [the envoys'] master (al-Afdal)."³² The Latin chronicler attributes the change in the attitude of the Egyptians to the fact that, since the Saljuk Turks in Syria had been weakened by the Franks, the Egyptians felt that they were more secure.³³

William of Tyre also reports that, when the Crusaders reached Tripoli and set up camp before it, its governor, Ibn 'Ammār, who was subject to Fatimid authority, sent a delegation for peace negotiations." He offered 15,000 pieces of gold beside gifts of horses and mules, silks and precious vases, and also promised to restore all Christian captives whom he was holding in his power."³⁴ Furthermore, William of Tyre adds, the governor of Tripoli sent persons from his household along with the Crusaders, as guides on their way to Jerusalem.³⁵

Ibn Taghribardī (d. 874/1469) only refers to the fact that Ibn 'Ammār sought peace with the early Crusaders; however, he blames the Egyptian authorities for failing to defend Tripoli in 493/1109, and accuses the Egyptian authorities of delaying the dispatching of their forces and fleet to defend Tripoli. Thus, their arrival after the fall of the town was ineffective. He further accuses the authorities of sending untrained military personnel with the Egyptian fleet, and asks: "Why did not the wazir of Egypt al-Afdal lead the Egyptian forces? For after all, they (the Egyptians) had

enough forces, resources and military equipment.”³⁶

We mentioned earlier that the twelfth-century interpretation of the doctrine of *jihād* departed, to some extent, from the classical interpretation of the doctrine, due to circumstantial differences as well as to the nature of the enemy. This is best exemplified in the treatise of al-Sulamī, which, as we indicated earlier, was preached during a period of extreme urgency (crisis), as well as in other writings and sayings of some of the jurists.

In his treatise on the *jihād*, al-Sulamī perceived the First Crusade within a providential framework, defining it as one of the greatest disasters that had befallen Islam, and as a warning from God to the Muslims, to test their dedication to Him, and their willingness to refrain from their disobedience by following the original teachings of Islam which included the *jihād*. Once the Muslims were ready to abide by God’s commands, according to al-Sulamī, God would aid them against their enemy. Addressing his contemporaries, he notes that: “In the past, god punished their ancestors (mankind) through different signs (i.e. natural disasters and invasions), however, no matter how severe these early punishments were, they could hardly be compared in severity to the present one (the First Crusade). Thus, if they wanted to persist in their disobedience, then God would relinquish them to an enemy (the Crusaders), keen on severe revenge, and ready to exterminate them.”³⁷

On the human level, al-Sulamī attributed the successes of the early Crusaders to disunity among the Muslims, saying: “When they (the Crusaders) entered *al-Shām* (modern Syria, Palestine, Lebanon), they realized that they were in territories that were disunited; among rulers, in disagreement, with hearts filled with hatred. Such observations encouraged them to expand their conquest, beyond their original plans, attacking the Muslims incessantly while they (the Muslims) were disinclined to resist them. They conquered more land than they had dreamt of and committed more crimes against the population than they had initially planned.”³⁸ “Until now (the time of preaching the treatise),” al-Sulamī says, “they are pursuing their goals, encouraged by the restraint of the Muslim authorities. . . . As a result, they have become convinced that all the Muslim countries will succumb to them and all their inhabitants will be their captives.”³⁹ How were they to confront this ruthless enemy? Al-Sulamī notes that, according to the legist al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 206/820), the Imām (leader of the Muslim community, or the Caliph) was responsible for undertaking an incursion into enemy territory, at least once a year, to be led either by him personally or carried out through his raiding detachments. In so doing, he will be

complying with the doctrine of *jihād*, which demands such an undertaking (the aim of such annual incursions is to defend Muslim territory and gather intelligence information about military movements of the enemy).⁴⁰ Al-Sulamī also quotes some of the views of the prominent theologian al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) on the *jihād*. Al-Ghazzālī's teachings contributed to the Sunni Renaissance, which was a force in the Counter-Crusade. Al-Ghazzālī defended *jihād* in general as a duty, incumbent upon every free, able Muslim, the aim of which was to make the word of God triumphant and uproot the polytheists and hence achieve the reward which God and His messenger promised those who fight in His path (martyrdom).⁴¹ In the case of the Muslim response to the First Crusade, however, he defined it as defensive, saying: "If a Muslim community bordering on or facing the enemy is strong enough to repel the enemy, then *jihād* is a collective obligation incumbent upon all members of that community (with the exceptions stated in legal texts). However, if that particular community is too weak to repel the evil of the enemy, then it is incumbent upon the neighboring Muslim communities to help the beleaguered one."⁴² Taking as an example *al-Shām*, he says: "If the enemy attacks a Muslim city, whose garrison is incapable of repelling the aggression, then it is incumbent upon men from the neighboring territories, affiliated with it to support it. However, if this kind of help is still insufficient, then, it is the duty of all the territories close to *al-Shām* to take part in the *jihād*, until there are enough fighters to face the enemy. If an enemy surrounds a city, the the *jihād* is mandatory upon all its inhabitants, irrespective of whether they are citizens or transients."⁴³

Al-Ghazzālī, who happened to be in Jerusalem and Damascus, when the Crusaders were on the march, did not refer explicitly to the obligation of the Caliph and all Muslim states in the *jihād*, or, if he did, his instructions have yet to reach us. The notion of a defensive war involving all Muslims became clearer in the second half of the twelfth century. As we shall see later, it became the most prominent aspect of Saladin's policy.

Al-Sulamī, distressed by the advance of the early Crusaders into Syria, was more emotional than al-Ghazzālī in defining the *jihād*, because he was trying to arouse enthusiasm and feelings of patriotism in the Damascenes, whom he was addressing and whose city was in danger of falling to the enemy, and move them to action. Thus, he pointed out that the (early) jurists' instructions on the *jihād*, as well as on its rules and regulations aimed at "carrying it (*jihād*) into enemy territory, whether it be near or far. However, if the enemy enters Muslim lands and attacks, like these (the Crusaders), then marching against them in those territories that they had

usurped from the Muslims, is a war of resistance, aimed only at defending lives, children, and property, and at safeguarding lands that are still under Muslim control.”⁴⁴ In a clear departure from the classical theory of *jihād*, al-Sulamī adds: “Had it not been for the purpose of uprooting them (the Crusaders), and recovering the territories, then, marching against them, in such a situation, could neither be labelled as *jihād* nor as *Ghazū* (incursion).”⁴⁵ Accordingly, he calls upon every able-bodied Muslim, who is not hampered by blindness, chronic disease, or old age, to participate in the *jihād*. He also calls upon the rulers of the Muslims (the Caliph and the Sultan in Baghdad) to act immediately “for the defense of the faith (Islam); for the guidance of the Muslims, and for defending themselves and their forces.” He added: “If the Muslim authorities do not heed such a duty, then they should remember the Prophet’s (Muḥammad) saying: ‘He who is in charge of a community, but fails to guard it through good advice (*Naṣīḥa*), will be denied Paradise (by God).’” Explaining the term advice (*Naṣīḥa*), he says that it implies “the safeguarding of the community, and defending it against any aggression.”⁴⁶

Al-Sulamī warns his contemporaries that, if they act quickly, they can defeat the enemy, “for the enemy was still smaller in number (than all the Muslim forces combined), their horses and military equipment were limited; while their bases of supply were remote.”⁴⁷ Had this early jurist mistaken the new enemy for the Byzantines, and knowing that the Byzantines were close at hand, he would not have referred to the remoteness of their bases.

As a prerequisite to the *jihād*, which is a religious duty, al-Sulamī points out that Muslims should resist the evils of the soul and follow the moral code of Islam. This is the spiritual *jihād*, considered by some Muslims as the real *jihād*. He calls for unity among Muslim groups, irrespective of their ideological differences. Thus, according to him, the Caliph or the Sultan (the real power), should put aside all his differences with other Muslim rulers, in *al-Shām*, al-Jazīrah and Egypt (even though Fatimid Egypt was an enemy of the Abbasids). For, as al-Sulamī points out, it was a precedent among the early Arab antagonists to unite in times of crisis. However, once the crisis ended, they used to either split again or remain as allies. In a critical situation like this (the Crusades), says al-Sulamī, the Muslims should follow the example of their predecessors and remain in good relations with each other.⁴⁸

He calls upon all Muslims—soldiers, citizens (urban dwellers) and peasants—to contribute as much as they could financially to the defense of their territory and to “fight more than their ancestors did in the Muslim

West while waging raids against their territories (Frankish territories in Europe), or against Byzantine territory.”⁴⁹ This reference indicates clearly al-Sulamī’s knowledge of the enemy as he differentiates between them and the Byzantines, hinting that Frankish-held territory is like *Dār al-Ḥarb*.

When al-Sulamī preached on the *jihād*, there was a leadership vacuum in the Muslim world, or, rather, there were leaders who lacked both the moral qualities and the will to fight against the invaders. This vacuum was filled later by three leaders of the *jihād*: ‘Imād al-Dīn Zangī (d. 541/1146), his son Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd (d. 570/1174) and Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, d. 589/1193). They each completed the task begun by his predecessor, until the major part of the Muslim territories was liberated.

The Ideological Response Between 1144 and 1187 A. D.

Commenting on the Condition of the Muslims in Syria before ‘Imād al-Dīn Zangī came to power (521–541/1146), the medieval chronicler Ibn al-Athīr stated the following:

When the lord, the martyr (‘Imād al-Dīn) assumed power (in Mosil and Northern Syria), the lands of the Franks had become widely extended, their forces had multiplied and their power was on the increase. . . while the Muslims were incapable of stopping their aggressions. The raids of the Franks had become incessant, their evil was spreading all over the area. . . Their banners were hoisted throughout the lands of Islam, and their victories over the faithful (*Ahl-al-īmān*) only followed other victories.

The Kingdom of the Franks extended from the environs of Mardīn in Syria to the ‘Arīsh in Egypt, with only a few intervening Muslim cities like Aleppo, Ḥoms, Ḥamāh and Damascus. Their raiding parties operated freely reaching from Diyār Bakr to Āmid, sparing neither believer nor non-believer, confiscating land and property. . . Those Muslims living under Frankish rule often wished that they were from among the dwellers of the graves. . . Frankish threat had become so great, that they imposed land taxes and customs on neighboring Muslim communities. They even sent emissaries to Damascus to review all the slaves that had been taken from the lands of Christianity, and gave them the choice of staying with their owners or returning to their homeland.

What an affront to Islam and what a shame to the Muslims!⁵⁰

But, according to Ibn al-Athīr, it was in this state of extreme humiliation of Islam that God willed to support the Muslims in their struggle, so he selected 'Imād al-Dīn Zangī as their leader. The organized Islamic military response to the Crusades, started under 'Imād al-Dīn with the fall of the principality of Edessa in 1144, continued under both Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin, resulting in the downfall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. "The Counter-Crusade," says Aziz Atiya, "is revealed as a perfect counter-foil and an equal peer to the Crusade, with only one major difference—that the latter left its permanent impression on the course of history, whereas the former culminated in irrevocable bankruptcy."⁵¹

The Islamic military response to the Crusades may not have been successful without the well organized ideological campaign carried out by the jurists in Damascus, which had become the capital of *jihād* under Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin in the second half of the twelfth century, as well as in Alexandria, the center of Sunni revival under the Fatimid, and in Cairo, the main supplier of Saladin's forces between 568-589/1172-1192. Muslim jurists and scholars flocked to these centers of the *jihād* from different parts of the Muslim world, including al-Andalus, to teach and preach in their numerous educational and religious institutions. These scholars shaped the course of the *jihād* throughout the century. As Sunni Muslims, in their writings they emphasized the unity of Islam, and the reaffirmation of the authority of the Abbasid Caliph as the sole representative of the Muslims. Though this was symbolic, it was essential for the *jihād*. Several works on the *jihād* were written and used for teaching in this period, some in response to requests by the leaders of the *jihād*, Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin, who, according to their biographers, memorized much of the content of these works.⁵²

Several works were also written about the virtues of Muslim cities, some of which were, like Jerusalem, occupied by the Crusaders, while others, like Damascus, Cairo and Alexandria, were threatened with occupation. The aim of writings on the virtues of these cities, and the merits of defending or recovering them, was not only to create an awareness of the place of these cities in Islamic piety, but also to instruct the citizens, as well as the military forces, especially the new settlers.

The first major result of the ideological campaign was the fall of Edessa (539/1144). After this the jurists started emphasizing the need for the recovery of Jerusalem and the Syro-Palestinian coast. In Egypt, one of

the wazirs, Ibn Ruzzik (d. 556/1160), approached Nūr al-Dīn, who had become the undisputed leader of the *jihād* in Damascus, offering to coordinate with him attacks against the Latin Kingdom from both Egypt and Syria. Ibn Ruzzik's dedication to the *jihād* and to the recovery of Jerusalem was demonstrated by the fact that he sent several military expeditions into Palestine in 552-553/1157-1158.⁵³ At the same time, Nūr al-Dīn harassed the Franks of Syria incessantly, often recovering territory (some villages), destroying crops and taking captives, some of whom were used for bargaining and obtaining revenue. The ransom money was used for the *jihād*. Under Nūr al-Dīn, the *jihād* focussed on the unification and mobilization of the Islamic forces for the recovery of Muslim territory, especially Jerusalem. His dedication to the recovery of Jerusalem was, perhaps, best demonstrated when he ordered a special pulpit to be constructed in Aleppo by woodworking specialists, which was to be installed in the Aqṣā Mosque, after the liberation of Jerusalem.⁵⁴ That same pulpit was installed by Saladin, Nūr al-Dīn's successor, in the Aqṣā Mosque in 583/1187, where it remained until 1968. However, as a Mujāhid, Nūr al-Dīn earned his reputation as the liberator of Muslim territory in Syria and for the restoration of Islam there.

‘Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī describes Nūr al-Dīn's role in the *jihād* as: “the one who reinstalled Islam and the *Sharī‘a* in *al-Shām* (areas of Syria recovered from the Crusaders), after *Kufr* (unbelief) had replaced it. He fortified the borders with the Franks, built schools (religious schools), established *Khanqāhs* (a religious building dedicated to Sufis) for the Sufis, restored the walls of the cities. . . . After all, Nūr al-Dīn was the leader who returned Egypt to Islam (Sunni Islam) and established a new administration there!”⁵⁵

As a result of the *jihād*, Nūr al-Dīn earned, among others, the religious titles of the *Mujāhid*, the *Murabiṭ* against the enemies of the faith, the killer of the infidels and polytheists, the protector of the borders of Islam, and the saviour of the Muslim community. These and other titles reflect the Muslim view of the *jihād* in the twelfth century. AbūShama points out that once, in the presence of some jurists, Nūr al-Dīn remarked saying: “How many times was I close to martyrdom, but it eluded me!” One of the jurists responded to him saying: “By God! Do not venture with your life and with that of the Muslims, for you are their main foundation. If you are killed, may God forbid, in the battlefield, no Muslim will escape the sword of the enemy and the liberated territories will be retaken by the enemy.” To this Nūr al-Dīn responded: “Who is Maḥmūd (Nūr al-Dīn), to be told

this? Before me there was a leader who protected the land and the faith (Islam), that is God, the One and Only God.”⁵⁶ A poet described Nūr al-Dīn as “the leader involved in the two *jihāds*, the *jihād* against the enemy of Islam and the *jihād* against the temptations of the soul. Accordingly, his life is one of continuous strife.”⁵⁷

One of Nūr al-Dīn’s major political achievements was the overthrow of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt (567/1171), and the restoration of Sunnism there. This move, which was accomplished militarily by Asad al-Dīn Shirkūh and his nephew Saladin, added, to the *jihād* front, a major geographical entity which was essential for the recovery of the Holy Land later on. Saladin, the first non-Fatimid independent ruler in Egypt in almost two centuries, continued the policy of Nūr al-Dīn of unifying the Islamic front in preparation for the *jihād*. However, he envisioned the *jihād* as the collective responsibility of all Muslims whether they were in Iraq, North Africa, al-Andalus or al-Yaman. This reflected the unity of all Muslims and their dedication to a major religious cause. Saladin’s vision of the *jihād* is best expressed in a document (*tadhkira*), drafted in 571/1175 by al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil (d. 597/1200), the chief administrator (*wazir*) of Saladin, on behalf of the latter, seeking official recognition for Saladin’s efforts in the *jihād* against the Franks (the Crusaders) and requesting a formal investiture with all the territories that he had conquered—Egypt, Yaman, parts of North Africa and Syria—and in territories that he might recover from the Crusaders in the future. The letter, which reflects Saladin’s perception of the *jihād*, deserves some analysis, as it also sheds light on the general notion of *jihād* in the second half of the twelfth century.

The pivotal theme of the document is the *jihād* against the Franks, the aim of which was to recover all Muslim lands, especially Jerusalem (*Bayt al-Maqdis*).

And with God’s help, we will be able to release, from captivity, the mosque [the Aqṣā] from which God has lifted His Messenger to the Heavens.⁵⁸

The document stresses Saladin’s recognition of the Abbasid Caliph as the highest spiritual authority, and as the only symbol of Islamic unity. This was a crucial issue in the *jihād* theory, for war had to be declared in the name of one supreme authority. Recognition of the Abbasid authority was one of the ideals repeatedly mentioned in Saladin’s correspondence with the Caliph, even during the Caliphate of al-Nāṣir (d. 622/1225), who

viewed Saladin's successes with apprehension. Commenting on this aspect of Saladin's policy, Gibb says:

He saw clearly that the weakness of the Muslim body politic, which had permitted the establishment and continued to permit the survival of the Crusading states, was the result of political demoralization. It was against this that he revolted. There was only one way to end it: to restore and revive the political fabric of Islam as a single and united empire, not under his own rule, but by restoring the rule of the revealed law, under the direction of the Abbasid Caliphate.⁵⁹

In order to conduct a successful *jihād* against the Crusaders, for the liberation of the Holy Land and its sacred shrines (the Aqṣā Mosque and the Dome of the Rock), Saladin advocated the application of several military as well as political measures, on both the internal and external fronts. These measures included the overthrow of the Fatimids in Egypt in 567/1171; the unification of the Syrian front, which had split after Nūr al-Dīn's death in 570/1174; the opening of the route between Egypt and Syria, by clearing it of Crusaders' strongholds; and insuring the security of Mecca and Medina, the holy cities of Islam, by protecting them from Crusader's attacks. The document deals with these issues in detail. It justifies Saladin's overthrow of the Fatimids on the basis that Islam, under them (the Fatimid), "was weakened and the laws of *Shari'a* (which included the *jihād*) were not implemented."⁶⁰ Furthermore, it states that the Egyptian military forces, though innumerable with vast economic resources, "were more capable of fighting against Islam than against *Kufr* (reference to Latin Christianity)."⁶¹ This was due to the fact that the loyalties of the two largest factions of the army, the Nubians and the Armenians, were not directed towards Islam. The Nubians, who, according to the document, numbered over 100,000, were only loyal to the Fatimid Caliph: "They recognized no god except the dweller of the palace (the Caliph), and no *Qibla* (reference to the Ka'ba in Mecca, the direction of the Muslim prayer) to turn their faces to, except his base."⁶² As for the Armenians, they, according to the document, served in the forces, "even though they were Christians"⁶³ (this is contrary to the doctrine of *jihād* which prohibits non-Muslims fighting in Muslim armies). They were also favored by being exempted from the payment of *jizya* (the poll tax), and had a great influence in state affairs.⁶⁴ In addition, there were agreements between the Fatimids and the Crusaders against the forces of Islam (reference to the

forces of Saladin). However, with God's support, Islam, through Saladin and his forces, achieved a victory over the Fatimids.⁶⁵

With the fall of the Fatimid, Egypt was added to the *jihād* front, which, together with Syria, encircled the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem on its northern and southern borders and, hence, made it easier to carry on a systematic *jihād*. It also contributed to protecting Egypt against frequent attacks by the Crusaders, in the second half of the twelfth century. The Crusaders, according to the document, "had conquered vast areas of the country; established their own administrations (in conquered areas); raised their crosses; and erected their idols (a sign of religious domination)."⁶⁶ The Crusaders' expansion was enhanced by the weakness of the Egyptian regime, which, instead of confronting them in battle, tried to purchase their withdrawal with large sums of money which could have been used in the *jihād* against them.⁶⁷

Protecting Egypt from Crusaders' attacks was one of Saladin's major concerns throughout his lifetime. This explains why, as soon as he assumed power in Egypt (in 565/1169), he embarked upon the fortification of the country, the reorganization of the army, and the rebuilding of the fleet. This also indicates that, despite Saladin's interest in having a dynastic power base in Egypt, as Ehrenkreutz contends, he was also dedicated to the *jihād*, the aim of which was the liberation of the Holy Land, and other Frankish-held territory. Saladin, like Nūr al-Dīn before him, was aware of the fact that a total victory against the Crusaders was difficult to achieve without Egypt, which, in addition to its geographic position, as we mentioned earlier, was to provide the *jihād* forces with financial resources and manpower. The role of Egypt was crucial for the victories of Saladin against the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem between 583/1187 and 585/1189, as well as in the struggle between the Muslim forces and the Latin forces during the Third Crusade (585-588/1189-1192). Saladin's fears that the Crusaders intended to capture Egypt in an effort to weaken the *jihād* front were confirmed during his lifetime and in the thirteenth century, when most of the Crusades were focussed on Egypt.

To confirm his dedication to the *jihād*, Saladin pointed out in the document that, as soon as he established his authority in Egypt, and acting in accordance with the Islamic law, he started harassing the enemy: "We focussed on raiding the territories of the infidels (*al-Kuffār*). Thus, not one year passed without our conducting a raid (against the Crusaders), by land or sea...until we have afflicted them with killing, capture and enslavement. We recovered some strongholds, which the people of Islam

(the Muslims) have hardly frequented, ever since they were usurped from them. . . . Among these is a fortress in Aiyla, which the enemy had built in the Sea of India (reference to the Gulf of Aqaba at the Red Sea), and which leads to the two holy Muslim shrines (in Mecca and Medina), as well as to al-Yaman. . . .”⁶⁸

The recovery of Aiyla, which was one of the strategic operations aimed at clearing the route between Egypt and Syria of Crusaders’ strongholds, and controlling navigation in the Gulf of Aqaba, was also given a religious significance, for, according to the document, the enemies (the Crusaders) “had raided the coast of the Ḥijāz, and almost succeeded in capturing the center of the Muslims’ *Qibla* (Mecca and the Ka’ba), thus threatening the pilgrimage shrines with transformation. . . and the Prophet’s (Muḥammad) burial place (Medina), with the settling of people who do not believe in the tenets of Islam.”⁶⁹

As for the problem of Syria, the document states that, following Nūr al-Dīn’s death, it fell into a state of disunity, with many commanders seeking independence for their estates. The Syrian Franks immediately stepped into Muslim Syrian politics, recovering some territories and releasing many of their own prisoners. Hence, Saladin stepped in, as he indicates in the document, to prevent Syria from falling to the Franks. Damascus, as he mentions, was much closer than Cairo to the Franks, and therefore a better capital for the *jihād*. It remained the center of the *jihād* until his death.

In concluding the document, Saladin states that all these achievements were only means for the recovery of *al-Quds*, Jerusalem.⁷⁰

Whatever Saladin’s motives were at this stage of his career, one thing is clear, that is that his vision of the *jihād* had extended beyond the Latin Kingdom and Syria. As his later career shows, he counted on his conquered territories for financial and military aid for the *jihād* against the Crusaders of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Egypt played a crucial role in this *jihād*.

In concluding this section, one can say that, based on this document and others, Saladin’s strategy was to unify Egypt, Syria, the Jazīra (Mesopotamia), the Yaman and North Africa, under his leadership in the name of the Abbasid Caliph. In so doing, he hoped to increase his manpower in preparation for the recovery of the Holy Land, to use Egyptian ports for his fleet, to clear the Red Sea and the areas around it of the influence of the Crusaders, especially in 574/1178 when Renauld of Chatillon planned to attack the cities of Mecca and Medina and terrorize the pilgrims. From his bases in North Africa, Saladin hoped to intercept European ships

carrying war material to the Crusaders in the East.

He explains his ultimate motives in the following statement: "If the means for the recovery of Jerusalem are obstructed, and if the will of the Muslims for uprooting the *Kufr* is not sheathed, then the roots of *Kufr* will expand; its (the *Kufr*) menace to the Muslims will increase, and we (the Muslims and their leaders) will be held responsible before God (for failing to check its expansion), and those who fail (to carry on the *jihād*) are sinful."⁷¹

At the peak of his military career in 1187, Saladin described his achievements in the *jihād* in the following words:

We moved to the region of Jerusalem and 'Asqalān; recovered all its fortresses and citadels as well as all its cities. These are: Haifa, Caesarea, Arsūf, Jaffa, al-Ramla, Lydd... and al-Khalil (Hebron). We also invested 'Asqalān, the city famous for its fortifications, for fourteen days, and recovered it through surrender. The banners of monotheism have been raised on top of its towers and walls. It has been settled with Muslims after being evacuated from the infidels and polytheists. The *Mu'adhdhins* are (now) calling for the prayer in all the region. Nothing is left for recovery in the coastal area from Jubayl (Byblos) to the borders of Egypt, except Jerusalem. May God make its recovery easy. If God wills (that we recover Jerusalem), we will turn to Tyre.⁷²

Saladin envisioned a vast Islamic front stretching from the Indian Ocean to Muslim Spain facing Western Christianity in the East and Europe; first uprooting the Crusaders completely from the East with its combined forces (this is the defensive *jihād*), then following this with the *jihād* against the enemy in Constantinople and Europe (offensive *jihād*). Ibn Shaddād, Saladin's advisor and biographer, reflecting on Saladin's dream and love for the *jihād*, reports the following dialogue with him. Saladin told him once:

My desire is that, once I have conquered the rest of the coast (Frankish-Syrian coast and Tyre), I'll divide the territories (among his heirs), take leave and then set sail to the islands of this sea (the Mediterranean), where I will follow the infidels and fight them until I die, or until no infidel is left on the face of this earth.

Ibn Shaddād then responded saying:

No one on this earth is more courageous than the lord (Saladin), and no one is more dedicated in supporting the religion of God (Islam). However, it is more advisable to send the forces by the sea (for *jihād*) and not venture with his own life (to safeguard Islam).

Then Saladin asked him:

“What is the noblest death?”

Ibn Shaddād then answered:

“Death in the cause of God (defence of the Faith and martyrdom).”

“Then! That is what I wish to achieve,”

answered Saladin.⁷³

This episode reflects clearly on the notion of the *jihād* towards the end of the twelfth century, which is not only expressed in Saladin’s heroism and idealistic vision, but in the advice of the jurist, Ibn Shaddād, who, having seen Islam strengthened and the Muslim territory liberated, was more concerned about the preservation of both.

Some Popular Twelfth-Century Perceptions of the *jihād*

Since the *jihād* in the twelfth century involved the recovery of religious places, poets, chroniclers, jurists and preachers used religious imagery, such as allusions to Islamic battles, messengers and heroes, in an effort to evoke a sense of religious patriotism. At the same time, the doctrine of *jihād* was polemical in nature.

The enemy (the Franks) was often referred to, not only as the infidel (*Kāfir*), as we have seen in Saladin’s correspondence, but as polytheist (*Mushrik*). This equates the Latin Christians with the polytheists of pre-Islamic Arabia, whose conversion only followed their military defeat (this is more of a rhetoric). In fact, when Saladin swept the Latin Kingdom, he gave the Franks two choices: either stay and pay the *jizya*, like other *Dhimmi*s, or move to another Crusader-held Frankish territory. Latin Christianity was referred to as polytheism (*Shirk*). The war against the Latins was described as the war of monotheism (*Tawhīd*) against Trinitarianism (*Tathlith*). The

Muslims were referred to as the "Dwellers of Paradise" fighting against the Latins, the "Dwellers of Hell."⁷⁴

The Latins were referred to as the worshippers of the great Cross, which represented Satan. The march of Saladin's forces to Ḥaṭṭīn in July 1187 reminded the Muslims of the Day of Resurrection. The image of the "Resurrection" symbolized the resurrection of Islam for having recovered its holy places and thus, "united the Dome of the Rock" with "Black Stone"⁷⁵ of the Ka'ba. It also symbolized the march of the Muslim forces towards martyrdom and eternal bliss.

While the Crusaders' armies were marching towards Tiberias in 583/1187, they looked like "moving mountains, like raging seas..." according to 'Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī. However, "while moving on earth, the different levels of Hell were getting ready, to receive their souls, while those of Paradise were being prepared to receive the martyrs... Mālik, the angel of death, awaited the Latins, while Riḍwān, the Angel of Paradise, rejoiced (for being entrusted with Muslim souls)."⁷⁶ The night before Ḥaṭṭīn was compared to the night of power, which marked the triumph of Islam.

The Crusaders' plight at the mount of Ḥaṭṭīn, which was the key to the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, was compared to that of the community of Noah; for, like the latter, they had sought protection from the deluge (in the case of the Crusaders the deluge was the onslaught of Saladin's forces) but God destroyed them. Like the people of Noah, they were the victims of their disbelief.

Al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil wrote to Saladin, commenting on his victory at Ḥaṭṭīn, that:

Whenever the servant (al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil) realizes that the churches have been converted into mosques (many of which were originally mosques), and that the place in which God was mentioned as the third of three (Trinity), is now mentioned as the Only One, he (the author) cannot but praise God, and pray for the safety of the hero.⁷⁷

The early twelfth-century jurists interpreted the defeat of the Muslim forces and the loss of Jerusalem as divine punishment: an expression of God's displeasure with the Muslim community for having abandoned its religious duties and obligations. This early interpretation persisted throughout the century and was central to the ideological preparation for the *jihād* (Counter-Crusade). Satisfying God, the ultimate goal, could only be achieved through a sincere *jihād* leading to the recovery of the Muslim

holy places. Thus, when Jerusalem was recovered, Muḥy' al-Dīn ibn al-Zakī, a jurist, assured the Muslims that they had finally earned God's aid and blessings:

O men, rejoice at the good news! God is pleased with your conduct; and that is the utmost term, the highest point, of man's desires; inasmuch as he rendered it easy for your hands to recover this strayed camel (Jerusalem) from the possession of a misguided people and to bring it back to the fold of Islam after it had been abused by the polytheists for nearly one hundred years.⁷⁸

‘Imād al-Dīn al-İşfahānī defined the recovery of Jerusalem as the second *hijra* (immigration) of Islam to the “Holy House,” achieved through Saladin. This implies the rebirth of Islam in the Holy Land. The notion of *hijra* is linked to the whole concept of the *jihād* in Islam, and the two are often used synonymously in the Qur’ān, as in the following:

Those who fled and were driven from their homes and suffered damage for My cause and fought and were slain, verily I shall remit their evil deeds from them and verily I shall bring them into gardens and underneath which rivers flow: A reward from God; and with God is the fairest reward.⁷⁹

The eviction of the Muslims from Jerusalem was considered a great humiliation which necessitated a *jihād*, the only means to restore the faith to its land and the only test of the religious dedication of the Muslims of the time. The *hijra* of Islam to Jerusalem was considered by ‘Imād al-Dīn and others to be as crucial to the faith as was the *hijra* of the Prophet (Muḥammad) to Medina in 1/622 and that to Mecca in 10/632. It was, after all, through the migration of the Prophet to Medina that Islam was established, preserved, and spread. The second *hijra*, that to Mecca in 10/632 when the Prophet triumphantly entered his birthplace, announced the final victory of Islam and the completion of the Prophet's mission:

This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor unto you, and chosen for you *al-Islam* as a religion.⁸⁰

The Islamic Response to the Third Crusade: 585–588/1189–1192

The period of the Third Crusade has often been described as one of “religion and chivalry.” Although this is true to a great extent, one can add that

the struggle between the western Christian forces of the Third Crusade and the Muslim forces is also characterized by diplomacy, negotiations and flexibility. The forces of the Third Crusade fought to check the expansion of Muslim forces into yet unrecovered territory and to try to regain some of the territories that their eastern compatriots had lost; while the Muslim forces fought to preserve what they had recovered, especially Jerusalem. Between the two antagonists, there were some of the Franks in the East, as well as Byzantium and the eastern Christians who were reluctant to fight for the 'Faith,' as they did in the First Crusade. There were some Muslim forces, who were also reluctant to fight for the defense of the 'Faith', as they did during the Battle of Ḥaṭṭīn (583/1187) and the liberation of Jerusalem. Hence, despite the continuous flow of fighters and pilgrims from the West, the Third Crusade remained confined, militarily and geographically. At some point, it even brought the antagonists in the East, the Muslims and the Christians, closer together against the western invaders. Such alliances, and the resistance of the Muslims, kept the western forces in check for two years, after which both sides had to give some concessions in return for peace. These concessions included the abandonment of the reconquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders. Thus, according to the Muslims, despite some loss of territory, the three bases of Islam—Mecca, Medina, and al-Quds (Jerusalem)—remained united, symbolizing the unity of Islam.

One feature of the relationship between the Muslim and western forces of the Third Crusade is the social relations established at the highest level between the two antagonists, which resulted in the exchange of physicians, food, gifts and services, as well as the exchange of visits among the commanders. King Richard I, considered a staunch enemy of Islam, used to refer to Saladin's brother, al-Malik al-ʿĀdil, as, "my brother and my friend." He (Richard I) even negotiated with Saladin on the question of marriage with his sister Joana of Sicily, widow of William II, to al-Malik al-ʿĀdil, Saladin's brother. When the marriage plans failed, the king offered his niece as a bride. This did not materialize either.⁸¹

Despite what has been said about the Muslims' indifference and ignorance of their counterparts, as we mentioned in the introduction to this paper, Arabic writings, especially Baha' al-Dīn ibn Shaddad's biography of Saladin dedicated to the Third Crusade, indicates that the Muslims had ample information about their enemies.

One aspect which deserves discussion in concluding this section, as well as the paper, is the vision of Saladin and his contemporaries of the *jihād*, during the period of the Third Crusade. Religion was a moving force

behind the resistance of Saladin and those who stayed with him on the battlefield, but it was not the same with other Muslim leaders, like Caliph al-Nāṣir in Baghdad and some feudal lords who were reluctant to involve their military forces in the strife.

Saladin's dedication to the *jihād*, in defense of Islām, is best described by him, while he was under siege in Acre during the Third Crusade, in the following remarks:

Trinity has prevailed, while monotheism has laid down its weapon (in weakness). Our enemy is not one enemy. It is (coming) from every land beyond the sea. . . . Every city in Europe, every town, island and village large and small has prepared its ships, exhorted its fighters, supplied its forces sending them against us, led by their bishops and patriarchs. . . . The land and the sea routes have been crowded with these multitudes, who have come for the support of the Cross, in order to revenge the recapture of Jerusalem (by the Muslims). . . . They have been informed that if they go to fight against Islam, their sins would be remitted. . . . If they cannot go to war, then they should send their representatives or send money. Thus, they have returned to us wearing iron clads instead of garments of mourning.⁸²

In a letter, addressed to the ruler of al-Andalus, Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Manṣūr (d. 1199), seeking military support against the forces of the Third Crusade, Saladin states:

How could he see the lands of *Kufr* aiding *Kufr* in the Holy Land, while the lands of Islam, failing to support Islam. . . let him (al-Manṣūr) fill the sea with sailing ships, carrying for the Muslims (in the East) war supplies, men, or any form of helps. . . . Let him help the people of the faith against the people of misfortune (the ill-fated, the Franks).⁸³

Saladin did not receive any official aid from western Muslim territories, nor sufficient support from the East. Thus, he seized the opportunity of signing a peace treaty with King Richard I, according to which he had to surrender some of the territories he had liberated. This reflects on his apprehension about what might befall the areas which he had liberated, as expressed in the introductory quotation of section I of this paper.

The chroniclers and scholars created an image of the leaders of the *jihād* in the twelfth century which can be summed up in the following titles:

- Qāhir al-Mutamarridīn—vanquisher of the rebellious
 Qāmi' al-Mulhidīn—uprooter of the atheists
 Qātil al-Kafara wal-Mushrikīn—slayer of the infidels and polytheists
 Hāfiz al-Thughūr—defender of the frontiers
 Al-Muḥāmī 'an al-Dīn—defender of the faith
 Jāmi' Kalimat al-Īmān—the unifier of the faith
 Qāmi' 'Abadat al-Ṣulbān—uprooter of the worshippers of the crosses
 Mujir al-Umma—refuge of the community
 Ghiyāth al-Jumhūr—succor of the people
 Al-Murābiṭ Li Ā'dā' Dīn Allāh—the one in the frontiers, in a permanent state of military activity against the enemies of the Faith (Islam)
 Al-Dhābb 'an Ḥurum Allāh—the defender of God's sanctuaries
 Al-Shahīd—the martyr
 Al-Malik al-'Ādil al-'Ārif al-Zāhid—the just king, the spiritual knower, the ascetic
 Rukn al-Islām Wal-Muslimīn—the pillar of Islam and the Muslims
 Muḥyī al-'Adl fil-'Ālamīn—resurrector of justice in the world
 Al-Malik al-Zāhid al-Mujāhid—the ascetic and *Mujāhid* king (fighter in the defence of Islam and Muslim territory)

These titles which were shared between the three leaders of the *jihād*: 'Imād al-Dīn Zangī, Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin, embodied the military and heroic, as well as moral, qualities of the *jihād* with special emphasis on the *jihād* in the twelfth century.

NOTES

1. Bernard Lewis, "The Use by Muslim Historians of Non-Muslim Sources," in *Historians of the Middle East*, Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt, eds. (Oxford, 1962), 181.
2. Francesco Gabrieli, "The Arabic Historiography of the Crusades," in *Historians of the Middle East*, Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt, eds. (Oxford, 1962), 98.
3. J. J. Saunders, *A History of Medieval Islam* (London, 1965), 161-62.
4. See Claude Cahen, "Crusades," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new edition (*EF²*), 65.
5. See Francesco Gabrieli, ed., *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, trans. E. J. Costello (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978), 233-234.
6. Majid Khaddūrī, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, 1979), 141.

7. Najīb Armanāzī, *al-Shar' al-Duwalī fil-Islam* (Damascus, 1930), 74-75.
8. Muḥammad T. al-Ghunaimī, *The Muslim Conception of International Law and the Western Approach* (The Hague, 1968), 184.
9. Khaddūrī, 141.
10. Al-Ghunaimī, 184.
11. *Ibid.*, 184.
12. 'Alī-Ibn Ṭāhīr al-Sulamī, *Kitāb al-Jihād* in Emmanuel Sivan, "La genèse de la contre croisade: un traité Damasquin du début XIIIe siècle." *Journal Asiatique* XXIV (1966): 207.
13. *Ibid.*, 207.
14. Claude Cahen, "La chronique abrégée d'al-'Azīmī, *Journal Asiatique* CCXXX (1938): 371.
15. 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fil-Tārīkh*, 12 vols. (Beirut, 1966), 10:414.
16. 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Tārīkh al-Bāhir fil-Dawlah al-Atābikiyya* (Cairo, 1963), p 32.
17. *Ibid.*, 69-70.
18. Aḥmad Ibn 'Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā fī Ṣinā'at al-Inshā* (Cairo, 1916), VI:458-463.
19. Cahen, *La Chronique*, 369.
20. *Ibid.*, 371-372.
21. Abū Ya'la Ḥamza Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq* (Beirut, 1908), 134.
22. *Ibid.*, 135.
23. Kamāl al-Dīn 'Umar Ibn al-'Adīm, *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīkh Ḥalab*, 3 vols., ed. Sāmī Dahhān (Damascus, 1951-1954), 2:134.
24. *Ibid.*, 2:132.
25. William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. Emily A. Babcock and A. C. Krey, 2 vols. (New York, 1943), 1:258.
26. Ibn al-'Adīm, 1:141-142.
27. William of Tyre, 1:330.
28. Ibn al-'Adīm, 2:131.
29. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 10:273.
30. William of Tyre, 1:223.
31. *Ibid.*, 1:326.
32. *Ibid.*, 1:326.
33. *Ibid.*, 1:326.
34. *Ibid.*, 1:330.
35. *Ibid.*, 1:330.
36. Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Taghribardī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wal-Qāhira* (Cairo, 1939), 5:179-180.
37. Al-Sulamī, 211-212.
38. *Ibid.*, 207.
39. *Ibid.*, 207.
40. *Ibid.*, 207-8.
41. *Ibid.*, 208.
42. *Ibid.*, 208.
43. *Ibid.*, 208.
44. *Ibid.*, 212.
45. *Ibid.*, 212.
46. *Ibid.*, 213.

47. *Ibid.*, 214.
48. *Ibid.*, 213.
49. *Ibid.*, 214.
50. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Bāhir*, 32.
51. Aziz S. Atiya, *Crusade, Commerce and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), 130.
52. Ibn Shaddād, 21. See also Aḥmad Badawī, *Al-Ḥayāt al-Adabiyya fī ‘Aṣr al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalābiyya* (Cairo, n.d.), 536–537.
53. Abū Shāma, 1:288–289.
54. ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī, *Al-Fath al-Qussī fil-Fath al-Qudsī*, ed. Muḥammad Ṣubḥ (Cairo, 1965), 137. See also Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, 11:551.
55. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Ismā‘īl Abū Shāma, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn al-Nūriyya wal-Ṣalāhiyya*, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1962), 1:25–26.
56. *Ibid.*, 1:19.
57. *Ibid.*, 1:45.
58. *Ibid.*, 1:623.
59. Hamilton A. R. Gibb, *Studies in the Civilization of Islam*, ed. Stanford Shaw and William R. Polk (Boston, 1962), 100.
60. Abū Shāma, 1:617.
61. *Ibid.*, 1:618.
62. *Ibid.*, 1:618.
63. *Ibid.*, 1:618.
64. *Ibid.*, 1:618.
65. *Ibid.*, 1:619.
66. *Ibid.*, 1:618.
67. *Ibid.*, 1:617.
68. *Ibid.*, 1:619.
69. *Ibid.*, 1:619–620.
70. *Ibid.*, 1:623.
71. *Ibid.*, 1:622.
72. Abū Shāma, *Recueil*, 4:314–315.
73. Ibn Shaddād, 22–23.
74. ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Isfahānī, *Al-Fath al-Qussī fil-Fath al-Qudsī* (Cairo, 1965), 78, 80. See also Abū Shāma, *Recueil*, 4:266.
75. See ‘Umar Bāshā, *Al-Adab fī Bilād al-Shām* (Damascus, 1972), 488, 490, 498.
76. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Ismā‘īl Abū Shāma, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn al-Nūriyya wal-Ṣalāhiyya* (*Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, Historiens Orientaux*) (Paris, 1898), 4:226.
77. *Ibid.*, 5:289–290.
78. Aḥmad Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A‘yān wa-Anbā’ Abnā’ al-Zamān* (Ibn Khallikān’s Biographical Dictionary), trans. Macguckin de Slane, 4 vols. (New York, 1871), 2:636.
79. Qur’ān, 3:195.
80. *Ibid.*, 5:3.
81. Ibn Shaddād, *Al-Nawādir al-Sulṭāniyya wa-l-Maḥasin al-Yūsufiyya* (Cairo, 1964), 195.
82. Abū Shāma, *Recueil* 4:432–433.
83. Muḥammad Ḥamāda, *al-Wathā‘iq al-Siyāsiyya wal-Idāriyya* (Beirut, 1987), 4:353.